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A  
C R I T I C A L  
COMMENTARY  
On such BOOKS of the  
A P O C R Y P H A,

As are appointed to be read in Churches, viz.

WISDOM, ECCLESIASTICUS, TOBIT, JUDITH,		BARUCH, History of SUSANNA, and BEL and the DRAGON.
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WITH  
TWO DISSERTATIONS  
ON  
The Books of MACCABEES and ESDRAS.  
Being a CONTINUATION of  
Bishop PATRICK and Mr. LOWTH.

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By RICHARD ARNALD, B. D. Rector of  
*Thurcaston, in Leicestershire.*

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The SECOND EDITION, Corrected.  
With great ADDITIONS communicated to the AUTHOR by a learned Friend.

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*Licet Ecclesiæ nostræ Libros illos, quos Ecclesia Romana ad Canonem Veteris Testamenti adjicit, Apocryphos esse existiment, neque Divinam illis Auctoritatem tribui velint; non ideo tamen eos contemnunt et aspernantur, ut noxios et inutiles. Sed quemadmodum prisca Christianorum Ecclesia, quamvis eos Libros Divinis æquari noluerit, maximò eos in honore et pretio habuit, et dignos judicavit, qui non tantum privatim, sed publice prælegerentur, tanquam ad ædificationem morum utilissimi: sic nos quoque eis hodie non negamus honorificum locum in Ecclesia Dei, et Privilegium quoddam supra omnem Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum sortem. Cujus rei argumentum est, quod eos in eodem cum Libris vere sacris et Canonicis volumine compingere solemus, et in Homiliis sæpe citare non dedignamur. Le Blanc Thes. Theol. par. ii. fol. Lond. 1683. c. i. De Libris Canonicis et Apocryphis, p. 175.*

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L O N D O N,  
Printed by W. BOWYER for B. LAW and Co. at the Bible and Ball, in  
*Ave-Mary-Lane. MDCCLX.*



Passages of Scripture occasionally altered or illustrated.

W. B. The initial letter denotes the Book.

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xxxi.	18.	104. B.	xxxi.	18.	104. B.	xxxi.	18.	104. B.
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A  
C R I T I C A L  
C O M M E N T A R Y  
U P O N T H E  
B O O K  
O F

*The Wisdom of Solomon;*

Being a CONTINUATION of

Bishop *PATRICK* and Mr. *LOWTH*.

By RICHARD ARNALD, B. D. late Rector of  
*Thurcaston in Leicestershire.*

The SECOND EDITION, corrected.

With great ADDITIONS communicated to the Author by a Friend.

Δός μοι τὴν τῶν σῶν θρόνων πάρεδρον Σοφίαν.

Non debuit repudiari sententia Libri Sapientiae, qui meruit in Ecclesia Christi de gradu  
Lectorum tam longa Annositate recitari, et ab omnibus Christianis, ab Episcopis, usque  
ad extremos Laicos Fideles, Poenitentes, Catechumenos, cum veneratione Divinae  
Auctoritatis audiri. *August. lib. i. De Praedest. Sanct. cap. xiv.*

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L O N D O N,  
Printed for P. DAVEY and B. LAW, in *Ave-Maria-Lane.*

MDCCLX.



TO THE

MAGNIFICENT FATHER A. G. D.

TO HONORABLE

UPON THE

By Divine Providence

B O O K

Lord Arch-Bishop of York

These Writings of Solomon;

Being a Continuation of



BRITANNICVM MVSEVM

By RICHARD ARNOLD, B. D. late Rector of  
Thurcaston in Leicestershire.

The SECOND EDITION, corrected.

May it please Your Grace

I O accept the following manuscript  
upon the Plan of Bishop of Durham  
an Appendix to, and Continuation of  
Design. I am far from thinking that  
Work equal to the Nature of the subject  
I have myself with any degree of  
with its many Defects and  
and B. R. W. in Ave-Maria-Lane.

MDCCLX



TO THE

Most REVEREND FATHER in GOD,

**T H O M A S,**

By DIVINE PROVIDENCE,

Lord Arch-Bishop of **YORK;**

Primate of *England* and Metropolitan,

AND

One of His MAJESTY's most Honourable *Privy-Council*.

*May it please Your* GRACE,

**T**O accept the following Sheets, which are formed upon the Plan of Bishop *Patrick* and Mr. *Lowth*, as an *Appendix* to, and Continuation of, their useful Design. I am far from thinking that I am engaged in a Work equal to the Nature of their Subject, nor can I flatter myself with any Hopes that this Performance, with its many Defects, will meet with the like favourable Acceptance.

I WAS



I WAS encouraged to pursue this Design, from the many excellent Things which are spoken of *The Book of Wisdom* by the Fathers, and most early Writers; and as our Church has given a sort of Sanction to its Usefulness by allowing it, in Conformity to ancient Custom, to be read in her public Service, I hope this Consideration will justify the present Attempt, and apologize, in some measure, for my Presumption in offering to your GRACE an Apocryphal Book, and placing it under the Protection of your great Name; especially as I consider the uncanonical Books upon the Footing only of such Primitive Ecclesiastical Writings, as many Prelates, of the first Eminence in the Republic of Letters, have not thought it beneath them to employ their learned Labours about.

WAS I permitted to observe the common Practice in Addresses of this Kind, and to speak in the Language of modern Complaisance, the World might expect that I should dwell upon all those great Qualities, in which your GRACE excels; but I shall only beg leave to observe, that your rising Merit early drew the Eyes of a very discerning and learned Prelate \* upon you; and when, through Age and Infirmities, He was, at length, hindered from labouring in the Word and Doctrine, like *David* stricken in Years he transferred his Charge upon no less able a Successor, and the same great Accomplishments reviving in your GRACE, made the Loss less sensible and regretted; and equally endeared you to the *same* learned Society, and to that illustrious Name in particular, which now fills the highest Station in the Law with the most consummate Abilities. And as if a double Portion of the Spirit of *that Elijah* rested upon You, in You we admire the same Justness of Sentiments, Clearness of Expression, Beauty of Language,

\* Bishop *Fleetwood*.



and well conducted Zeal: In You we trace his affectionate manner, sweet Elocution, just Action, and those other moving Graces of the Preacher, which command the Passions, and charm the Attention, so that *being dead he yet speaketh.*

NOR are You, My LORD, less distinguished by an affable and obliging Temper, which shines forth, and is displayed in that Easiness of Access, and condescending Goodness, which endear you to the Love and Esteem of all, and must render you particularly amiable to that PROVINCE, over which, by the Designation of Providence, you preside with so general an Applause.

As these great Qualities, at length, conducted you so deservedly to the Episcopate, so your speedy Advancement, as it were from Glory to Glory, to the present High Station which you fill, is an Instance of your superior Merit, and consummate Modesty; both of which illustriously stand confessed, as you neither asked nor solicited this Eminence; it rather sought you out, and seemed to court you, so that I might justly draw the Parallel between you and some celebrated Names of Antiquity, whose Ambition was Retirement, and their Preferment a sort of Violence. What the Historian says of that great General, *Epaminondas*, is truly applicable to your GRACE, “That he never made any  
“Interest for Preferment, but was courted to accept it,  
“and often forced into it; and he always discharged his  
“Trust in such a manner, as to do greater Honour to  
“his Station than he received from it†.”

I COULD enlarge, with equal Pleasure and Truth, upon so copious and inviting an Occasion; but, to say more, would I fear give Offence to your GRACE, and

† Recusanti omnia imperia ingesta sunt; Honoresque ita gessit, ut Ornamentum non accipere, sed dare ipsi Dignitati videretur. *Justin. lib. vi. c. 8.*



to say less would have been the highest Injustice in me; nor should an Eloquence less than your own attempt to display your Character.

THAT your GRACE may long preside over the Church, under the happy Conduct and Blessing of that WISDOM, in whose Right-hand is Length of Days, is the sincere Prayer of,

*My LORD,*

*Your GRACE's most Obedient,*

*and Dutiful Servant,*

**RICHARD ARNALD.**



# A U T H O R ' S P R E F A C E.

**T**HERE have been so many excellent *Commentaries* published upon the Holy Scriptures, and every one of the sacred Books have been illustrated by the Labours of so many learned and judicious Persons, that it may be presumed nothing has escaped their Enquiry, or seems necessary now to be added to their Discoveries: But the *Apocryphal Books*, though they are placed next to the *Canonical* ones in the same common Volume, and have some of them been esteemed, even by many Protestant Writers, as second only to them for the Usefulness of the Matter and Variety of Instructions contained in them [see *Sparrow's Rationale*, p. 41. *Raynol. Cens. Libr. Apocr. Præl.* vii. LXXIV. *Wheatley* on the Common-Prayer, p. 140. *Chemnit. de Script. Canon. Par. I.* *Falkener's Libert. Eccles.* p. 160. *Cosin's Schol. Hist.* p. 8.] have hitherto received, though they confessedly stand in great Need of Light and Illustration, very little Help and Advantage of this Nature. The following *Commentary* therefore upon the *Book of Wisdom*, which the Ancients had in so great Esteem, and our Church has thought not unworthy to be read in her public Service, will, I flatter myself, be the more favourably received, and appear the more necessary, as there is no *Comment* upon this, or indeed any of the *Apocryphal* Writings extant, that I know of, in our Language; and such as have written upon it in other Languages, being generally *Papists* Expositors, have perverted many Passages to countenance their favourite Opinions; which I have occasionally taken notice of in the Course of this Work, to prevent any Mischief from such an Abuse:

THAT there are some exceptionable Places in the Book itself I do not deny, and what Book merely human is entirely without them? Nor because I have undertaken the Illustration of it, shall I be so disingenuous as to patronize, or even palliate its Errors, much less cry it up as all Perfection; and therefore, as I shall neither with the *Romanists* pretend that it is Canonical, and to be put upon the same Level with the inspired Writings, against which Opinion there are unsurmountable Difficulties, both internal and external, so neither can I persuade myself, with too many *Protestants*, to deery it as useless and of no Authority, for no other Reason probably, but because the Church of *Rome* has paid too great a Deference to this, and other Writings confessedly *Apocryphal*, which I cannot think are all of them of equal Value, but that the *Didactical* Books, as they are called, *viz.* *Wisdom* and *Ecclesiasticus*, claim abundantly the Preference, as in fact they are universally well spoken of and esteemed, and, I believe, have as many Admirers, as they have Readers, and may therefore, I hope, without any Imputation or Reflexion, be as laudably commented upon, as any of the primitive ecclesiastical Writings.

THE *Book of Wisdom* in particular, to which the following Sheets only relate, especially that Part of it which refers to God's dealing with the *Egyptians*, is an Epitome of the History of *Exodus*; it abounds with useful Sentiments and instructive Morals; we see in it repeated Proofs of God's Patience and Long-suffering towards Sinners,



Sinners, of his Mercy and Loving-kindness to his faithful Servants, especially in their Distress, and many lively Instances of his Justice and Severity upon obstinate and irreclaimable Transgressors: Such are the following memorable Events recorded in it, "The Establishment of the Kingdom of Death upon the Earth through the Sin of our first Parents; the Destruction of the old World by the Deluge for its Wickedness, after the repeated Menaces of at least an Age; the miraculous manner in which *Noah's* Family were alone preserved from perishing by the Waters; the Fire which came down from Heaven upon the unrighteous Cities, and the whole Kingdom of *Egypt* punished, at different Times, by ten terrible Plagues.— In what manner *Wisdom* conducted the Patriarchs, and other Holy Souls, the Friends and Favourites of God in their several Ages, inciting them to the most laudable Actions, and, as a Reward of their Labours, reaching forth to them a glorious Kingdom, and a beautiful Crown from the Lord's Hand; how by it *Moses* obtained a good Report, became the Servant of God, and commissioned by him to dispense his Mercies and Judgments; the Sea opening a Passage for the *Israelites*, and closing again to overwhelm *Pharaoh* and his Army; the former sustained miraculously with *Manna* for forty Years, and drinking of the Brook which flowed from the hard Rock, and the *Egyptians* perishing through the Calamity of their River stained with foul Blood; the former covered with a Cloud from the scorching of the Mid-day Sun, and conducted by Night with a Light of Fire, and the latter perishing by a continued Darkness, whose Horror was increased by the Glare of Spectres and Apparitions; an Army of Hornets marching before the People of God, to drive the *Canaanites* from their Possessions, and the *Egyptians* destroyed by as dreadful a Persecution of Locusts: The Clouds, at several Times, converted into a Shower of Hailstones to overthrow the Wicked, and, at other Times, the Elements suspending their known Qualities in favour of God's Chosen." Such important Facts recorded in this Book, manifesting God's Displeasure against Sin, and his Acceptance and Reward of Obedience, shew the great Usefulness of it, and that it was not without Reason approved of by the Church, and appointed to be read in it, for Instruction and Edification. And hence we may presume, *Dr. Reynolds*, who wrote so learnedly against the Authority of the *Apocryphal Books*, was induced to speak so favourably of this, and *Ecclesiasticus*, calling them, *Valde bonos et utiles, et omnibus tractationibus præferendos* (which is the Language also of *St. Austin*, *De Prædest. Sanct.* lib. i.) *proximumque illis locum deberi post Scripturam Sacram. Præl. vii. LXXIV.*

THE original Text of this Book is in *Greek*, nor are there Reasons sufficient to induce us to conclude, that it was ever extant in *Hebrew*: But though the Author wrote *Greek* well, and was acquainted with approved Writings, both of Philosophers and Poets in that Language, yet, in all the Editions which I have carefully consulted and compared, there seem to be many faulty and suspicious Passages. *Junius* has the like Observation upon all the *Apocryphal Books*, *Permulti ubique inveniuntur loci varii, distorti, depravati. Depravati autem! imo profligati, æque in contextu Græco atque in Translationibus, quos quidem locos partim ex Canonicorum Scriptorum Autoritate, partim ex ipsorum authorum secum, aut aliorum cum ipsis comparatione, partimque ex judicio necesse fuit emendare. Præf. ad Lib. Apoc.* From him therefore I promised myself no little Assistance; but neither *Junius*, nor the many Commentators I have occasionally consulted, give that Light which one might have expected in the most difficult Passages. And though they could not but perceive, and often do acknowledge the *Greek* Text to be corrupt, yet they content themselves with giving a general Guess at the Author's Meaning, without strictly and minutely examining the Original, whether it would warrant and justify such a Sense, or might be, by some happy Conjecture, altered to afford a better. There is indeed thus much to be said in the Behalf of some of them, that being *Catholic* Commentators, the very Text itself was sacred to them; but why the few *Protestant* Expositors,



Expositors, whom we find among the *Sacred Critics*, should be generally so sparing of their learned Labours, as to attempt scarce a single Emendation, when the Badness of the original Text in so many Places called for their Assistance, can be resolved into no truer Cause, than what is mentioned before, viz. that the *Apocryphal Books* having been too much extolled by the *Romanists*, and even made a Part of the Canon, and many of their erroneous Tenets pretended to be warranted from thence, these have been as remarkably regardless of them, and through an overcautious Delicacy have gone into the other Extreme; which probably may be the Reason, joined to the Scarcity of useful Notes and Observations upon the *Apocryphal Books*, that the learned *Peole* has taken no Notice of these in his *Synopsis*. But as this Way of Reasoning against the general Usefulness of a Thing from a particular Abuse of it, is allowed on all Hands to be illogical and inconclusive, there is the less Occasion to enlarge on this Head.

As there are many Passages which to me seem faulty in the Original, and have hitherto passed unaltered, and even unattempted, I have endeavoured to restore these by the most easy and natural Helps; sometimes by a different Point only, sometimes by the Change of a few Letters; Mistakes, which might arise probably at first from the Carelessness of Transcribers, or the Likeness and Affinity of Sound: But I have been cautious of indulging too much Liberty and Wantonness this way, and when any Criticism is attempted, and an Emendation of the Original Text offered, which I was induced to, either by the Sense of the Context, or the Badness of the present Construction, or the Authority of the ancient versions, which I have constantly consulted, I have always supported such an Alteration with Reasons at least probable, and have not obtruded any favourite Criticism dogmatically, but submitted it, with great Deference, to superior Judgment, being ready to retract any Mistake, and to acknowledge my Obligation for any friendly Information. Nor have I boldly attempted any Transposition, however inclined or induced to it, by the Confusion and Perplexity of some Passages in their present State, such as *ch. i. 16. ch. xii. 27.* not having Authority from MSS or the ancient Versions: For though a Conjecture of a Transposition may be sometimes admitted in Books which are confessedly written in Prose, yet as some learned Men have been of Opinion, [see *Grabe's Prolegom.* tom. ult. ch. i. 2. *Calmet's Diction. in voce WISDOM*] that this Book, and that of *Ecclesiasticus* were originally written in Metre, and there may perhaps seem some Countenance for it from the many poetical Terms here used, and from their being wrote stitche-wise in the *Alexandrian MS.* in the same manner as the Book of *Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Canticles* are, to which some of the old *Latin* Translations, and Dr. *Grabe*, in his late Edition, probably for the same Reason, has joined them; I was, on this Account, less disposed to indulge any conjectural Transposition, as, in metrical Books, Mistakes of that Nature could not so easily happen; though nothing certain can be built upon this, even though we should suppose with some others, that this Book was originally wrote in *Hebrew*. Thus much I can assert with great Truth and Sincerity, that as it was my Design to make the Work useful in all possible Particulars, I have purposely confined myself to explain, as indeed all Expositors should, the most difficult Passages, nor have I designedly left any one Difficulty which respects either the Sense, or the Reading of the Original Text itself, unattempted at least. And this I have done by minutely examining the *Greek* Text, collating the several Editions and their various Readings, consulting the *Oriental* Versions, and the several ancient *English* Translations, comparing the Author's Account with the Scripture History, and collecting what was Parallel, or would give an additional Light, from *Josephus, Philo, Spencer, Selden, &c.* and to these Helps I have occasionally added some material Notes and Observations of those celebrated Commentators *Messieurs* of *Port-Royal* and *Calmet*. The former give us the Sentiments of the Fathers, and their Exposition and Reflexions upon particular important Points; and the latter, in the explanatory way, exceeds all the Commentators that



## A U T H O R ' S   P R E F A C E .

went before, and almost supercedes the Use of any other. Such as would see a short marginal Paraphrase upon this Book, will probably find Satisfaction from a small one in 12, published in 1706. And that the following Sheets may be useful to every Class of Readers, I have likewise studied Plainness and Clearness, and inserted, in their proper Places, many moral Reflexions, such as arose naturally from the Subject, which, as they tend to discourage Vice, and shew the Fallacy of Libertines of *Epicurean* Principles, so they serve likewise to enliven the Work, and are a sort of Relief and Entertainment after a dry Criticism.

The *English* Translation of the *Apocryphal Books*, which the Church now uses, is that which was made by the Command of King *James I*, but though seven very considerable Persons were employed in the Work, and among them the learned Dr. *Duport*, the then *Greek* Professor in the University of *Cambridge*, yet it is surprizing to observe in how many Places it is faulty and imperfect. In that of the *Book of Wisdom*, the Language is not only bad, but the Sense often obscure and intricate; and though some Allowance may be made upon Account of the Faultiness of the original Text, which might, in particular Passages, occasion the Obscurity of our Version, yet often where the Original is pure, clear, and intelligible, the Translators have not only fallen short of the Force and Beauty of it, but have unaccountably mistaken the Sense; and where the *Greek* happens to be equivocal, and will admit of different Meanings, have frequently taken the worst, and most foreign to the Context. The Translation of the first Part is much the best executed, but the three last Chapters betray great Negligence, and seem to come from a hasty, I had almost said, an unskillful Hand. In all such faulty Instances I have helped our Version, and given the true rendering; nor is the Number of Emendations attempted in the *Greek* Text less considerable: How far I have succeeded in the critical Part, is submitted to the Judgment of the Learned; but hope it will meet with the more Candour, being the first Essay. If what I now offer to the Publick shall be favourably received, I shall be induced to publish, in due Time, the like Commentary upon the Book of *Ecclesiasticus*, which is already in some Forwardness.

THAT nothing might be wanting that could give any Insight into the Book itself, or contribute to the Discovery of its Author, I have prefixed two Dissertations of *Calmet's*, which I purposely translated from the *French*, as they are drawn up with great Judgment, and will be found very useful for the better understanding this Writer; one upon the Book itself, the other containing the Opinions and Conjectures of learned Men about the Author. In the former, the Style, Sentiments, Method, and subject Matter of *The Book of Wisdom*, are so judiciously treated of, that it is needless to attempt to add to it; but as the Conclusion contains some bold Assertions of the Canonicalness and Inspiration of the *Apocryphal Books*, which are not warrantable, and which unanswered, through the Authority of so great a Name, might have done harm, I mean his Appeal to those pretended Councils, in whose Decrees the *Romanists* take Shelter, and this learned Commentator so much triumphs in, I thought it incumbent upon me, however unequal to the Challenge, to examine and confute this Pretence; which I have done in the clearest manner, that the Nature of such a Controversy will admit of, and, by Authorities and Reasons so full and cogent, that, I trust, an Antidote is provided against any possible Poison that can be conveyed. In the latter, he recounts the several supposed Authors of this Book mentioned by Antiquity, and the Arguments urged in their Behalf, but, at length, he leaves the Point undetermined; so that from him we rather learn who is not, than who is the real Author of it. But the Reasons which he produces in favour of *Philo the Jew*, it must be confessed, are very strong, so strong, that it seems not improbable he would have adjudged this Book to him, if the Canonicalness of it would not have been endangered thereby. The two principal Arguments urged against *Philo* by him are, his not being inspired, and the Difference of Style.---The former he himself acknowledges is of no Force to such as do not own the Canonicalness



calness of this Book; and the latter he has answered, when he observes, that this may be occasioned by the Difference of the Subject Matter, according to which, the same Writer often varies his Style, and seemingly differs from himself; which is particularly true of *Philo*, for sometimes his Pieces are Allegorical, sometimes Literal, sometimes between both Extremes, and yet from some Resemblance in the Features, one may easily know that they belong to the same Parent:

*Facies non omnibus una,*

*Nec diversa tamen, qualis decet esse sororum.*

Such a Variation of Style therefore, if there were no other Arguments against him of more Weight, no more concludes against *Philo*, than a Change of Dress, according to the Exigency of a Man's Business and Occasions, infers a real Change of his Person.

St. *Jerom* acquaints us that many of the Ancients supposed this Book to be wrote by *Philo*. *Prol. in lib. Sap.* and some very considerable Moderns are of the same Opinion. Dr. *Raynolds* contends that it was wrote by *Philo* in the time of the Emperor *Caius*, who would have his Statue set up and adored in the Temple of *Jerusalem*. *Sueton. in vit. Calig. 22.* and that the *Jews* sent this very *Philo*, as their Ambassador to intercede with him not to profane their Temple, but the Emperor ordered *Petronius* to see the Orders about his Statue complied with. This, he says, is perfectly agreeable to the Argument and Drift of *The Book of Wisdom*; and from hence he accounts for those Precepts in the first and sixth Chapters, which contain the Duty of Princes, that they were inserted with a View to *Carus*, to admonish him how he ought to act, or to instruct his Successors. Hence likewise those fine Observations upon the Reward of Virtue, the happy Exit of good Men, and the Torment which awaits the wicked, especially those in Power, in the second, third, fourth, fifth Chapters, designed, as he supposes, for the Comfort of the distressed *Jews*, and as a Warning and Terror to evil and tyrannical Princes. Hence, lastly, those severe Remarks upon the Original, Progress, Mischief, and Downfall of Images and Idols, and those Threatnings against them, their Makers and Worshipers, which are to be found at large in the thirteenth and fourteenth Chapters. *Cens. Lib. Apoc. tom. i. Prol. 22.*

*JUNIUS* thinks the *Book of Wisdom* was composed from some Fragments of *Solomon*, and that it is an Extract from his Writings, which the seventh, eighth, and ninth Chapters may seem to favour, and that *Philo* was the Compiler; and so takes the middle way, between those who assign it to *Solomon*, and those who ascribe it to *Philo*. Bishop *Cosin* concurs in giving this Book to *Philo*. *Schol. Hist. sect. 36.* and refers in the Margin to the following Authorities, as confirming this Opinion, *S. Basil Ep. ad Amphiloeb. S. Hier. Præf. in lib. Sol. Beletb de Div. Offic. c. 60. Jo. Sarisbur. Epist. 172. Aquin. in Dionys. de Divin. Nom. c. 4. Lect. 9. Bonavent. in lib. Sap. Lyran. in eundem.* These farther Authorities in favour of *Philo*, joined to *Calmet's* Arguments, though stronger than any hitherto alledged for any other Person, must yet be allowed to amount only to a bare Probability.

As there is not sufficient Light for determining, with any Certainty, the real Author of *The Book of Wisdom*, or the precise Time in which he wrote, I shall set down only what is most generally agreed on with relation to this Book, viz. that it was not wrote by *Solomon*, though the Title carries his Name, nor originally in *Hebrew*; that it was wrote by a *Hellenist Jew*, for the Style shews that it was a *Greek* that composed it, as St. *Jerom* observes, *Stylus ipse Græcam Eloquentiam redolet, Prol. in lib. Sap.* and from some Circumstances in the Book itself, it seems most probable to be wrote by a *Hellenist Jew* of *Alexandria* in particular. That it was wrote long after *Malachi*, and the ceasing of Prophecy, even a considerable Time after the *LXX* Interpreters, and therefore not by one of them. We may, I think, come still nearer its true Date, if we place it after the Times of the *Maccabees*, and, consequently, that it is much later than the Book of *Ecclesiasticus*: For what *Grotius*



urges from its being placed in all the Copies before that of *Ecclesiasticus*, is of little Weight to determine its Era, nor is the Order of Books, as it occurs in our Bibles, any Rule for settling the Precedence in Point of Time. For does not the Book of *Job* follow after the *Pentateuch*, and other Books confessedly later? And yet the learned suppose it to be wrote before any of the Books of *Moses*, and probably the oldest Book we have now remaining. See *Origen. cont. Gels. lib. i. Euseb. Demonstr. Evang. lib. i. c. 6. Selden De Jure Nat. &c. c. 11. Bishop Sberlock. Dissert. II.* In a Word, allowing the Uncertainty of the Author, and of the exact Time when this Book was wrote, yet, as it certainly precedes the most primitive ecclesiastical Writings in Point of Time, and cannot, without manifest Injury, be supposed inferior to them in Point of Worth, it ought at least to be put upon the same Level with them, and challenge as high a Regard.

WHAT a late learned *Metropolitan* says of the Authority of the Writings of the Apostolical Fathers, belongs in an equal, if not a higher Degree to the Apocryphal Books, especially the *Didactical* ones: "We cannot doubt but that what was universally approved of, and allowed, not by a few learned Men, but the whole Church in those Days, what was permitted to be publicly read to the faithful for their Comfort and Instruction, must, by this means, have received the highest human Approbation, and ought to be looked upon by us, though not of equal Authority with those Books, which the same Church has delivered to us as strictly Canonical, yet as standing in the first Rank of ecclesiastical Writings." *Archbishop Wake's Prelim. Disc. to the Transl. of Apost. Epist. p. 119.*

[N. B. In this Edition of the Commentary of the Book of Wisdom, the Reader will observe that the many Additions communicated to the Author by a very learned Friend, are included in Hooks, which he designed to have melted down into the Body of his Work, and to have acknowledged, no Doubt, his Obligations to the Person that sent them. But he had executed this Design in Part only, the Observations being transcribed no further than Chap. ix. and the original Copy of them not found among his Papers. This Loss has, by good Fortune, been supplied by another Friend, through whose Hands the Observations were transmitted to him, and who was indulged the Liberty of taking a Copy of them for himself; from whence they are now given to the Public. They correct often Mistakes of the Author, which it was thought proper to continue as he left them, that the Reader might the better judge of the Force of the Remarks, and that a Liberty might not be taken after his Death, which himself only, while alive, had a right to make use of.]

CALMET'S



which from its being placed in all the Copies before that of Ecclesiasticus is of little Weight to determine its Age, nor is the Order of Books, as it occurs in our Bibles, any Rule for settling the Precedence in Point of Time. For does not the Book of

Wisdom follow the Book of Ecclesiasticus in the Order of Books, and precede the Book of Ecclesiasticus in the Order of Time? We have now remaining, *See Oration, Part I. Chap. I. De la Sagesse de Salomon, Discours II.*

## C A L M E T ' S P R E F A C E

TO THE READER, I have learned, that the Authority of the Writings of the Apostolical Fathers, belongs in an equal, if not a higher Degree to the Apocryphal Books, especially the *Didache*, than to the Canonical ones. We cannot doubt, but that what was universally approved of, and allowed, by the Church, must be of great Authority, but the *Didache* is not so generally received, and its Authority is not so generally acknowledged.

## The B O O K of W I S D O M.

which is the Summary of his Sentiments, and as containing some of his most weighty and important Maxims. Some of the Ancients quote it also by the Greek Name *Panaretos*, i. e. a Treasury of all Virtue, or a Collection of useful Instructions to bring us to it. And in this Sense we must understand Wisdom in this

Translated from the *French*.

**C**USTOM and the Language of the Church have always given to the Books attributed to Solomon, the Title of *Sapiential Books*. The Fathers often cite them under the General Name of *The Wisdom of Solomon*, and in Ecclesiastical Language *The Book of Wisdom* comprehends not only all the undoubted Works of that Prince, but likewise *Ecclesiasticus*, and that which we are now going to explain, which, by a peculiar Privilege, hath been called, by way of Eminence, *The Book of Wisdom*; or, as the Greek expresses it, *The Wisdom of Solomon*. Not that Solomon was the Author of this Book, scarce any learned Men are of that Opinion; but it has been looked upon as a Summary of his Sentiments, and as containing some of his most weighty and important Maxims. Some of the Ancients quote it also by the Greek Name *Panaretos*, i. e. a Treasury of all Virtue, or a Collection of useful Instructions to bring us to it. And in this Sense we must understand Wisdom in this Author, as synonymous to Religion, Piety, Justice, and the Fear of God; a Sense widely different from that in which Wisdom is understood in the Writings of the Heathen Philosophers, where it has but little Concern or Connexion with Religion, and the Practice of real Virtue, aiming only to enlighten and improve the Understanding, and to give it a Sort of fruitless Knowledge of general Truths of a very imperfect Morality founded wholly upon Nature.

THE principal End proposed by the Author of this Book is the Instruction of Kings, Nobles, and Judges of the Earth; he addresses his Discourse to them, accommodates his Rules to their Circumstances and Occasions, and exhorts them to a serious and diligent Study of Wisdom. And to incline them the more effectually to it, he assumes the Name of *Solomon*, and speaks to them as in his Person with an Air of Authority, but without Haughtiness or Affectation. He proposes this great Prince to them as a Pattern, and recounts by what Means he arrived to that Height of Glory, Riches, Knowledge, and Eloquence; he declares that 'tis to Wisdom alone he is indebted for all these Blessings, and that whoever will imitate him, may arrive to the same Happiness and Perfection. And to engage them the more effectually to the Pursuit, he assures them that the Means of attaining Wisdom are not difficult, that to gain her is only asking her of God, that she even prevents those that seek her, and hastens to meet those who sincerely desire her.



He discovers to them, at the same Time, the Obstacles that they may meet with in the Study and Pursuit of Wisdom, which he shows are chargeable on Men themselves, rather than on God; that therefore they wrongfully accuse Nature, and to no Purpose urge their own Weakness and Infirmities. For Death and Sin made not their first Entry into the World through the Will of God, but by the Fraud of the Devil, and through the Fault of Men themselves. At first Man was created Pure, Innocent, and Immortal, and was himself the Cause of forfeiting these great Blessings and Privileges. But notwithstanding his Fall, Wisdom is still possible to be attained by him, and, through the Assistance of God, he may acquire it. But to engage God to be his Friend, he must avoid, above all Things, Sin, Debauchery, and Deceit; for God will be served faithfully, and with an upright Heart, nor will Wisdom ever enter into, or dwell in a deceitful and corrupt Soul.

He expressly confutes those who believe the Soul to be mortal, and who place their sovereign Happiness in the Pleasures of Sense, and says, they deservedly brought Death upon themselves, by siding with the Devil, and ranging themselves in his Party, who, through Envy, brought Men into this degenerate and unhappy State. He represents the *righteous Man* as reviled, hated, persecuted, condemned unjustly, and, at length, put to Death, and in such Terms as suit admirably with the Sufferings and Passion of *Jesus Christ*. He threatens the Wicked with the Judgments of God, and extreme Punishment in another Life, and represents them in a State of Despair at seeing the Happiness of the Just, which they shall be Witnesses of. On the other Side, he describes the blessed Condition of the Saints in a future State, as a Condition of Joy, Peace, and Glory, and represents them as Kings and Judges, who shall shine in Heaven, and exercise there a Jurisdiction as glorious, as their Humiliation was on Earth contemptible. He commends Virginity, and opposes it to the many Disorders of Lust and Incontinence, and in particular inveighs against the Sin of Adulterers, whose Posterity he shews to be unfortunate, and of short Continuance.

He speaks of Wisdom in the most magnificent and pompous Terms, in such a manner, that he often attributes to her what, in Strictness, belongs only to the Divinity itself, of whom she is a Ray and Emanation. He gives her the Name of the Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit, Creator, which fills and knows all Things, and is Almighty; one in Essence, but manifold and diversified in her Operations. He says, that Wisdom is a Sort of Efflux or Vapour, which issues and proceeds from the sovereign Virtue of God, an Emanation of his Splendor, the Brightness of the everlasting Light, the spotless Mirror of the Majesty of God, and the express Image of his Goodness. That being but one, she can do all Things, and continuing the same, renovates, or makes all Things new. That none are beloved of God who are not filled with Wisdom; that she is always about his Throne, and was present at, and assisted in the first Creation of Man. He prays to the Lord to send her down from Heaven, that she may instruct him, and be his Guide and Assistant.

He shews the Advantages which Wisdom procures to Men by his own happy Experience; that *Adam*, who fell at the Beginning, recovered himself by Wisdom; that through her *Noah* had the Happiness to please God, and to preserve himself pure and unspotted in the Midst of a wicked and perverse Generation; that it was Wisdom which preserved *Abraham* from the general Corruption of the World, and *Lot* in the Destruction of *Sodom*. He relates the History of *Jacob* and *Joseph*; that of *Moses* and the *Hebrews* in *Egypt* and in the *Desert*; and the principal Miracles that God wrought in their Favour, and always ascribes to Wisdom the Glory of them. He draws an elaborate and judicious Parallel of the different Manner in which God treated the *Egyptians* and the *Hebrews*, and compares the just Severity of God towards the Former, with the many signal Instances of Favour shewn to the Latter. He enlarges upon the Original of Idolatry, and shews its Folly, Progress, fatal Consequences and Effects, and foretells its Ruin and Downfall. That Idolaters are the most senseless of all Men, and their Blindness absolutely inexcusable, in not discovering and finding out the true God by the Help and Scale of the Creatures. And in general it may be said, that in no other Book of Scripture, nobler and more grand Conceptions of the Deity are to be met with than in this.

There are some particular Sentiments in this Book, which have made some doubt of the Inspiration of the Author, and of the Canonicalness of the Book itself.

We



We shall examine, in a particular Dissertation, what he says about the Original of Idolatry. There is some Difficulty in what he asserts with respect to his own Soul, that it being naturally good, had the Happiness to light into a Body likewise pure and undefiled; *ch. viii. 20.* We have examined the Passage in the Course of this Work, and shewn that he speaks there only of natural Parts, and not of any moral Qualities or Endowments.

He says in another Place, that *Joseph* had the Sceptre of *Egypt*, which is not mentioned in the Books of *Moses*, and that the *Hebrews*, whilst they remained there, under the Bondage of *Pharaoh*, were a just and irreproachable People, which is contrary to what *Ezekiel* and other Prophets say of them, who accuse them of Idolatry in that very Country. He approves of the *Hebrews* spoiling the *Egyptians* of their Goods, as being only the just Recompence of their Labour, which before was so badly requited. He adds likewise many Particulars to *Moses's* Account: He seems to believe that *Abraham* lived at the Time of the Building the Tower of *Babel*, and that Wisdom prevented him from consenting to that bold and presumptuous Design, and kept him free from Idolatry, which, like an Inundation, overspread the Earth. He accuses the *Canaanites* of Magic, eating human Flesh, worshipping Flies and Insects, which the Scripture does not charge them with. It is true indeed, that the *Philistines* adored *Beelzebub*, The God of Flies; but these People were not of the Race of *Canaan*, nor of his Extraction.

He says, that the Fire which fell with Hail and Rain upon *Egypt*, spared those Animals which plagued the *Egyptians*, supposing that the Frogs, Flies, and Locusts were still subsisting at that Time, which is contrary to the Account of *Moses*.—He speaks of Manna, as a Food prepared in Heaven, as the Nourishment of Angels, and in which the *Hebrews* found every Thing agreeable to their Palate that they could wish for; whereas *Moses* tells us, that the Taste of Manna was like that of Wafers, or Bread prepared with Oil; that the *Israelites* were so surfeited with it, that they disliked the very Sight of it. He makes Apparitions and Spectres to haunt the *Egyptians* during the three Days Darkness in *Egypt*, supposing them to be visible by the Light of some sudden and occasional Flashes; and adds some Circumstances about the *Israelites* Passage through the *Red Sea*, which seem fabulous, as what he says of Grass and Flowers appearing at the Bottom of it, to make their Journey more easy and delightful; and in fine, seems to believe that the Quails which fell in the Wilderness round about the Camp of the *Hebrews*, was a miraculous Production, like that of the Flies and Frogs which *Moses* brought upon the Land of *Egypt*.

BUT to all this we may answer in general, 1. That it is a Piece of natural Justice due to an Author, that is not living nor capable of explaining his own Sentiments, to understand his Expressions in the most favourable Sense, and not to impute a bad Meaning to him, as long as one is not forced to it by the plain Evidence of his own Words: Now we have shewn in the Comment, that there are none of these Passages which have been excepted against, but what may be understood in a good and consistent Sense. 2. With Respect to the Additions which are complained of, it is common, we know, both in sacred and profane History, for one Writer to supply what hath been omitted by another.

THIS Answer will hold, it may be replied, when two Authors cotemporary, or nearly so, record the same Fact; but the Case is quite otherwise here, as the Author of this Book lived many Ages after *Moses*. To this we rejoin, that there are two Ways by which the Memory of Events may be transmitted to Posterity, viz. by Scripture; or by Tradition. If the Author could not come to the Knowledge of these Particulars by the first of these Ways, he might learn them by the second. But if this Author was inspired, as we assert, and shall hereafter shew, there is notwithstanding the Force of his Evidence, unless there could be found in his Account of Things some manifest Contradiction to the sacred History, or Sentiments contrary to Truth and Religion, which can never be shewn.

FOR, with Regard to *Joseph's* having the Sceptre of *Egypt*, it is not to be understood of a Kingdom or Sovereignty properly so called; it means only that he was the second Person in the Kingdom, and had a very extensive Rule over all that Country. And do not *Joseph's* own Brethren say as much? *Joseph is yet alive, and is Ruler over all the Land of Egypt.* As to the *Hebrews*, who lived under the cruel Bondage of

*Pharaoh,*



*Pharaoh*, loaded and overwhelmed with Hardships, they were just and irreproachable with respect to that King and his Subjects, who had cruelly enslaved them, though not so indeed in regard to God, who permitted their Slavery to punish their Idolatry.—The Spoil of the Goods of the *Egyptians* by the *Hebrews* is not condemned any where in Scripture, and such as have wrote on that Subject, justify the Action by many substantial Reasons.—What this author says of the *Canaanites* is but too true. The Description which the Scripture gives of their Abominations is much more shocking, than any thing said of them in this Book. We have already answered, in general, to the Objection drawn from the Addition to the sacred Account; the rest will be discussed in the Commentary itself. Some have raised an Argument from the Author himself, “If he is not the real *Solomon*, why does he endeavour to pass for that Prince?” “Can the Holy Spirit inspire a Writer to personate what he is not?” We answer, that such an Artifice in this Writer, whoever he be, is neither fraudulent nor false. It is no more than a sort of *Prosopopœia*, an ingenious Fiction, whereby a Writer, to give more Weight and Authority to the Instructions delivered, assumes the Name and Person of another more ancient. The Woman of *Tekoa* speaks in such a disguised manner, when she pretends before the King to have lost one of her Sons, 2 *Sam.* xiv. 4. By the same Artifice, one of the Sons of the Prophets feigns himself wounded for having let a Prisoner escape, 1 *Kings* xx. 35. Thus *Nathan* reproved *David* for his Sin with *Bathsheba*, under the significant Parable of the Ewe Lamb. And thus the Prophets introduce, *God*, *Moses*, *Abraham* as occasionally talking, to render their Discourses, by such a Fiction, the more lively and affecting.

THE Author of this Book designed to give the Heathens a just Idea of the Original and End of true Wisdom.—The *Greeks* were passionately fond of Philosophy; but they knew not its true Origin, ascribing it to their own Industry and Pains, which the wise Man, in this Treatise, shews to be the Gift of God. They make it consist in fruitless Speculations, or in Rules of a Morality merely chimerical (as was that of the *Stoics*, which exceeded the Power of human Nature) or one purely natural, which went no further than common Honesty, and the doing such Actions as were agreeable to right Reason. But this Writer proposes to them supernatural Wisdom, having God for its End, and Holiness for its Object. He overthrows Idolatry by shewing its ridiculous Rise, sad Consequences, and the Horrors and Abominations which accompanied it; that therefore Men, and, above all, Philosophers, are inexcusable, in not knowing and acknowledging God, and transferring to Creatures that Honour which is due to the Creator only. In a word, he destroys the Opinions of the *Epicureans* and *Sadducees*, who denied the Immortality of the Soul, a Future Judgment, the Reality of Hell, and the Punishments and Rewards of another Life. After this manner he opposes the principal Mistakes of the Philosophers, and gives here the Plan of a true and sound Philosophy. Original Sin, the Fall, Repentance, and Recovery of the first Man, the Rewards and Punishments in a Future State, are as well, or perhaps more clearly, described in this Book than in any of the Old Testament, which is of great Consequence, to establish the Truth of these Opinions, and to shew the Antiquity of such a Belief among the *Jews*.

THE six first Chapters of this Book are as a Preface to the rest of the Work; they are a sort of an Abridgment of the nine first Chapters of the Book of *Proverbs*. In them Kings and Nobles are exhorted earnestly to the Study of Wisdom. In the vii<sup>th</sup> and viii<sup>th</sup> Chapters, the Author, assuming the Name of *Solomon*, proposes himself as a Pattern, and shews what means he employed to attain true Wisdom. One sees there the Description of his happy Reign, and of his consummate Knowledge, agreeably to what is said of it in the first Book of *Kings*. The ix<sup>th</sup> Chapter is a Paraphrase on the Prayer which *Solomon* made to God in the Beginning of his Reign, which is mentioned 1 *Kings* iii. 6, 7, 8, 9. The x<sup>th</sup> Chapter, to the End of the Book, is a Continuation of the same Prayer, where he enlarges upon the Power of Wisdom, and its Effects, the Evils which accompany the Wicked and Inconsiderate, and the Rewards of the truly Wise and Righteous, which he confirms by various Instances and Examples. The Work seems not to have been finished, or at least the Conclusion of it has not reached us, for the Author does not finish his Prayer, as it is natural to suppose he should, according to his first Design.



We shall not enlarge here upon the Writer of this Book, nor the Time in which it was written, we shall do that in a particular Dissertation. The original Text is in Greek, which is yet preserved, and it does not appear that it was ever extant in Hebrew, notwithstanding what some Authors have thought to the contrary. We find none of those *Hebraisms*, which are hardly to be avoided by those who translate from the Hebrew, nor any Turns but what are usual in the Greek Tongue. The Author manifestly had read the Heathen Writers, and wrote Greek well; he even borrows some Expressions which are peculiar to them, as the *Giants* being drowned in the Waters of the Deluge, the River of *Forgetfulness* or *Lethe*, the Kingdom of *Pluto* or *Hades*, *Ambrosia*, &c. There are some Passages in which he plainly appears to have imitated *Plato*, and one clearly perceives that he had studied that Philosopher. His Style is swelling, abounds with Epithets, often obscure, and almost throughout poetical and figurative. The Jewish Writers had some Knowledge of him, and have quoted him sometimes; *Rabbi Moses Ben Nachman* cites particularly *ch. vii. 7.* which he gives in Syriac, or such Hebrew, as was spoken at *Jerusalem* in the Time of our Saviour.

THE Author often quotes Scripture, and always according to the *Septuagint*. Thus *ch. v. 10, 11, 12, 13.* he compares the Life of Man to a Shadow, to a Vessel cutting the Waves, to a Bird which parts the Air, and to an Arrow shot at a Mark, which is taken from *Prov. xxx. 19.* where the wise Man says, according to the LXX, that there are four things which are hard to be known, the Way of an Eagle in the Air, the Way of a Serpent upon a Rock, the Way of a Ship in the midst of the Sea, and the Way of a young Man in his Youth; but, in the Hebrew, the last Clause is, and the Way of a young Man with a Virgin. So that Passage in *ch. ii. 12.* Let us lie in wait for the Righteous, because he is not for our turn, is taken from *Is. iii. 10.* where the *Septuagint* reads, Let us bind the Righteous, because he is disagreeable to us; but, in the Hebrew, it is, say ye to the Righteous that all shall be well with him. In his Account of the Plagues of Egypt, he follows the LXX, particularly in what he says of the Flies and Locusts. And when he speaks of Idols in the *xiii<sup>th</sup>* and *xiv<sup>th</sup>* Chapters, he almost, Word for Word, copies what we have in *Isaiab, Jeremias, Baruch,* and the *Psalms* on that Subject.

THE Latin Translation which we have of this Book is not *St. Jerom's*; it is the ancient *Vulgate*, used in the Church before the Time of that Father, and made from the Greek, in the first Ages of the Church, by an Author unknown. The Translator does not seem well acquainted with the Purity of the Latin Tongue, often making use of Words that are not used by approved Authors in that Sense; as *Honestas* for Riches, *Honestus* for a rich Man, *Respectus* or *Visitatio* for the Punishment which God inflicts upon the wicked, *Supervacuitas* for Vanity or Vain-glory, *Animalia supervacua* for dangerous and noxious Animals. The Translation keeps very close to the Text, and is strictly exact in rendering every single Word faithfully, neglecting all Ornaments of Speech, and the Beauties of the Latin Idiom. *St. Jerom*, in his Preface to the Books of *Solomon*, says, that he corrected *Proverbs, Ecclesiastes,* and *Canticles* from the ancient Version of the LXX, but did not meddle with the Translation of this Book, or *Ecclesiasticus*. There are not many various Readings in the Greek Copies, but a much greater Number in the Latin ones. The *Complut.* Edition, that of *Antwerp*, and of *Sixtus V.* in 1590, afford a great Variety, which are corrected in the Bibles of *Clement VIII.* and in the *Vulgate*. We have marked them at the Bottom of each Page in the Commentary.

THE Book of *Wisdom* was not always received by the Church as Canonical, as not being admitted into the Jewish Canon of Scripture among those Books, which were written in their Language, and passed through their Hands to the Christian Church without any Doubt or Exception. But such as were written in Greek, as *Wisdom* and *Ecclesiasticus*, have been disputed and contested, and the Church, always cautious and wary in her Decisions, did not decree to admit them for Canonical, till after mature Judgment and long Deliberation; which Slowness in her Proceedings and Determination shews, that she did not admit them hastily, or by chance. The Scarcity of Books in the Beginning of Christianity, the great Distance of Churches from one another, the Difficulty of assembling general Councils, made each Church keep to its own Tradition, to admit, or not to admit Books, till the Truth was at length discovered.



## CALMET'S PREFACE.

The principal Reasons brought against the Canonicalness of this Book are, 1. That there is no Appearance that *Philo* the Jew, to whom very many Authors ascribe it, was inspired; he lived and died a Jew without any Knowledge of *Jesus Christ*, or receiving his Gospel. 2. The Doubts of some ancient Fathers, who have ranked it in the Number of disputed Writings—That several particular Churches left it out of their Canon, and even some late Interpreters, as *Lyrarus* and *Cajetan*, did not admit it as indisputably Canonical. 3. The Jews not admitting it into their Canon, for it does not appear to have been known among them before the Time of *Jesus Christ*. 4. Internal Evidence in the Book itself to reject it, as plain Imitations of the Gospel, and Writings of the Apostles; the Opposition of some Passages to the undoubted Scriptures; and the Addition of others, which appears to have been made on purpose. All that can be objected on this Head, we have mentioned before in the Body of this Preface; and will examine, in the Dissertation upon the Author of this Book, the Objections with Respect to *Philo*, and those Passages in the Gospel and Writings of the Apostles, which resemble some in this Book. We have also answered, both in the Commentary and in this Preface, the Accusation of Untruth, which has been urged against this Writer. There remains only the Difficulty which arises from the Jews not acknowledging it to be Canonical, and some of the Ancients not receiving it.

The Authority of the Jews hath never been of any great Weight in the Church, particularly of the modern Jews, whose Malice and unfair Dealing, in every thing relating to our Faith and Holy Religion, is open and notorious. The Apostles, whose Authority is of infinitely more Weight than theirs, have taken Quotations and Proofs from this Book [a]. And 'tis begging the Question to say, that this Writer copied from them. They recommended it to the Faithful, who have ever since preserved, read, and cited it as inspired Scripture, so that we cannot now form any reasonable Doubt about its Canonicalness. To the Testimony of those few among the Ancients, who have disputed its Authority, we oppose a Croud of Witnesses in all Ages of the Church, who have acknowledged and quoted it as Divine Scripture. In short, to the Scruples of those who, seeing Antiquity wavering upon this Point, have found some Difficulty to persuade themselves to admit this Book into the Canon, we oppose the Third Council of *Carthage*, in 397; that of *Sardica*, in 347; that of *Constantinople* in *Trullo*, in 692; the 11th of *Toledo*, in 675; that of *Florence*, in 1438; and lastly, the 4th Session of the Council *Trent*, all which expressly admitted this Book into the Class of Holy Scripture. And there is scarce any ancient Father who has not quoted and commended it. Many of them attribute it to *Solomon*, others to some Prophet, and all to an inspired Writer [b]. We may therefore reasonably urge upon this Occasion, the Argument of Prescription against our Adversaries, and let them produce their Title against our quiet Possession. Let them attack and confute, if they can, so many Councils [c], and those

[a] See this Objection discussed in Note on Chap. ix. 13. and Bishop *Cosins's* Scholast. Hist. p. 23.

[b] Some of the later Fathers, as St. *Jerom*, St. *Austin*, &c. give indeed very honourable Titles to *The Book of Wisdom* and the other Apocryphal Books, calling them Canonical, Sacred, Divine; but then they mean not by Canonical, as the Church of *Rome* does, *Canones Fidei*, a perfect Rule of Faith; but *Canones Morum & Historiæ*, such as are profitable only for Instruction, and to inform Men in the History of the Jewish Church. See *Dupin's Biblioth. Pat.* tom. i. p. 8. Nor when they call them Sacred or Divine, do they mean to equal them to Divine Scripture, strictly so called, or to make them of the same Sovereign Authority with the undoubted Canonical Books themselves, for the establishing Matters of Faith, or determining Controversies in Religion. See St. *Jerom's* Epist. 7. ad *Lat.* Epist. ad *Paul.* Pref. in lib. *Sol. Just. de Dact.* lib. ii. c. 8. *Kerani*. lib. ii. c. 10. *De Crisost.* lib. ii. c. 23. *Cyril. Hieros.* in *Catib.* See *St. Euseb. Eccl. Hist.* lib. vi. c. 25. *Ruffin.* in *Antid.*

[c] As the Catholics lay the Stress of their Cause upon these Councils, and this learned Commentator triumphs in them as their Bulwark, it seems proper and even necessary to examine into the Authority of these Councils, and consider how far they prove the Point they are brought for. I shall take them in the Order as they stand in this Preface. With Respect to the Third Council of *Carthage*, whereat St. *Austin* himself, they say, was present, we reply, 1. This Council was not *Oecumenical*, but only a Provincial one. 2. The 47th Canon (according to *Binius*) which they urge against us, was not originally in the Acts of this Council, but added in the Time of Pope *Boniface*. For if this Council was held under the Consulate of *Quesarius* and *Arrius* in the Year 397, as the Inscription or Title of this Council in all Copies has it, there can be no such Canon in it; for *Boniface*, to whom this Canon refers, was not, at that time, Pope of *Rome*, nor above twenty Years after, not till 418. 3. The great and general Council of *Chalcedon*, consisting of 630 Bishops, confirmed the Code of the Universal Church; in that Code were contained the



learned Ecclesiastical [d] Writers, which are the Bulwarks of our Cause: They must overthrow all these, before they will be able to reach us.

THE Prophecies which are to be met with in this Book, and which have been acknowledged as such by the Fathers, are still further Proofs of its Canonicalness. All that is mentioned here of the future Downfall of Idolatry, and of the terrible Judgment which God will inflict upon the Wicked, may be considered as a true Prophecy.

Canon of the Council of *Laodicea*, wherein we have the Catalogue of the Canonical Books of Scripture; but the Canons of the Council of *Carthage* were not confirmed by it, as not having yet any Place in it. And therefore we may safely conclude, that neither Pope *Leo* the First (whose Legate subscribed the Council for him) nor any of the Bishops there gathered together, acknowledged any other Books of Canonical Scripture, than what the Council of *Laodicea* (which left out all these Books) had declared to be received; and read for such in the Church, before their Time. 4. The *Romanists* themselves do not generally allow the Authority of this Council, to determine what Books are Canonical: For *Wisdom*, and the rest of the Apocryphal Books, have been since rejected by many great and considerable Persons among them, as *Isidore*, *Nicephorus*, *Robanus Maurus*, *Hugo*, *Lyrar*, *Cajetan*. See *Limborch's Theol. Christ.* lib. i. c. 3. *Melch. Canus.* *Leo. Theol.* lib. v. cap. ult. *Baron. Ann.* tom. viii. ad Ann. 692.

The next is that of *Sardica*, or *Sardi*, in 347, which was so far from a general Council, that it was only a Western Synod. The Canons of this Council were never received by the Catholic Church as general Laws, they were never put into the Code of the Canons of the Universal Church, which was approved by the great Council of *Chalcedon*, but were first added to the Code by *Dionysius Bauguis*, as those of the Council of *Carthage* likewise were. The East never received these Canons, nor would the Bishops of *Africa* own them. The Popes only used them, and cited them under the Name of the Council of *Nice*, to give them the greater Weight and Authority. See *Dupin's Eccl. Hist.* vol. ii. p. 261.

As to that at *Constantinople* in *Trullo*, this is only cited by them as confirming the Council of *Carthage*; for in other Respects, the Canons of this Council are not so agreeable to the *Roman* Writers, who represent them as falsified and corrupt. They do not relish the 36th Canon, which makes the Bishop of *Constantinople* equal to the Bishop of *Rome*; nor the 55th, which lays some Restraints upon the Church of *Rome*. But it is to be well observed, that the 227 Bishops here assembled, in the second Canon, confirmed also the Council of *Laodicea*, (which was 37 Years before that of *Carthage* which they urge) which reckons the Canonical Books of Scripture as we do, and excludes the rest, in Canon 59th as not properly belonging to them. When therefore in the same second Canon they allow also the Council of *Carthage*, they cannot be supposed immediately to contradict themselves, but that they understood the *Laodicean* Council to be taken in one Sense, and the Council of *Carthage* in another; the latter extended, in a large and improper Acceptation of Scripture, to the Ecclesiastical Books, and the former, in a more strict and proper Sense, took in only those Books that were really Authentic and Divine. For in one, and the same Sense they cannot both be taken, nor otherwise be confirmed and stand together. See *Cosin's Schol. Hist.* Sect. 104. *Episcop. Instit. Theol.* lib. vii. c. 7.

There is still less to be said in favour of the 11th Council of *Toledo*, which was subscribed only by the Archbishop of *Toledo*, fifteen bishops, two Deacons, two Bishops, Deputies, and seven Abbots. A Number too small and contemptible to make a Council!

That of *Florence*, in 1438, is of so modern a Date, that it can be of no great Weight. It was assembled by the Authority of the Pope, and under his Influence and Management. In the large Tomes and Editions of the Councils, no such Canon, as is pretended, is to be found; it is a Decree added by some Impostor, probably the Epitomizer or Abridger of the Councils, and is supposed with Reason to be a Forgery, for nothing was mentioned at this Council concerning the Canon of Scripture. Nor can it be called a General or Oecumenical Council, even in Respect of the *Latin* Churches only; many of which neither acknowledged *Eugenius*, or his Council, and the Council of *Basil* then sitting, condemned this of *Florence* as a Schismatical Assembly. And the *Greeks*, as soon as they were returned, and got to *Constantinople*, would stand to nothing that their own Fears and the Pope's Persuasion had before led them into. See *Cosin's Schol. Hist.* Sect. 160.

The last is the famous Decree of the Council of *Trent*, wherein forty-three, or some few Persons more, were only assembled, and cursed all other Persons in the World, that did not receive their new Canon of Scripture in such Manner and Form, as they were then first pleased to appoint it. To establish this Oecumenical Decree, as they most unwarrantably called it, of the *Greek* Church they had not one; of the *English* as few; of the *Helvetian*, *German*, and *Northern* Churches none; of the *French* scarce two; of the *Spanish* not many. All the rest were *Italians*, and they in no great Number; among whom some were the Pope's Pensioners, and sent thither to overbalance the Votes of others, many of them Titular, and some Unlearned. And was it ever heard in the World before, that forty Bishops of *Italy*, assisted, perhaps, with half a Score others, should make up a General Council for all *Christendom*? (See *Cosin's Schol. Hist.* Sect. 194.) Wherein, as there was not any one greatly remarkable for Learning, that voted the Canonical Authority of the Apocryphal Books, which the Eastern and Western Churches ever held as suspected and uncertain; so some of them (as *Father Paul* observes, whose Testimony upon this Occasion must be allowed of great Weight, and less exceptionable) were Lawyers, eminent, perhaps, in their own Profession, but of little Skill and Understanding in controverted Points of Religion; and such Divines as were among them, were of low Parts, and less than ordinary Sufficiency. The greater Number were Courtiers, and Bishops of such small Places, or Dignities only Titular, that supposing every one to represent the Clergy and People from whence he came, it could not be said that one in a Thousand, in *Christendom*, was represented in this pretended Council. See *Brent's Transl. of the Hist. of the Council of Trent.* B. II. p. 153. I mentioned just above, that the

BUT



But the Place upon which the Ancients have fixed with most Attention, is, where the Author describes the Punishments of the *Just Man*, in Terms so resembling the Sufferings of *Jesus Christ*, that *Grotius* imagines these Passages to have been added to the Book by some *Christian Interpolator*, after the Death of our Saviour; which is not at all probable, as they are so linked and interwoven with the Context, that they are not to be separated without manifest Violence. The Fathers had quite a different Opinion of them, and have made use of them against *Jews* and *Heathens*, and shewn the complete Accomplishment of them in the Person of *Jesus Christ*.

THE *Jews* themselves do not absolutely reject this Book; I have before observed, that a learned *Rabbi* quotes a Passage from it in his Preface to the *Pentateuch*. *John Picus* of *Mirandola* asserts, that the *Jews* read a *Book of Wisdom* in *Hebrew*, composed, as they thought, by *Solomon*, as the Marrow and Quintessence of the Law of *Moses*. But it is very different from this Book. *Isidore*, *Sixtus* of *Sienna*, *Christopher a Castro*, *Gonsalve a Cervantes*, *Lorin*, in their Prefaces to this Book, maintain that it was written at first in *Hebrew*, and afterwards translated into *Greek*: Many affirm, that it was written by *Solomon*, and translated after into *Greek* by the *LXX*. But these last Opinions go too far. If the *Jews* were acquainted with, and read this Book, it must have been translated into their Language from the *Greek*, and we must indeed agree that they never received it as Canonical.

Eastern and Western Churches looked upon the Apocryphal Books as suspected and uncertain. Those that are curious may see this Matter very minutely discussed by a particular Detail of the Sentiments of the several Churches, extracted chiefly from the Writings of the Bishops, that presided over the respective Sees, which *Episcopus* has happily executed, *Instit. Theol.* lib. iii. c. 7. in such a clear Manner, and so exact a Method, as to Time, Place, and Persons, that we see the Judgment of these two great Ecclesiastical Bodies, as it were, in one View, and without any Confusion or Perplexity.

[d] This may be disproved by almost an Infinity of Testimonies in Bishop *Cosins*' *Scholastical History*, wherein by an Historical Disquisition of the Universal Tradition of the Church of God, unanimously delivered in all Ages from the Apostles Times (and before) to ours, and by a very particular Enu-

meration of the Testimonies of the ancient Ecclesiastical Writers through the several Centuries, it appears, that neither the ancient Fathers, Bishops, nor Ecclesiastical Writers, taught or believed otherwise than we now hold. So that it seems strange that so learned a Writer as *Calmet*, should either be so greatly deceived in a Point of such Consequence, or one in other Respects so fair and candid, should, knowingly triumph in false Evidence and unsupported Authorities: Nor is it less strange, that he should not give the incomparable Book of this Prelate, a Place in his *Bibliotheca Sacra*, as the Nature of that Work required; but we may suppose that he either did not know it, being written in *English*, or did not care to have it known and read, the Answers of it being so cogent against the *Romanists*, and the Book itself the strongest Bulwark of the *Protestant Cause* in this controverted Point betwixt us.



## CALMET'S DISSERTATION

UPON THE

AUTHOR of *The Book of WISDOM.*Translated from the *French.*

**I**F the Dispute which hath been raised about the Author of *The Book of Wisdom*, was only among Catholick Writers, and all Parties were agreed upon its Canonicalness, and the Inspiration of the Author, we should have given ourselves no more Trouble about this, than some others of the sacred Books, whose Canonicalness is acknowledged by all the Churches, even those which are separated from our Communion, though the Writers of them are doubtful and unknown. When once it is agreed that the Holy Spirit is the Original Author of a Book, one need not be so solicitous who the Person employed as the Instrument is. But in the Question before us, many of those who dispute about the Writer of this Work, attempt to destroy its Authority, and, by diminishing the Credit of its Author, would take the Liberty to reject it as Apocryphal. To oppose this is the Design of the present Dissertation, wherein we shall endeavour to shew, that though the Author of *The Book of Wisdom* be not certainly known, the Book itself does not cease, on that Account, to be Authentic, Inspired, Canonical.

MANY Catholick Writers suppose the Author of this Book to be *Solomon* himself. "He wrote it, say they, in *Hebrew*, from whence it was translated into *Greek* by the " *Seventy* Interpreters, together with the other Works of that Prince: The ancient " Fathers quote it often under his Name, and it has generally that Title in the *Greek* " Copies. The Author plainly assumes this Character throughout, and the true *Solo-* " *mon* stands confessed in as clear a manner, as in any other of his Books. Every " body agrees, that it is not unworthy of his consummate Wisdom, and high Re- " putation; and that his Sentiments and Maxims are comprized in it: That though " this Piece is not now to be met with in the *Hebrew*, it cannot be concluded from " thence, that it was never wrote in that Language: For how many Works have we " in the Versions and Translations only, the Originals of which are not now to be " found? And how many are ascribed to particular Authors, as indisputably theirs, " which have less Marks to ascertain them to belong to such Writers, than this has " of being the genuine Work of *Solomon*?" This is what they plausibly urge in behalf of this Opinion.

BUT to these Reasons it may be replied, that if this Work was really *Solomon's*, and was in *Hebrew* in the time of the *LXX* Interpreters, the *Jews* would not have forgot, or neglected it as they have done, nor excluded it their Canon. It is entirely unknown in that Language to *Josephus*, *Philo*, *St. Jerom*, and *Origen*; so that in all Appearance it never was in that Language. Add to this, that the Turn of the Phrase and Expressions are in the manner of the *Greeks*, and very different from the *Genius* of the *Hebrew* Tongue. The Author quotes the Scripture in it according to the *LXX*, and borrows Passages from Books, which were not wrote till a long Time after *Solomon*. To pretend that the *Jews* have suppressed the Original, out of Hatred to the Christians, who make use of its Authority to convince them, that they have accomplished, in the

Murder



Murder of our Saviour, what was foretold of him in this Book, is to advance what is incredible, and raising an Objection which has been an hundred Times confuted, and more difficult to maintain, than what they would avoid by this Plea. For could the Jews have suppressed it, if they would? And if they could, what Service would that have done them, since they have left it us in Greek, with so many other Books, as strong at least as this, to establish the Truth of our Religion?

The Authority of the Fathers is decisive to prove a Point of Faith, and the Authenticalness of any Text; but then their Testimony must be constant and uniform; but, in a Matter of Criticism, and where their Judgments are divided, their Opinion does not always determine the Case. Now here the Ancients do not speak in an uniform Manner, some absolutely deny Solomon to be the Author, others speak doubtfully, and none affirm it in express Words. They cite indeed this Work according to the Usage of the Church, which comprehends, under the Name of *The Book of the Wisdom of Solomon*, not only *Proverbs* and *Ecclesiastes*, but also this Book and that of *Ecclesiasticus*. The Title of the Book, in the Greek Copies, is no stronger an Argument than the Name of *King*, which this Author assumes in the Body of the Work, or the Port and Appearance of *Solomon*, with which he would set himself off. The Ancients often call their Books by the Names of Persons whom they introduce speaking; as *Plato* gives to his Dialogues the Names of *Socrates*, *Timæus*, *Protagoras*, and *Cicero*, to his Book of *Famous Orators*, that of *Brutus*, and to another that of *Hortensius*. *Xenophon* too calls the History, in which he gives the Model of a complete Prince, by the Name of *Cyrus*, who is the principal Character drawn in it. But nobody will say, that these Pieces were written by those whose Names they bear, for it is known and confessed on all hands, that it was *Plato*, *Cicero*, *Xenophon*, who wrote them under such fictitious Names. St. *Jerom* says expressly, that the Book of *The Wisdom of Solomon* carries a false and borrowed Title.

The Resemblance that is to be found in the Thoughts and Expressions of this Book with those of *Solomon*, is so far from proving him to be the Writer of it, that it furnishes a strong Argument to the contrary. This Prince would never have copied from himself, nor have repeated here, what he had already said in some other Work; nor would he have cited Passages from *Isaiah* and *Jeremiah*, who lived so long after him. We do not design or endeavour to decry the Book, or to diminish its real Worth and Value; we readily own, that it is not unworthy of the Wisdom of *Solomon* himself, and we have given it an Author more great and noble than that Prince. It is the holy Spirit, which inspired this Writer, as he did *Solomon*. I shall not repeat here, what I have said elsewhere, with respect to some Terms used in this Book, which are borrowed from the Heathens, such as *Ambrosia*, the River of Forgetfulness or *Lethe*, the Kingdom of *Pluto* or *Hades*, &c. These Fables are apparently of later Date than *Solomon*, as well as the Chaplets and Crowns of *Roses*, mentioned *ch. ii. 8.*

St. *Austin* was once of Opinion, that *Jesus* the Son of *Sirach* was the Author of the Books of *Wisdom* and *Ecclesiasticus*; but he did not long continue under that Mistake, he recants as to the Book of *Wisdom*, *Retract. lib. ii. cap. 4.* and, without explicitly saying who is the Author, owns that it is more probable that *Jesus* the Son of *Sirach* did not write it: He says in another Place, that it was by no means likely to be wrote by *Solomon*; but he does not doubt, but that It, and *Ecclesiasticus* were both written by Inspiration [e]. And he elsewhere observes, that the primitive Writers of the Church, nearest the Times of the *Apostles*, fetched Proofs from this Book, as being of divine Authority; that there can be no Pretence for not receiving it, and placing it in the Rank with the other Scriptures.

St. *Jerom* informs us, that some ancient Writers ascribed *The Book of Wisdom* to *Philo* the Jew, which Words have afforded much Matter of Dispute to Authors that came after. Some have looked upon it as a dangerous Opinion, which tends to destroy the whole Authority of the Book, by ascribing it to a Jewish Writer, and one who was never reckoned inspired. Others have adopted him without any Limitation, but the greater Part add this Restriction, that the *Philo*, whom St. *Jerom* mentions, is not that *Philo* whose Writings we have, who is commonly known by the Name of *Philo the Jew*, but some other more ancient. For they pretend that there were several Au-

[e] See this confuted by St. *Austin. De Civit. Dei*, many other Places, which will serve likewise for an Answer to what immediately follows from St. *Austin*,  
lib. xv. c. 23. lib. xvii. c. 20. lib. xviii. c. 38. and  
there



thors of this Name, the first, as they say, lived under *Ptolemy Philadelphus*, and was one of the Seventy Interpreters; the second is *Philo of Biblos*, who is cited by *Eusebius* and *Josephus*; the third is *Philo the Jew*; the fourth is one who lived under the second Temple, and wrote a Book about the Soul.

THE first *Philo* is unknown to Antiquity, nor is there any Reason to place him in the Time of *Ptolemy* and the LXX Interpreters. In all Appearance there never was such an Author, since he is not mentioned by any ancient Writer. The second was a Pagan, a Native of *Biblos*, who translated the History of *Phœnicia* into Greek; *Josephus* places him in the same Rank with *Demetrius* and *Eupolemus*, who, not being of the Jewish Religion, could not have acquired a sufficient Knowledge of their Books, to give any true and just Idea of their History, and can, with less Reason, be supposed to be the Author of sacred and prophetic Books. The next then is the famous *Philo*, the Jew of *Alexandria*, who lived in the first Age of the Church, and was deputed, by the Jews of that Place, to the Emperor *Caius*, about the Year XL, of the common Era. He wrote many Books in his Youth, but, in the latter Part of his Time, was employed in public and national Affairs, and was of great Service to his Countrymen. *Eusebius* and *St. Jerom* write, that, in a second Embassy which he was sent upon to the Emperor *Claudius*, he contracted an Acquaintance and Friendship with *St. Peter*. *Photius* says, that he even embraced Christianity, but quitted it again out of Discontent or Disgust. *Josephus* mentions him as a very considerable Person. His Works are in a Style admirable for its Beauty and Plainness, but his Method of expounding Scripture is allegorical. *Photius* thinks, that it was from him the Custom was first introduced into the Church of explaining the Scriptures allegorically, and it is certain that some of the Fathers have followed his Method. — As to *Philo's* being a Christian, that Opinion is now exploded by all learned Men, as well as his pretended Intimacy with *St. Peter*.

THERE are four ways to judge whether *Philo*, to whom many of the Ancients have ascribed this Book, be really the Author of it. 1. A Conformity of Sentiments and Method. 2. A Resemblance of Style. 3. An Agreement with the Person and Character of *Philo*, and the Times wherein he lived. 4. The Authority of those Writers who have ascribed this Book to him. We shall examine these Particulars in their Order.

THE Author of *The Book of Wisdom* represents God as the Creator and Preserver of all Things, of infinite Wisdom and Justice, and whose Providence watches over and extends unto all his Works. A God who aims only at the Good of his Creatures, who created them originally pure and innocent, and does not proceed to punish them till their Wickedness is incorrigible, and at its full Height; who is the Author of true Wisdom, and all other Blessings, and communicates them freely to such as sincerely ask for them. *Philo* agrees in all these Sentiments; but as this is nothing extraordinary in a Jewish Writer, I shall not stop to draw the Parallel, which, would be of no Service here.

THE Soul of Man, according to *The Book of Wisdom*, is immortal, and linked to a corruptible Body, the Weight of which draws it to the Earth, and presses it downwards; it is capable of eternal Happiness, but when it gives itself up to the Pursuit of Sin and Wickedness, it brings upon itself Punishments and Misery without end; it is inexcusable, when it continues ignorant of its Creator, who is so loudly proclaimed by his Works. *Philo* says much the same, "That the Soul of Man is clothed with the Body as with a Garment, but that of a wise Man with his Virtues;" and in another Place, "That while we continue in this World, we are in a State of Pilgrimage; but a wise Man looks upon himself, when in the Body and upon the Earth, as in some strange Place, considering Heaven as his only true Country, and his proper native Place."

*PHILO* supposes two Sorts of Souls, some of which descend into and inhabit Bodies, and others are at a great Distance and very remote. Of those that enter into Bodies, and continue there, some apply themselves to, and are trained up in a Philosophy wholly sublime, which, after the Death of the Body, they continue to pursue, to purchase a Life eternal and incorruptible: The other sort, overwhelmed with the Weight of the Flesh, neglect the Study of Wisdom, and giving themselves up to the Caprice of Fortune, are attached to Things sensible and corporeal, to the Pursuit of Vanity, and Glory.



Glory, Riches, &c. which very much resembles what the Author of *The Book of Wisdom*, speaking in the Person of Solomon, says, *ch. viii. 19, 20. That he had a good Spirit*, or rather, *that, being good, he came into a Body undefiled*, wherein he supposes a Pre-existence of Souls, some good, others wicked, not by Nature, or through any Fate or Necessity, but voluntarily and by Inclination, which is certainly the Opinion of *Philo* in many Places.

THE high Encomiums this Author gives of Wisdom are likewise to be met with in *Philo*, who says, "That she is a pure Gift from the Bounty of God, who communicates her to Souls well disposed, which love Contemplation; that she existed before all Ages, and by her the World itself was created; that she is as the Mother, and God the Father of it; that the Wise alone are truly worthy to reign, to have Command and Sovereignty; and only these are truly rich; that Wisdom is all divine, and nothing more easy to be acquired, being always ready to communicate herself; that she never shuts her School, but is willing and disposed to receive those who desire Instruction. These she enchants, and as it were inebriates, with sweet and agreeable Draughts of her Doctrines, she invites them to come and improve themselves by her Lessons, and promises them infinite Advantages and Blessings." According to *Philo*, Kings should distinguish themselves by their Wisdom; and their Ambition, Happiness, and Glory should centre in this; that a Prince should be well versed and instructed not only in human and secular Affairs, but likewise in spiritual and divine, and should appear to his Subjects as an animated Oracle, and a living Law; which agrees admirably with the Idea which the wise Man here gives of a perfect and consummate Prince.

THE Author of this Book speaks of *the Word*, or *the Word of the Lord*, as a distinct Person from him that generated and sent him. He ascribes to him divine Attributes, particularly Omnipotence. 'Twas this *Word* which fed the *Israelites* in the Wilderness, cured the Bitings of the Serpents, slew the First-born of the *Egyptians*, and, in fine, created the World. *Philo* resembles our Author more on this Head, than in any other particular; and some have pretended, that he had even Knowledge of that divine Word, of which St. *John* speaks in the Beginning of his Gospel; and others have advanced, but against all Reason, that this holy Evangelist took his Doctrine and Expressions from him. He says, that the invisible *Word* which created all Things is the express Image of God, above all the World, more ancient than it, and superior to all Creatures. That this *Word* was employed to separate and divide the Elements, and to range all the Parts and Matter of the Universe into Form and Order according to his own Will. That this *Word* was begotten of God, was the Creator of the Universe, and has a Dominion and Sovereignty over all the Kingdoms of the World. In speaking of *Isaac*, he says, that this Patriarch never departed from his Duty to God, but that he attached himself to *the Word*, that divine Mediator, which instructs us in those Things which are best for us, and came down to, and condescended to converse with us, to teach us what is most convenient and proper for us in all Circumstances: For, continues he, God disdains not to be known to, and intimate with such as love Virtue, and sends his *Word* to support and succour them.

THE Punishment and Sufferings of the Wicked in another Life, and the Rewards and Glory of the Righteous are admirably described in *The Book of Wisdom*; *Philo* speaks of them in as plain and distinct a Manner. He says, that the Elements, the Air, Fire, and Water, all conspire to the Punishment of the Wicked, God, by his Almighty Power, employing those very Things, which he designed for the Benefit and Use of Man, as his Instruments and Scourges to punish the Ingratitude and Wickedness of his Creatures. He observes, speaking of *Cain*, that Men imagine temporal Death to be the greatest of all Misfortunes, not reflecting upon the terrible Tribunal of the sovereign Judge which will succeed, with respect to which, in the Judgment of God himself, Death may be considered only as the Commencement of their Misery. And what is their Misery? It is to live, as continually dying, or rather to be dying always, without ceasing to live.—A Death always renewing, and in some Sense immortal. For there are two Sorts of Death, the first is that of the Body, which is an indifferent Thing, it may be either good or bad; but the second is, to die without ceasing, the greatest and most terrible of all Calamities and Misfortunes.

He says, in another Place, that the Wicked are always dead, though they should chance to live even to extreme old Age, and that the Righteous, on the contrary, tho'

dead



dead and departed this Life, through bodily Sufferings, are really living, and enjoy a Life permanent, and without end; and he instances in *Nadab* and *Abihu*, who being dead betimes, enjoy Immortality, and a Life incorruptible before God [f]. He elsewhere observes, that long Life does not consist in a Number of Years, but in a Course of Goodness, Expressions exactly agreeing with these of *The Book of Wisdom*. "Tho' the Righteous be prevented with Death, yet shall he be in Rest; for honourable Age is not that which standeth in Length of Time, nor is measured by the Number of Years; but Wisdom is grey Hair unto Men, and an unspotted Life is old Age. That God took his beloved [Enoch] from the World in the Flower of his Age, lest Wickedness should alter his Understanding, or Deceit beguile his Soul; and that being made perfect in a short Time, he fulfilled a long Time, or had all the real Advantages of old Age." *Ch. iv. 7, 8, 9. 11. 13.*

WHAT the Writer of *The Book of Wisdom* says of Idolatry and Idolaters in the XIII<sup>th</sup> Chapter, is so like what we find in *Philo* in the Beginning of his Treatise, *De Monarch.* that one perceives plainly that they had both the same Sentiments, and did not copy the one from the other. They both shew the Folly and Mistake of those who deified the Stars, instead of exalting their Hearts, and paying their Devotions to him who is the great Creator and Ruler of them. In his *Piece upon the Decalogue*, there is a Passage entirely agreeable to that of *Wisdom*, *ch. xv. 15.* where the Ridiculousness of those pretended Deities is exposed, which *neither have the Use of Eyes to see, nor Noses to draw breath, nor Ears to hear, nor Fingers of Hands to handle, and as for their Feet they are slow to go.* There is no End of multiplying Instances of the Agreement between *Philo* and *The Book of Wisdom*; but these that we have produced, may be sufficient to shew the Conformity of their Sentiments.

LET us now examine the Facts mentioned by the *Author of the Book of Wisdom*, which seem to differ from the Account of *Moses*. *Philo* speaking of *Joseph*, says, that he was made Viceroy, or, to speak more properly, King of *Egypt*. And in the Description of the Plagues of that Country, he says, that in the Parts beyond *Memphis* there is no Rain, nor do they know what Winter is. But at the Command of *Moses*, Nature changed her Appearance, and the Air assumed new Qualities; and Thunder, Lightnings, Hail, and Rain were as dreadfully and sensibly felt *there*, as in other Regions. And what was very particular, the Water did not extinguish the Fire in the Lightning, nor the Fire melt and dissolve the Hail: A Reflexion, which the *Author of the Book of Wisdom* likewise makes in several Parts of that Work.

*PHILO* remarks, that, during the Darkness in *Egypt*, which lasted three Days, no Fire could be kindled there, the Thickness of the Fog extinguishing it immediately; which is agreeable to our Author's Account. With respect to Manna, the Expressions of both are very much alike. According to *Philo*, it is a Nourishment produced without the Labour of Man, sent purposely from Heaven, and, in a figurative Sense, is the Wisdom of God, his Word, or Commandment; which is very like what *Moses* says, on this Occasion, *That Man doth not live by Bread only, but by every Word that proceedeth out of the Mouth of the Lord*, *Deut. viii. 3.* He explains, in an allegorical Manner, the Vestments of the High Priest, and, like our Author, supposes them to be symbolical of the Universe; that the Habit in general represents the whole World, and each particular answers to, and expresses the several principal Parts of it: The long Robe of an azure Colour, is an Emblem of the Air; the Pomegranates at the Bottom represent the Water; the Ornaments, or Flowers, denote the Earth; and the Bells, the Harmony, which is in the several Parts of it, from whence the Union of the System proceeds. The *Hebrew* Text speaks only of the Pomegranates and Bells, but *Philo*

[f] *Calmet* here translates *Philo* literally; the Passage referred to is in his Treatise, *De Profugis*. Οἱ μὲν ἱερεῖς Νάδαβ καὶ Ἀβίου, ἵνα ζήσωσιν συνδυάσονται, θνήσκουσιν ζωῆς ἀφθάρτου ἀνικατάκατατόμοι βίον, καὶ λοιπὸν τῷ θρόνῳ πρὸς τὰ ἄνω μετὰ τὸν ἁγίου πνεύματος ἐφ' ὧν τὰ σύμβολα τῶν ἀφθαρτίων ἔσονται, καὶ τὰ ἐκτελέσονται ἐνώπιον Κυρίου, τελείων ἵσταται. 'Tis surprising, that *Philo* should produce these two Persons as an Instance of rewarded Piety, who died by the immediate Judgment of God, by an extraordinary Visitation from Heaven, for offering strange Fire before the Lord, *Lev. x. 1.* Had they died instant-

ly, when they had the Honour to be called up to God, and to have a Sight of him, and to eat and drink in his Presence, when he appeared on Mount Sinai, *Exod. xxiv. 9, 10, 11.* they might have been thought to have died in God's Embraces, as some of the *Rabbins* have asserted of *Moses*. This Mistake seems to arise from his Allegorical Manner of Interpretation. When the Text says, *They died before the Lord*, he renders, *They now*, though the Phrase has a quite different Meaning in that Place. See *Patr. in Levit. x.* *Philo* has the same Thought, in *lib. Quis Rerum Divin. Hæres.*



follows the *Seventy*, who seem *Exod. xviii. 33.* to mention Flowers. All this is agreeable to, and an Explanation of what our Author says in fewer Words, *That in the long Garment was the whole World*, ch. xviii. 24.

ONE thing is very observable, that *Philo* doth not copy the very Words of *The Book of Wisdom*, as he would have done, if he had designed to quote or use it, as the Work of another Writer. He follows in general the same Method, the same Sentiments, the same Thoughts, but in different Terms; as when one and the same Author expresses himself upon particular Points in different Works. From this very great Likeness and Conformity of Opinions, many of the Ancients have concluded *Philo* to be the Author of the *Book of Wisdom*.

THE Difference of the Style of *Philo*, and that of *The Book of Wisdom*, is one of the strongest Arguments against his being the real Author; but the Ancients, who were as good Judges as the Moderns upon this Head, it is manifest, laid no great Stress upon the Difference of Style, since it did not hinder them from ascribing this Book notwithstanding to *Philo*. And in spite of the Diversity of Style, one may observe in several Parts of this Book, the pompous Turns of *Philo*, his Exuberance in Epithets, and his rich Vein displayed by many lively and pathetic Descriptions. But as he wrote it under the borrowed Name of *Solomon*, he might disguise his Style a little, and appear more sententious in this Book, than in his other Works: This probably is the true Reason of the Difference of Style, it proceeds from the Matter and Subject itself. For let the same Person write an Oration, Lessons of Morality, an Epistle, or a Poem, will not a great Variety of Style necessarily arise from these different Characters, though they are all penned, and proceed from one and the same Author?

THOUGH the Book we are speaking of affords but few Hints whereby to form a Judgment of the Time and Place in which it was wrote; yet, as glimmering as the Light is, it may be sufficient to give us some Idea of both. The Author lived in an idolatrous Country, and most probably in *Egypt*, since upon all Occasions he inveighs against the ridiculous Idolatry of the *Egyptians*, which consisted in paying Adoration to Water, Fire, Serpents, and other Beasts the most frightful and mischievous. He lived at a Time when the *Jews* had a great Aversion to Idolatry, he speaks of its Origin, and that one Cause of it was the Grief of a tender Parent for a deceased Child, which at length terminated in paying divine Honours to him. This Remark is more applicable to *Egypt* than any other Country, upon account of that great Respect which the *Egyptians* are remarkable for paying to their Dead; and because it is certain, that *Isis* and *Osiris*, the first Deities of this Country, had the Sovereignty of *Egypt*, and the former appointed divine Honours to the Body of her deceased Husband. He speaks likewise of the *Jews* being held in Subjection, and persecuted under some idolatrous Princes, which agrees very well with the Times of *Philo*, when the *Jews* suffered greatly, both in *Judea* and in *Egypt*, from the *Roman Emperors*, their Deputies, and even the People themselves.

If he wrote it after the Death of *Jesus Christ*, who could not be unknown to him, it is not improbable that he had him in view, when he describes *the just Man*, as reviled, persecuted, and at length put to Death; and that seeing the Beginning and first Essays of Christianity, and the Miracles which accompanied the first preaching of the Gospel, he foretold the approaching Ruin of Idolatry. In fine, living under idolatrous and cruel Emperors, it is probable he might direct his Instructions to them under the Person of *Solomon*, and the more effectually to execute his Design, purposely disguised his Style to give his Work a greater Air of Antiquity, and to add the more Weight to it. And it may be questioned whether it would have been even safe for him at that time in the very Heart of *Alexandria*, to have addressed a Book in Greek to Princes, wherein Idolatry is condemned in such a bold and open Manner; but by concealing himself and Writings, under the fictitious Name of *Solomon*, he avoided all Danger.

WHEN *St. Jerom* tells us, that some of the Ancients ascribed this Book to *Philo* the Jew, he meant, no doubt, *Philo* of *Alexandria*, for at that time no other of the Name was known. And as the Ancients, whom he cites, are the first that acquaint us whom the Church attributed this Work to, their Judgment ought to be of great Weight; and so much the more, as since that time no one has been assigned in particular as the undoubted Author of it. Truths of this Nature are generally the more certain, the nearer they approach to the Fountain-head: Now in the time of those Ancients whom *St. Jerom* mentions, this Tradition must have been very fresh, and it might have been a

received



received Notion in the Church, even from the Times of the *Apostles*; the great Commendations which the Ancients give of *Philo*, shew the high Idea they had of his Merit. We have before mentioned that *Eusebius*, *St. Jerom*, and others believed him to have been a *Christian*; the former asserts, that he was perfectly acquainted with all that related to the Doctrine and the Laws of his Ancestors; he extols his Eloquence, the Loftiness of his Thoughts and Sentiments, his exact Understanding of the Scripture, and his Explications of the sacred Books. And if *St. Jerom*, *Eusebius*, and others who have drawn up the Catalogue of *Philo's* Works, have not inserted the *Book of Wisdom* in the Number, the Reason was either that since their time it has been questioned, or that being received by the Generality of Churches as an inspired Book, it was not proper to range it among the Works of a *Jewish* Author.

THIS is what may be plausibly urged in Favour of *Philo*, but this alone will not be sufficient to induce us to ascribe this Work to him, there will always be an invincible Argument to the contrary, viz. his Religion. *Philo* died in *Judaism* many Years after the Death of *Christ*; and if he was acquainted with the Truths of the Gospel, he has not done that Justice, or given that Honour to it which he ought. It is not therefore probable, that the Holy Spirit should speak by the Mouth of such a Person, or that the Church should adopt, or receive as an inspired Book, the Work of an unconverted *Jew*. This Reason, it must be confessed, is of no Force against those who do not look upon *The Book of Wisdom* as Canonical. But there are other Reasons which hinder us from ascribing this Book to *Philo*. 1. The Difference of Style. 2. The Silence of the Ancients, as *Eusebius*, *St. Jerom* himself, *Photius*, *Suidas*, and others, who have not placed this Book among those of *Philo*. 3. The Passages of this Book quoted in the Gospels, and the Epistles written either before *Philo* could write this Work, or a very little time after. There remains then only in his Favour Tradition, and that but indifferently supported, and a Conformity of Sentiments, which is not so peculiar to *Philo*, but the like may be found in *Job*, *Proverbs*, *Plato*, *Ecclesiasticus*, and in the Books of *Maccabees*. In these we meet with, likewise, the Punishments of the Wicked after this Life, and the future Rewards and Happiness of the Righteous; one finds *Wisdom* represented there as coeternal with God, and the Word, as Almighty, Omnipotent, Creator, Preserver; as instructing, punishing, rewarding. These Notions were common at that time among the *Jews*, and who can be certain that *Philo* himself did not take these from the Books we have just quoted?

ORIGEN has nothing certain about the Author of this Book, no more than the other Fathers which follow him. All then that can be concluded from what we have said is, that *Philo* was manifestly of the same Principles with the Author of this Book, had the same Method, and most of his Sentiments; that he wrote in *Egypt*, and is not very ancient, since it is indisputable that he lived after the Version of the *Seventy*. If we should attempt to reckon up the Differences between *The Book of Wisdom* and *Philo*, a very considerable Number perhaps might be produced; the former sets down ten Months as the ordinary Time for the Birth of Children; the latter only seven, asserting that Children born after that Time, suppose in the eighth Month, are not commonly long-lived, or born to be happy. *Philo* also differs from the Author of *The Book of Wisdom* in what he says of the Creation of Man, and his Likeness and Resemblance of God. According to the latter, Man was created in the Similitude and Image of God, immortal and innocent, his Body formed out of the Earth, and will return to Earth again, as his Soul will likewise to God after Death, from whom it originally proceeded: *Philo* makes the Resemblance between God and Man to consist in the Soul, which God himself created in the Beginning, and filled with Inclinations for its Welfare and Happiness, but adds at the same time, that he called evil Angels to assist at the Formation of Man, who were the Authors of those bad Dispositions observable in him; which includes that dangerous Opinion of two different independent Principles, which the *Manichees* afterwards abused in so strange a Manner.

GROTIUS is of Opinion, that *The Book of Wisdom* is the Work of a *Jew*, who wrote it in *Hebrew* after the Time of *Esdras*, and before the Pontificate of the High Priest *Simon*, and that for this Reason it is placed before the Book of *Ecclesiasticus*.

It was translated, as he says, into *Greek* by some *Christian* Author, who understood that Language well enough, but took great Liberties in his Translation, without confining himself to the Words of his Original, and even added some Strokes and Sentiments taken from *Christianity*. Hence, he says, it proceeds that the universal Judgment



ment is taken Notice of there, the Happiness of the Righteous, and the Punishment of the Wicked, in a Manner more distinct and clear, than we observe generally in the Books of the ancient *Hebrews*.

THESE are the Sentiments of *Grotius*, but there is scarce any Part of this Hypothesis but wants Proof. It is mere Guess-work, to pretend that this Book was originally wrote in *Hebrew*, neither *Jews*, nor ancient *Christian* Writers have either seen or known it in that Language. If it was really wrote in it, would the *Jews* ever have suffered it to be lost? Or are there any Footsteps of *Hebraisms*, and a foreign Construction, discoverable in the *Greek* Translation? Those *Christian* Sentiments, which *Grotius* thought to be foisted into it by the Translator, are to be found in the Books of *Maccabees*, and in *Philo*, and some of them even in *Plato*. The two former, as likewise *Ecclesiasticus*, speak very clearly of the everlasting Happiness of the Just, and the eternal Punishments appointed for the Wicked. Are we therefore permitted to say, that these Books likewise have been corrupted by *Christians*, who have artfully conveyed their Maxims and Sentiments into them? That admirable Description of the just Man, *ch. ii.* afflicted and tortured with a Variety of Wretchedness, do we not meet with it in the Writings of *Plato*, *lib. ii. De Rep.*? From whence *Cicero* and *Seneca* both manifestly took it. It is well known how the ancient *Greeks*, and even the *Jewish* Writers, were attached to the Doctrine of that Philosopher, and why might not this Writer think it proper to preserve, and even consecrate such a fine Thought, and put it in its full Light and Beauty in this divine Work, and hereby set Truth at Liberty, and give it a freer Circulation, which before was, as it were, a Prisoner, and confined to the Heathen Writings? Does not *St. Paul* himself sometimes borrow the Thoughts, and even the Words of profane Authors?

*CORNELIUS a Lapide* believes, that *The Book of Wisdom* was written in *Greek* by a *Jewish* Author, after the Return from the *Babylonish* Captivity, and about the Time of *Ptolemy Philadelphus*. He even suspects that it might be one of the *Seventy* Interpreters that wrote it for the Use of that King, the Book being calculated, as has been before observed, for the Instruction of Princes: For *Aristeas* relates, that *Philadelphus* proposed to every one of these Interpreters, some Question concerning the good Government of his Dominions. He adds, that the Opinion which ascribes this Book to *Philo*, might easily have obtained by the following equivocal Terms: *Solomon* had two Names, *Solomon* and *Jedidiah*, the last of which signifies the Friend of God, and in *Greek*, *Philo* or *Philos* signifies a Friend; and the Rabbins, when they quote *Philo*, give him the Name of *Jedidiah*, and so People have been led into a Mistake to imagine *Philo* the *Jew* was meant, when *Solomon* only was intended under his other Name.

BUT these are Conjectures without any certain Proof. We will ingenuously acknowledge that this Matter is dubious, and that the Author of *The Book of Wisdom* is uncertain and unknown, but it is nevertheless Canonical and Divine, since it contains in it all that is necessary to deserve that Title: It abounds with useful and solid Instructions, and paints *Jesus Christ* and his Sufferings in a heavenly Manner, and the Truths recorded in it, are as comfortable to the Good and Righteous, as they are dreadful to the Wicked and the Sinner: And besides the Church has received and acknowledged it, as Sacred and Canonical.

IT is certain that the Author lived after the *Seventy*, since he cites their Text even when they depart from the *Hebrew*. He wrote at a Time when Allegories were much in vogue, and appears to have read the Writings of the Philosophers and *Greek* Poets. From these Circumstances we are of Opinion, that this Author cannot be very ancient. He seems to be later than the Writer of *Ecclesiasticus*, whom we have fixed to the Times of *Ptolemy Epiphanes* in *Egypt*, and *Antiochus Epiphanes* in *Syria*. And if this be so, our Author should have lived under the Government of the *Maccabees*.

A COM-



# COMMENTARY

ON THE

BOOK

WISDOM.

## The ARGUMENT.

**A**S the Title of this Book is Wisdom, the Author very properly opens it with the Recommendation of Righteousness, which is a principal Part of it; a Virtue necessary to be observed by all, but more particularly by the Rulers and Judges of the Earth, this being the chief End of their Appointment, the Pursuit of this End their great Duty, and the Attainment of it their true Glory. He then proceeds to shew in general the Necessity of right Sentiments of God, and the Folly of mistrusting, and murmuring against, his Providence; that as he is the Searcher of all Hearts, no Disguise or Hypocrisy can impose upon him, nor be concealed from him; that Wickedness first brought Death into the World, which God unwillingly inflicts upon Men, who were originally designed for a blessed State of Immortality.

## CHAP. I.

Ver. 1. **L**OVE Righteousness, ye that be Judges of the Earth. We find the like Command given to Joshua, when God appointed him to succeed Moses in the Government of his People: The Book of the Law shall not depart out of thy Mouth, but thou shalt meditate therein Day and Night, that thou mayst observe to do according to all that is written therein, for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good Success, Josh. i. 8. where the marginal reading, thou shalt do wisely, taken from the Hebrew, and confirmed by the LXX, seems far preferable. The same Direction is given, Psal. ii. 10, 11. Be wise now, O ye Kings, be instructed, ye that are Judges of the Earth; serve the Lord with Fear, &c. The Philosopher assigns two Reasons why Magistrates should be particularly careful to give publick Testimony of their Goodness; because the People will be less jealous

of suffering any Injury from such whom they believe to be righteous; and will be less disposed to attempt an Injury against such of whom they entertain the highest Opinion. Politic. Lib. v. c. 11. And it is no improbable Conjecture, that one Reason why Rulers are called Gods in Scripture, Psal. lxxxii. 6. is, that they ought to imitate the Deity in the Perfection of Goodness. [This is the most natural Interpretation of the Words, and undoubtedly designed by the Author, because ch. vi. 1. he calls those very Persons, *δικασται περὶ τῆς γῆς*. Where see the three Verses which follow, and ver. 9.] But besides this Acceptation of Judges of the Earth, there is another Sense suggested by Messieurs du Port Royal: *Les Saints expliquent ces paroles comme estant dites à tous les fidèles*, who, according to some of the Fathers, will be appointed Judges of the Earth. And indeed St. Austin thus interprets the very Words of this Author, *οἱ κρινόντες τὴν γῆν*, (see Comment. on Psal. ii.) from the Christian Doctrine, probably, 1 Cor. vi. 2. Know ye not that the Saints shall judge the World? *τὸν κόσμον κρινέουσιν*. Hence *ὁ κρινὴς τῆς οἰκουμένης*, became the Style of a great Saint, and is yet used as the standing Title of the Patriarch of Alexandria, and perhaps of other Eastern Patriarchs. That this Construction might be intended here may seem probable, because the Author of this Book uses the same Expression in the same Sense, ch. iii. 8. where, speaking professedly of the Saints, or the best of Men, he says, *κρινέουσιν ἔθνη καὶ παραθήσουσι λαὸν*. Upon which Words Grotius, and other Commentators scruple not to refer to Matt. xix. 28. and Apocal. ii. 26. and other Places where the Judgment of the World by the Saints is mentioned. Both these Passages in this Writer may easily be accounted for, if there was any Foundation for Grotius's Observation in the Introduction to his Notes, viz. that the Translator of this Book was a Christian, *qui*



*Christiana quedam commodis locis addidit.* If that great Man had given any Proof of his Remark, then indeed these Passages might be more justly suspected, and esteemed Instances of the Truth of his Observation.

Ibid. *Think of the Lord with a good Heart.* [Θρονήσας πρὸς τὸν Κύριον ἐν ἀγαθῇ καρδίᾳ.] Our Translators, because it follows immediately, καὶ ἐν ἀπλότῃ καρδίᾳ ζητήσας αὐτὸν, have considered ἀγαθότης, as well as ἀπλότης, as relating to the Heart. But according to *Gratius*, *sensite de Domino in bonitate*, is a *Hebraism*, for *bene sensite*, (which is the Sense of *Calmet* and the rest of the Commentators, of *Coverdale's* and the *Geneva Bibles*) think of God justly and worthily, i. e. have right Sentiments of his Goodness, Power (which the *Arabic* Version understands in particular) and his other Attributes: Consider what God is, and what ye yourselves are; what great Things he hath done for you, and what unworthy Returns ye have made him. This certainly is the better Construction, (if the *Hebraism* may be depended upon) and comprehends more than our Translation of the Place. This Instruction is very properly inserted in the entrance of this Work, because a right Opinion concerning God is the Basis and Foundation of all Virtue and Goodness. Thus *Origen*, βάσει γὰρ αἵμα καὶ ἰδραῖμα πασῶν τῶν ἀρετῶν εἶναι τὴν ἀρεμολύσαν Θεῷ δοξάζειν καὶ πείθεσθαι. *Cont. Marcion.* p. 2. for the better God is understood, with the more rational Religion will he be worshiped, and with a Homage more agreeable to his Nature, free from any Mixture of Superstition or Idolatry.

Ibid. *And in Simplicity of Heart seek him.* i. e. with Sincerity and Singleness of Heart, as *Coverdale* renders, in Opposition to double-mindedness, which the Scripture so frequently condemns, and the *Hebrew* well expresses by a Heart and a Heart, divided as it were betwixt God and the World; and thus *St. Bernard* seems to understand it. *Seek not any thing*, says he, *more than God, or so much as God, because he is above every thing; seek not any thing with God, or next unto him, because he alone is sufficient for every thing.* *De Div. Sermon.* 37. A Person of such a Temper is elegantly called by the Son of *Sirach*, a Sinner that goeth two Ways. *Ecclesiast.* ii. 12.

Ver. 2. *He will be found of them that tempt him not.* [In the Greek, ἐπελογάσαι, is found.] Though it is certain that *tempting* God, is used in Scripture not only for Presumption and too much Confidence, but also for too little Confidence, or Diffidence and Distrust, which latter is the Sense that *Grotius* and *Calmet* take it in; yet for what Reason it should be so taken here (especially as the following Words express this very thing, viz. that he sheweth himself to those that do not distrust him) is not easy to conceive: unless we will make a difference in the Degrees of Distrust expressed by πρὸς τὸν Θεόν and ἀπὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ, as there seems to be in the Degrees of Discovery God makes of himself, expressed by ἐπελογάσαι and ἐμπαίζεσθαι or else interpret ἀπιστίαν of Incredulity or Slowness of Belief, which is the proper Meaning of the Word. But the most natural Construction of the whole Verse is given by *Messieurs du Port Royal*, who interpret *tempting* God, of every Instance of

Hypocrisy and Disguise, *on ne cherche point Dieu avec un cœur simple*: This is so agreeable to the ἀπλότης καρδίας beforementioned, as well as to all the following Verses, that it claims the Preference. And then as it is another proper Effect of the *Simplicity of the Heart*, to be as free from Suspicions and Distrust, as it is from Craft or Pretence, μὴ ἀπιστεῖν, rendered and understood as in our Translation, follows most aptly and naturally.

Ver. 3. *For froward Thoughts.* [Σκολιὰ λογισμῶν.] Σκολιός properly is tortuosus, flexuosus, and, when applied to Thoughts, must denote crafty, captious, intriguing, subtle, prevaricating, and every thing which is the reverse of ἀπλός. I doubt therefore of the Propriety of rendering it by *froward*, which denotes rather Perverseness or Obstinacy, as our Translators render the Word, *Prov.* xvii. 20. from another Sense of σκολιός, viz. crooked, hard to be reduced to a right Line. But this Sense of Wiliness or Dissimulation perfectly agrees with the Context, for it is said to separate from God, i. e. God is not to be found by an Hypocrite; and the Reason follows in the fifth Verse. [εὐθύς, right or straight is the opposite to σκολιός. *Act* viii. 21. ἡ γὰρ καρδία αὐτοῦ ἐκ ἐστὶν εὐθεία ἐνώπιον τοῦ Θεοῦ. which is taken from *Pf.* lxxviii. 37. *Propertius* iii. 3. *Recta animi primum debuit esse via.*]

Ibid. *And his Power when it is tried, reproveth the Unwise.* This is variously apprehended by the Commentators. *Clarissimus* would have it, that the approved Virtue of good Men renders them the fittest to reprove the Ungodly. *Badwell* says, *Pronomen ejus adjunxit, ut ad Deum referatur.* So have our Translators inserted it; though his should have been in *Italic* Letters, because not in the Original. *Castellio*, the same in Sense; so also *Grotius* understands it, and expounds it, that there is sufficient Experience of the Power of God to confute all those who deny his Providence. But how does this suit with the Context? I think *Messieurs du Port Royal* preserve the Connexion much better, *Et lors que les hommes veulent tenter sa puissance* (tempt him by their Hypocrisy, as above, or, as they explain it here in their Notes, *en feignant la chercher au même tems qu'on le deshonore*) elle les convainc de folie, i. e. as they explain it, God punishes their Folly by giving them up to their own unruly Affections. The Sense of the whole third Verse seems to be to this effect: Guileful Thoughts set us at a distance from God and his Truth; he is too great and powerful a Being to be treated with Art or Craft; and when Men presume to treat him so, recalcitrat undique tutus (as *Horace* said of *Augustus*) they are sure to suffer for their Folly. This Sense is confirmed by the Words immediately following.

Ver. 4. *For into a malicious Soul Wisdom shall not enter.* [Εἰς κακότεχνον ψυχὴν.] Here again is meant the crafty, designing, evil-plottings Soul, and not merely the malicious Soul, as our Translators have rendered. And thus *Badwell* understands κακότεχνη, anima que malum molitur & machinatur. *St. Gregory* has a just and apposite Observation: *Deus de supernis mysteriis illorum mentes radio sue visitationis illuminat, quos nulla umbra duplicis obscurat.* *De Cur. Pastor.*



Pastor. p. 3. The Syriac and Arabic Versions understand it, of a Soul polluted with many Sins. And indeed it must be confessed in favour of this Interpretation, that all Sin, especially long continued in, indisposes the Soul for the reception of divine Wisdom, and renders it an incapable Subject of divine Grace; whereas Holiness composes our Natures into such a regular Temper, as is of all others the most fit to receive religious Impressions, and to procure us the Presence and Aid of God's Grace. This Sense has some Countenance from what follows.

Ibid. Nor dwell in the Body that is subject unto Sin] Not barely subject, or liable unto Sin; that cannot be the meaning, for this all Persons who live in the midst of Temptations must be in danger of committing; but the Sense is, Divine Wisdom will not dwell in such who are bound, or subjected under the Dominion of Sin: And so the Vulgate renders, *ne habitabit in corpore subdito peccatis*; and Coverdale's Version has it, *ne dwell in the Body that is subdued unto Synne*, or rather in Bondage, as a Debtor unto Sin; for so *κατάχετο*, which is a Forensic Term, properly signifies. What the Jews observe of the Spirit of Prophecy, that it dwells not with Sadness, is true of divine Wisdom, that it dwells not with Wickedness, i. e. in a Soul subject or enslaved to vicious and irregular Passions. And so long as Men allow themselves in any known Sin, suffer any Vice wilfully to remain in them unsubdued, so long they deprive themselves of the Presence or Inhabitation of this heavenly Guest. It is observable that the Author here insists upon Purity both in Body and Spirit. Nor is Wisdom, as understood by this Writer, to be attained without such a perfect Integrity. The Body itself, indeed, as such, cannot be the Habitation of Wisdom; but through the strict Union which is between it and the Soul, the Actions and Passions of one necessarily affect the other. Hence the Pollutions of the Soul communicate themselves to the Body, as the Defilements of the Body vitiate and infect the Soul. With great Reason, therefore, it is required as a necessary Means towards obtaining Wisdom, that we should glorify God both in our Bodies and in our Spirits, which is the Advice of the inspired Writer, 1 Cor. vi. 20.

Ver. 5. For the holy Spirit of Discipline will flee Deceit.] The Jews apply the Name of Spirit to several Habits of the Soul. Thus we meet with the Spirit of Meekness, the Spirit of Wisdom and Understanding, the Spirit of Counsel and Might, &c. *Isai. ii. 2.* and here the Spirit of Discipline: But I think, with Calmet, it would be better rendered, *the holy Spirit of Instruction will flee Deceit*, that being a more proper Word than Discipline, which our Translators use; for the Context requires that precise Sense, and Discipline has a general and more lax Sense in our Language; some Manuscripts accordingly read, *ἅγιον πνεῦμα σοφίας*, which confirms this. Seneca has a very remarkable Passage among his Epistles to this Purpose: *Sacer inest in nobis spiritus, bonorum malorumque custos & observator; & quem admodum nos illum tractamus, ita & ille nos.*—

There is a holy Spirit residing in us, who watches and observes both good and bad Men, and will treat us after the same manner that we treat him. Nor is the reason which is assigned for the Residence and Abode of a Demon, or good Genius, with Socrates, after a very extraordinary manner, less worthy of Notice: Do not wonder, says Maximus Tyrius, that such a Spirit should dwell with Socrates, whose Purity of Body, Goodness of Soul, Devotion towards God, and Integrity to Man, rendered him worthy of such a Friend. *Dissert. 26.*

Ibid. And remove from Thoughts that are without Understanding, and will not abide when Unrighteousness cometh in.] Probably the true reading here of the Original is, ἀπὸ λογισμῶν ἀσυνθέτων, and not ἀσυνέτων, as all the printed Copies have it: For the Context plainly shews, and even the Sentence immediately foregoing, that not silly or weak Thoughts, but guileful Intentions, and deceitful Practices are to be understood. What is here said of the Spirit of Instruction, with respect to Artifice and Dissimulation, is no less true of those holy Spirits who are the appointed Guardians of Mankind, with respect to Unrighteousness in general; for these, who with much tender Concern and affectionate Hopes minister to Man's Salvation, are forced with regret to leave the Care and Habitation of the Profligate and Irreclaimable, and with Sorrow cry out to one another, as the Angels did in the Jewish Temple, when thro' many Profanations it was no longer fit for their Charge, μεταβαίνομεν ἐλεῦθεν, let us depart hence. *Joseph. de Bell. Judaic. lib. 7.* And it is very observable, that when the Wickedness of the old World was arrived to its height, God pronounces, ἡ μὴ καταμένη τὸ πνεῦμά μου ἐν τοῖς ἀνθρώποις, Gen. vi. 3. My Spirit shall not always continue in such Men; the Sense of which Passage our Version expresses imperfectly by *striving with Men*. See *John xiv. 23.*

In Confirmation of the present reading, ἀπολογισμῶν ἀσυνέτων, it is urged, [that the same Expression occurs below, ch. xi. 15. ἀπὸ λογισμῶν ἀσυνέτων, and it is hard to say, what can be the Sense of ἀσυνθέτων here. ἀσύνετος is inconsiderate, without Reflection, as well as silly, and without Understanding; and so it is to be taken in several Places in the New Testament; as likewise the verb συνίημι, which is translated to understand, should be to consider, *Matt. xiii. 19.* When any one heareth the Word of the Kingdom, and understandeth it not, ἡ μὴ συνίησιν, and considereth it not, as the Sense manifestly requires. So *Mark vii. 14.* ἀκούετε μου πάντες ἡ συνίετε, hear and consider: the Consequence of which Consideration is Understanding. See also this Author, ch. vi. 1. Ἀκούετε ἡ συνίετε.]

Ibid. And will not abide when Unrighteousness cometh in.] It will have no Fellowship with the Ungodly. When the Spirit of Wisdom enters into the Soul of a Man, it enlightens and improves it; but if he afterwards abandons himself to Wickedness, the good Spirit will leave, and flee from him, for Wickedness and Wisdom cannot subsist together. This Observation was verified particularly in Solomon himself, who, when he followed the Corruptions of an evil Heart, was forsaken of



Wisdom, and fell into gross Errors. The Prophet therefore with great Judgment joins together the Spirit of Knowledge, and of the Fear of the Lord, *Isai. xi. 2.*

Ver. 6. *For Wisdom is a loving Spirit.*] i. e. a hearty well-wisher to, and Promoter of, the Good of Mankind, and in particular a Lover of their Souls. But how is the punishing a Blasphemer, an Instance of the great Love and Philanthropy of this Spirit? It seems rather a Proof of its Severity, than Kindness and Good-nature. The Answer and true Sense is, that though Wisdom be such a kind and merciful Spirit, yet her Regard to Justice is such, that she will not acquit the Blasphemer; and so St. Austin, *De Mendacio, cap. 16.* explains it. These may be supposed the Words, and as it were Soliloquy, of a wicked Man, comforting himself in the midst of his evil Courses against Danger, because divine Wisdom is a loving and compassionate Spirit: And then the Words immediately following will contain the Answer to this vain Subterfuge and weak Pretence, viz. that notwithstanding the affectionate Tendernefs of this Spirit, which is confessed on all hands, and displayed every where, yet cannot she act so inconsistently and unfitably to her holy Nature, as to excuse the Blasphemer. And thus the Syriac Version understands it, *amicus est quidem hominum spiritus sapientiae, at non justificat impium.* And Junius, after having stated the Objection, answers it in like manner, *Humanus quidem est, fateor, sed tamen non propterea injustus est, qui hominis blasphemii maledicta impune abire sinat.* See Comment in loc.

Ibid. *And will not acquit, &c.*] [*וְיִשְׁמַר* signifies *et tamen* in very many Places of the New Testament, and in other Authors. It should be rendered here, *nevertheless it will not, &c.*]

Ibid. *And will not acquit a Blasphemer of his Words.*] Or, as the literal rendring of the Greek is, *bold him guiltless with respect to his Lips.* Such whose Mouths are full of Cursing, Deceit, and Fraud, and under whose Tongue is Ungodliness and Vanity, who dare be outrageous against God, or deceitful and injurious to their Neighbour, shall be answerable for what is not conformable to Truth and Sincerity: All Falsehood and Deceit in general, either open or concealed, and whatsoever proceeds from the Heart or the Lips that may do hurt, is not only detestable to this divine Spirit, but will be punished severely by it. This in the Book of Proverbs is called a *forward Mouth*, which the *Vulg. Latin* translates sometimes a Mouth with two Tongues.

Ibid. *For God is Witness of his Reins, and a true Beholder of his Heart, and a Hearer of his Tongue.*] The Sentiment here is like that in King David's fine Charge to Solomon: *And thou, Solomon my Son, know thou the God of thy Father, and serve him with a perfect Heart, and with a willing Mind, for the Lord searcheth all Hearts, and understandeth all the Imaginations of the Thoughts,* 1 Chron. xxviii. 9. God's Judgment alone therefore is infallible as to Mens real Goodness and inward Dispositions; for whereas Men judge of their Neighbour's

Heart by his Words or Actions, which are often deceitful, God, on the contrary, judges of Mens Words and Actions as he sees their Heart, and knows their Reins. But the Observation in this place relates not so much to God's infinite Knowledge in general, as to his Discovery of Guile and Deceit in particular.

Ver. 7. *For the Spirit of the Lord filleth the World.*] i. e. is infinite and immense, is not bounded by any Place or Space, but spreads himself to all Places that we can either see or imagine, and infinitely beyond; so that we cannot say, he is here, and not there; thus far he reaches, and no farther. St. Gregory describes God *intra omnia non inclusus, extra omnia non exclusus, supra omnia non elatus, infra omnia non depressus: Lib. 2. Moral.* Or, to speak in the Language of the old Philosopher, he is a Being, *whose Centre is every where, and his Circumference no where.* But nothing can equal what God says of himself, *Am I a God at hand, and not a God afar off? Can any bide himself in secret Places that I shall not see him? Do not I fill Heaven and Earth, saith the Lord?* Jerom. xxiii. 23, 24. See also *Psal. cxxxix. 7.*

Ibid. *And that which containeth all things, hath Knowledge of the Voice.*] Some Manuscripts read *ὁ συνέχων*, which probably is the true reading. See Calmet and St. Austin. in *Speculo*, and Orig. in *Epist. ad Rom. cap. 9. lib. 7.* Thus the Syriac and Arabic Versions expound it, the former rendering, *ille qui tenet omnia scienter habet vocem ipsius*; and the latter, *Et qui creaturas omnes amplectitur, possidet notitiam vocis.* Coverdale's Version is to the same Purpose, *and the same that upholdeth all things, hath Knowledge also of the Voyce.* But the rendering of the *Vulgate* here is very faulty, and even ungrammatical: As the former Sentence respected God's Omnipresence, this takes in his infinite Knowledge, which extends itself to, and takes cognizance of, what passes every where. With respect to our Words, that of the Psalmist is most full, *Lo, there is not a Word in my Tongue, but thou, O Lord, knowest it altogether*; *Psal. cxxxix. 3.* With respect to our Actions, that of the Prophet Samuel, *The Lord is a God of Knowledge, and by him Actions are weighed*; 1 Sam. ii. 3. where the reading of the LXX is very observable, *Θεὸς γινώσκων Κύνεσ,* i. e. *the Lord is a God of Knowledges*, which, as Bishop Pearson expresses it, are so plural, or rather infinite, that of his Understanding there is no Number, *τὸς συνέχων αὐτῶν ἐν ἐστὶν ἐγθμός.* See the LXX in *Psal. cxlvii. 5.*

Ver. 9. *And the Sound of his Words shall come unto the Lord, for the Manifestation of his wicked Deeds.*] The marginal reading here seems preferable, *for the reprovng of his wicked Deeds.* Coverdale's Version is to the same effect, *The Report of bys Wordes shall come unto God, so that his Wickednes shall be punished*; to which agrees the rendering in the Geneva Bible, *The Sound of his Words shall come unto God for the Correction of his Iniquities*: And the Syriac and Arabic Versions are to the same Purpose. And in this Sense even our Translators themselves have used *ἐλέγχεω*, the very Verse before, which they seem here to have forgot.



Ver. 10. *For the Ear of Jealousy beareth all things.*] i. e. God's jealous Ear overhears every thing; especially Complaints against the Dispensations of his Providence cannot be kept secret from him, who is jealous of his own Honour. The Arabic Version therefore of this Passage is very just, *ob Zeli causam res omnes audit*: Hence his Name *Deus Zelotes*. There is no Metaphor more frequent in the Prophets, than to represent Sin as *spiritual Adultery*. Jealousy therefore, in a religious Sense, means God's quick Sense and keen Resentment of his injured Honour, that, like a suspicious and abused Husband, he is ever inquisitive and watchful, always listening to, and actuated by, every Report and Whisper, so that nothing can be concealed from, or pass unobserved by, him, that reflects the least Dishonour upon his Judgments or Proceedings.

Ibid. *And the Noise of Murmurings is not hid.*] *Murmurings* here may either respect God, or Man; with respect to God, the Sense is, that he will listen to, and remember, all hard and ungodly Speeches against him; that he will punish the secret Complaints or open Insults of such who dare to find fault with the wise Methods of his Providence, or, from any seemingly unequal Dispensations of it, call his Justice or Goodness in question: By Murmurings with regard to Men, we may understand, that Detraction, though a covert Method of evil speaking, and generally conveyed by way of Whisper, and under the Seal of Secrecy, yet shall neither be undiscovered, or unpunished. And in this latter Sense St. Austin understands this Passage (*De Mendacio, cap. 16.*) and is pleased with the Contrast of the Expression. viz. *the Noise of Murmurings; which though imagined to be secret, and the Slander of them conveyed privately, and as it were instilled into the Ear, yet are as well known, says he, to God, as if they were spoken aloud, or proclaimed with the Voice of a Trumpet.*

Ver. 11. *Therefore beware of murmuring, which is unprofitable.*] i. e. is very mischievous and hurtful. This Figure of Speech, called *Litotes* or *Meiosis*, when less is said than is meant, is frequent both in sacred and prophane Writings. Thus *Prov. xx. 23.* the wise Man saith, *a false Balance is not good, i. e. very bad, and hateful to God.* Thus *Idols* are called *vain things, which cannot profit, i. e. things which occasion much Mischiefe.* And the most shameful Vices are called *Things which are not convenient*, *Rom. ii. 28.* See also *Gen. xxxiv. 7.* Nor are Examples of this kind of Speaking wanting in *Cicero, Livy, Longinus*, and the best Writers. Thus *Virgil* calls the great Tyrant *Busiris, illaudatus*; and the *Stygian Lake, inamabilis*; though by this Negative of Praise, he intended to express a great Abhorrence of them. See more Instances in *Martyn's Notes* on the *Georgics*, lib. iii. p. 210.

Ibid. *And refrain your Tongue from Backbiting, for there is no Word so secret that shall go for Nought; and the Mouth that belieth, slayeth the Soul.*] We cannot better or more truly interpret this Verse, than of those Reasonings which are contained in the five first Verses of the next Chapter; nor can it be so consistently

understood any other way; for in the Verses referred to, we have all the Particulars inserted in this, viz. the γοργυσμός ἀνωφελής, the καλαλαγία γλώσσης, not *Backbiting*, as our Version hath it, but such Representations of our mortal State, as are false and injurious to God the Creator—the φθίσμα λαθραίου, in the strictest Sense, explained by εἶπον ἐν ἑαυτοῖς λογισάμενοι—and ἔκταν, on account of its pernicious Consequences.— And lastly, the εἶμα καλαψιδόμενον, which literally *slayeth the Soul*, by filling it with such vile Principles as bring it to Destruction. From hence the Connexion, between this and the next Chapter, is both visible and necessary; nor can we account for this Verse so well in any other Light. None of the Commentators have attended to this, and therefore they expound this Verse, either of *Lying* strictly so called, or of *Slander* in general; but if we understand it of *Slandering*, with the marginal reading and the Geneva Bible, we must confine it rather to a particular Branch of it, viz. the speaking Evil of God, good Men, or sacred Things. St. Bernard's Observation, that *Slander is like a Serpent, that at the same Time kills several Persons, is very just and applicable here*; for a Slanderer, that takes a wicked Pleasure in ridiculing or discrediting Things sacred, ruins himself at length by his Libertine Notions and false Principles; he shoots his Arrows against Heaven, which are sure to fall on his own Head; he poisons the Persons that listen to him with Consent and Pleasure, and so draws them after him into the same Ruin; and he wounds Religion, and consequently God through its Sides, by the Scandal and groundless Suspicions which he impotently endeavours to fasten upon it.

Ver. 12. *Seek not Death in the Error of your Life: and pull not upon yourselves Destruction with the Works of your Hands.*] [It should be thus rendered, *Seek not Death by the Error of your Life; and pull not upon yourselves Destruction by the Works of your Hands.*] The original Words ζηῆτε, and ἐπιπαύετε, intimate, that wicked Men labour to be miserable; that they offer a Sort of Violence to themselves when they commit Sin; and thereby oblige God, unwillingly, and as it were with Reluctance, to inflict Death on them. *Salvian* expresses this in most remarkably strong Terms; *God, saith he, is loth to punish Men, but they themselves, exigunt & extorquent ut perirent, vim etiam faciunt—manus inferunt pietati Divinae, & omni peccatorum scelere, quasi omni telorum genere, misericordiam Dei expugnant.* *De Gubern. Dei*, lib. i. As Death and Destruction proceed thus from the corrupt Abuse of Mens own natural Power and Liberty of Will, we hence see the Origin of Evil.— I observed of the former Verse, that it was best explained by a Reference to the Beginning of the next Chapter: so the like Reference to it is equally proper and necessary in this, for much the same order of Sentiments will be found in the Cautions here given: *Seek not Death, i. e. court it not, ἐν πλάνῃ ζωῆς*, which *Error of Life* is explained in the 6, 7, 8, and 9th Verses of the next Chapter: And the following



ing Verses there, viz. 10, 11, 12, that express a degree of Wickedness which amounts to a *Covenant* or *Compact with Death*, are here cautioned against, by *Pull not upon yourselves Destruction*; for *ἰπικαῶν ὀλεθρου* is as much above *ζηλῶν θάνατον*, as Acts of Violence, Cruelty, and Injustice, are above Voluptuousness in the Climax of a bad Life.

Ver. 13. *For God made not Death.*] i. e. He designed not originally the Entrance of Death into the World. Man, whom God at first made an Image of his own Eternity, in his State of Innocence had the pleasing Prospect of Immortality; and if he had continued upright, his Obedience would have been crowned with it. Bishop Bull hath a most excellent Discourse upon the State of Man before the Fall; 'tis his Opinion there, that "this never-ending Life of Happiness, promised to our first Parents if they had continued obedient, and grown up to perfection under that Œconomy wherein they were placed, would not have been continued in the earthly Paradise, but only have commenced there, and been perpetuated in a higher State; and after such a Trial of their Obedience, as should seem sufficient to the Divine Wisdom, they should have been translated from Earth to Heaven." *Bulli Opera Posth.* Vol. IV. Disc. 5.

Ibid. *Neither hath he Pleasure in the Destruction of the Living.*] God does not sport himself, like a merciless Tyrant, with the Lives of his Creatures, but is tender of their Welfare, ever disposed to do them Good, and ready to communicate Happiness to them, if their own Obstinacy and evil Behaviour do not obstruct it. And therefore if, notwithstanding these gracious Intentions of God in their Favour, Men do finally perish, their Miscarriage must be ascribed to their own perverse Wills, and sinful Abuse of their Liberty. And thus God declares expressly in *Hosea* xiii. 9. *O Israel, thy Destruction is from Thyself, i. e.* God is not the Cause of any Evil, either of Sin or Punishment; but thy Sin, whereby thou destroyest thyself, and thy Misery, which is the Consequence of it, are both of thy own procuring. See *Lowth* in loc. and *Ezek.* xxxiii. 11. Some of the Fathers, viz. Origen, Chrysostom, Theophylact, &c. have a pretty Observation, and which is very pertinent to the Passage before us, upon *Matt.* xxv. 41. *Depart from me, ye Cursed, into everlasting Fire prepared for the Devil and his Angels.* They observe, 1. That the Punishment of the Wicked is not said here to be prepared from the Beginning of the World, as the Blessing is, lest it should be thought that God designed Man's Punishment before he sinned. 2. That Christ saith, *Come, ye Blessed of my Father*, but not, *Go, ye Cursed of my Father*; because God is the Author and Procurer of Men's Happiness, but Man is the only Author of his own Misery. 3. That Punishment is mentioned as designed originally not for Man, but for the Devil and his Angels. See Dr. Whitby in loc.

Ver. 14. *For he created Things that they might have their Being.*] i. e. God created the World and all things in it for perpetual Duration; and that, under the direction of his

over-ruling Providence, they might always continue in Being; and particularly he designed this Favour for Mankind, whom at first he created to be immortal, ch. ii. ver. 23. This is the Sense of the Syriac Version, which renders, *Et in ipsa mundi origine vitam expertem mortis veneno.* [*εἰς τὸ εἶναι*, for existence, i. e. that they might continue: in opposition to *ἰπ' ἀπωλεία*, ver. 13.]

Ibid. *And the Generations of the World were healthful.*] [*γενέσεις*, creations, i. e. things created, or Creatures] were healthful or salutary: but as *ἔτι* follows, perhaps the more natural Translation is, *are*. All Things which God made in their several Kinds were very good, and designed for the Use and Benefit of Man, and were originally appointed to be serviceable to him; there were naturally no hurtful or noxious Qualities in the Elements, till Sin altered the Constitution of Things; but Sin having made a Breach in the World, a sad Train of Evils entered with it; for the World being made for Man, and the Place of his Residence, it hath felt the Effect of God's Displeasure to increase his Punishment. And since the Curse consequent upon the Fall, Famine, Pestilence, Deluges, Wild Beasts, Diseases, Pains, Sickneses, have been in their turns his Scourges and Destroyers, as if universal Nature was armed against him. Or the Meaning may be in particular, that all Men (*Nationes orbis terrarum*, as the *Vulgate* reads, and *Coverdale's* Translation follows) were created originally pure and healthful, both as to Soul and Body, in the Person of Adam, the common Root from whence they sprung; and that there was no natural Contagion, or hereditary Taint, to draw him to Disobedience, and in Consequence of that, to Destruction, *Exterminium*, as the *Vulg.* expresses it, alluding probably to Adam's Banishment out of Paradise. Had Adam indeed continued innocent, he then, among many other great Privileges, had transmitted downwards, by way of natural Generation or Descent, a healthful and blessed Temper of Body: But our great Protoplast and Representative falling, besides the Rectitude of his Mind, he lost also that blessed Constitution of Body, which would have been so great a Privilege to his Offspring.

Ibid. *And there is no Poison of Destruction in them.*] [*Φάρμακον ὀλέθρου*, i. e. destructive Poison. But as what the Author here says, *there is no Poison*, &c. is not true; and as he is speaking of the original State of the Creation, and of Time past, one would imagine, that instead of *ἐκ ἔτι*, he wrote *ἐκ ἤν*, *there was no Poison*, &c. viz. when God created them.] The Greeks often use *φάρμακον* in a good Sense. Thus we read in *Homer*,

*Φάρμακα ποτὶ δὲ μὲν ἰδὲ λαὸν μεμνημένα, ποτὶ δ' ἄν λυγρὰ.*

And therefore *ὀλέθρου* is very properly here added; as in *Virgil's Georgics* we meet with *malum virus*, where *malum* is not to be looked upon as a superfluous Epithet, because *virus* is used in a good as well as a bad Sense; as in *Statius* particularly. And that *venenum* itself does not always signify something destructive to Life, see *Virgil's* eighth *Eclogue*, and *Martyn* on lib. i. *Georg.* p. 29. St. *Austin* observes,



that Briars and Thorns were not of the original Product of the Earth, much less poisonous Plants and Herbs; and that none of these had grown upon the Face of it, but for Man's Disobedience. *De Genes. cont. Manich. lib. i. c. 13.* And *St. Basil, Hexaem. Hom. 5.* Accordingly the LXX render, *Cursed be the Ground for thy Sake*, by *ἐπικαλέσθαι ἡ γῆ ἐν τοῖς ἔργοις σου*, i. e. in or by thy Works of Sin. And *Aquila* and *Theodotion* render in like manner. But here it may be asked, How can this Observation of our Author be true, if in the natural World there are confessedly poisonous Plants and Drugs; and if what some good Writers maintain be just, with respect to the moral World, viz. that the Fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil was for its specifical Quality of a poisonous Nature both to the Soul and Body; and that the first Man's Nature was tainted by tasting or eating of it? Or how can it be justly said, that God did not create Death, since he did create that poisonous Fruit, by which the Human Nature was so deadly poisoned? For the Solution of this Difficulty, see the learned Dr. *Jackson's Works*, Tom. iii. p. 29.

*Ibid.* Nor the Kingdom of Death upon the Earth.] *ἡ δὲ βασιλεία* the Palace of Death. Nor would Death have had any Power, much less Sovereignty over the Earth, who now reigns absolute in it, hath made it her Place of Residence, and even fixed her Palace in it. For in the Original it is not *βασιλεία*, but *βασιλεῖον*, which means not Kingdom or Dominion, but rather Court or Palace. *Coverdale* renders *ἡ δὲ βασιλεία*, the Kingdom of Hell, intimating, that the Devil's Power was usurped, and his Sovereignty of Man's own Ereption. *Calmet* renders, *Le Roi des enfers n'avoit pas son Palais sur la terre.*

Ver. 15. For Righteousness is immortal.] If this Verse was included in a Parenthesis, the Sense of the Context would be better connected and more perfect; and I have the pleasure to observe, that *Coverdale's* Translation doth so include it: The Meaning seems to be, that Obedience would not only have made Man immortal, and translated him from an earthly to a heavenly Paradise, but, as the Verb is in the Present Tense, it may intimate further, that Righteousness, continued in, would have raised Man to an unchangeable State of Goodness, and his Innocence have been crowned with everlasting Perseverance: As the Angels, who continued in their Duty when the rest revolted, are finally established in their Integrity and Felicity. *Calmet* gives another Sense of this Place, that Righteousness has always existed, and shall never cease to be; for there have been from the Beginning, and will ever continue to be, some good Persons, in every Age, who are as shining Lights amidst a perverse and crooked Generation, so that, as *Christ* assures us, *Matt. xvi. 18.* the Gates of Hell shall not absolutely prevail against the Church. As Righteousness is a Blessing not originally foreign to our Nature, one cannot say that it entered into the World at a particular Time only, as Death did, and therefore is very properly described to be, pe-

*regrinum et adventitium malum. Faust. Rbeg. de Grat. Dei.*

Ver. 16. But ungodly Men with their Works and Words called it to them: for when they thought to have it their Friend, they consumed to nought, and made a Covenant with it, because they are worthy to take part with it.] We meet with the like Phrase, of making a Covenant with Death, *Isai. xxviii. 14, 15.* and upon the like Occasion. I shall transcribe it at large, because it will give great Light to this Passage: Because ye have said, We have made a Covenant with Death, and with Hell are we at Agreement; when the overflowing Scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us; for we have made lies our Refuge, and under Falsehood have we hid ourselves; therefore thus saith the Lord, Your Covenant with Death shall be disannulled, and your Agreement with Hell shall not stand; when the overflowing Scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it. This Passage of *Isaiah* is certainly alluded to and imitated by our author in this Verse. But the Words in the Original, and in our Version, are so perplexed and obscure, that it will be very difficult, I had almost said impossible, to give any Translation of this Verse, and many others in this Book, that shall answer truly to the Letter, and yet be free from Obscurity. The Words, as they now stand, are certainly intricate and confused, and seem by some Accident to have suffered a Transposition. Was I at Liberty to attempt mending the Obscurity of this Verse, it should be by a Transposition too of the Greek Words, by altering the Place only of *ἐτάκησαν* ἡ, thus — *Φίλον ἡγήσασθαι αὐτὸν σωθῆναι ἰδὲν τοῦ πρὸς αὐτὸν, καὶ ἐτάκησαν, ὅτι αἱετοί, &c.* i. e. they called (Death) to them, and looking upon it as their Friend, they made a Covenant with it; and consumed away, because they deserved to share in it. But tho' this easy Transposition would make the Construction very clear, yet I dare not warrant it without plainer Authority from MSS. or ancient Versions. Let us then see what Construction may be put upon this Verse, as the present reading is, by attending closely to the Context; and from what goes before in the 11 and 12th Verses, and what follows after in the whole second Chapter, we may in general make this Observation, that there seems here to be an intended Climax, to shew the Progress of wicked Mens Attachment to Death, like that in *Psal. i. 1.* to shew their Progress in Iniquity; they first call or invite Death to them; next they hold it or treat it as a Friend; and lastly, they enter into Covenant or strict Union with it. And this Progress seems to be represented and explained at large in the next Chapter: The first Step is in their Reasonings about Death, contained in the first five Verses, wherein they put it in a false, but the most favourable Light to themselves that it is capable of: The next Step is a debauched Life, founded on the foregoing false principles, and recommended in the next four Verses; this is, entering into Society or Friendship with Death; and the Consequence of it is, they consume, and waste away, and shorten their Lives, which is represented by *ἐτάκησαν*. The last Step is marked out, ver. 10. by their resolving upon Acts of flagrant Injustice, and malicious Wickedness; which is as if they were entering into



into *Covenant with Death*, and makes their Attachment to it inseparable, viz. *they die for ever*. But this will appear more fully, when we explain the Particulars of the next Chapter. I shall observe here, once for all, that we are not to imagine this Book to be only a Collection of confused Discourses or independent Sentences; for from the little Sketch here given, and the Argument of the several Chapters, to every attentive Reader a regular Method will appear plain and observable.

Ver. 16. This Verse would perhaps be better, and more clearly rendered thus: *For ungodly Men with their Works and Words called him to them; for when they thought to have him their Friend, they subjected themselves to him, and made a Covenant with him, because they are worthy to take Part with him, i. e. to belong to, or to be his Portion or Inheritance.* See Prov. xx. 21. where what is *μερὶς* in the LXX. is by Symmachus and Theodotion rendered *κληρονομία*. As the Incoherence of the Sense raises a Suspicion that the Greek Word *ἐτάκησαν* is faulty, it has been conjectured that [the Author wrote *ὑπετάγησαν*, they subjected themselves to him, they became his Subjects, and made an Agreement with him, as it follows. Job xl. 23. (in our Version xli. 4.) *Θήσεται μεῖω σε διαθήκην; λήψη δὲ αὐτὸν δούλον αἰώνιον; Will he make a Covenant with thee? Wilt thou take him for a Servant for Life?* The Obscurity of the Construction is in a great Measure owing to *αὐτὸς* and *ἐκεῖνος*: but it is to be observed that where the Words *αὐτὸς* (or *ἐγὼ*) and *ἐκεῖνος* are used in different Parts of a Sentence in good Writers, they signify different Persons or things, as *hic* and *ille* in Latin, and *αὐτὸς* to be referred to the nearer, *ἐκεῖνος* to the more remote. See Chap. iii. 24. xi. 10. xv. 17. xvi. 3, 4. and so it is in this Place, where *αὐτὸς* belongs to *Ἀδης*, *ἐκεῖνος* to *Θάνατος*; and the Translation of the three last Verses may be thus, supposing that the Author wrote *ὑπετάγησαν*. *For he created all Things for Continuance, and the Creatures of the World were salutary, and there was no destructive Poison in them, nor Palace of Hades upon Earth (for Righteousness is immortal) but ungodly Men, by their Works and Words called him (Hades) to them: taking him for a Friend, they made themselves his Subjects, and entered into an Agreement with him as being worthy (or deserving) to be the Portion of the other, viz. Death.* *Θάνατος* and *Ἀδης* are here represented as Persons (as they are by St. Paul 1 Cor. xv. 55. and St. John Revel. vi. 8. xx. 14. Isaiah xxviii. 14. 15.) and *Ἀδης* (who is probably the same with *Διάβολος* xi. 24. where he and *Death* are in like manner joined together) is here said (ver. 14.) to have a *Palace upon Earth*, as a King; and *Death* may be considered as his Minister or Executioner, agreeably to that of the Author to the Hebrews xi. 14. him that had the Power of *Death*, that is, the Devil, so *Ἀμαρτία* is often mentioned as a Person Rom. vi. and elsewhere; and *ἡ Δίκη*, Justice, or *Divine Vengeance*, below in this Author Chap. xi. 20. and Acts xxviii. 4. There is the same Mistake in our Version of these Words *αὐτὸς* and *ἐκεῖνος* in 2 Tim. xi. 26. where *αὐτὸς* relates to *Διάβολος*, *ἐκεῖνος* to *Θεός*.] By others this Verse, as it stands in the present reading,

is thought to contain a keen Satire, in a continued and not obscure Metaphor, upon the Folly of those wicked Men who shortened their Days by their Debaucheries, and lived so fast as if they were enamoured of Death, and impatient for its cold Embraces. Hence the Caution given ver. 12. *μὴ ζηῆτε θάνατον, seek not, i. e. do not covet, do not eagerly desire to pursue Death.* The Ground of which Caution is well explained in the Words before us ver. 16. *Ungodly Men with their Hands (beckoning) and with their Words (persuading, i. e. with all the Importunity of fond and passionate Lovers) call (or invite) it to them; esteeming it as their Friend (their Minion or Darling) they consumed away, or languished for it, ἐτάκησαν (sc. ἐγὼ) and they made a Covenant (as it were of Marriage) with it, because they are worthy to take Part with it (and be joined unto it in the closest Union.)* For the given Sense of the Verb *ἐτάκησαν* vid. Theocrit. Idyll. ii. ver. 29. which Construction of the Word is very natural and proper in this Place, as it preserves the Climax undisturbed. The Phrase, *they made a Covenant with Death*, only expresses the great Security of profane Scoffers, who set the Divine Judgments at Defiance. The Passage is well illustrated by another in *Lucan, lib. ix.* where, to express their Safety from the Danger of Death, it is said of the *Psylli* (famous for extracting Poisons) *Pax illis cum Morte data est.* vid. J. Cleric. in loc.

## CHAP. II.

### THE ARGUMENT.

**T**HE Author, having represented in the former Chapter the Original of Sin and Death, as too sadly exemplified in our first Parents, proceeds to show the contagious Effects and terrible Consequences of Sin upon their Posterity. For this Purpose he introduces some Libertines reasoning (if it may be so called) in their loose Way, in Favour of their darling Opinions, "That Life is short and uncertain, and therefore its sensual Gratifications to be pursued with Eagerness, and without Delay; That there is no real Distinction between Good and Evil, and therefore all Acts of Oppression and Injustice, such as may best suit Mens Convenience and Interest, are allowable and commendable; That the Soul is naturally mortal, and is annihilated with the Body; That there is no Future State, nor any Account to be given hereafter of Mens wicked and evil Courses in this Life:" These poisonous Principles are represented from the Beginning to Ver. 21. of this Chapter; and though set out to the best Advantage, are not intended to countenance Men in bad Notions of Religion, in false Opinions of God, and wrong Sentiments of the Soul; but are only Opinions introduced with an Intention to confute them: And therefore, on the very Entrance of this Chapter, the Author, to prevent any possible Mistake as to his Intention and Meaning, pronounces such Notions and Conclusions to be not right, ver. 1. and at the End of this, and in the three following Chapters, confutes them at large, determines in Favour of Virtue and Goodness,



Goodness, and shows the Certainty of their Reward.

Ver. 1. *Our Life is short and tedious.*] I think the Word *tedious*, which is used by the old *English Translations*, improper here; it occurs very rarely in the Sense of our Version; refers more generally to Time, and rather implies a long Duration of it: So that *short* and *tedious* seem wrong coupled together. It would have been better rendered, and with less Ambiguity, *short and painful*; and so the Original indeed signifies, *ὀλίγῃ καὶ λυπηρῇς ὁ βίος ἡμῶν*, which is confirmed by the *Syriac* and *Arabic Versions*. The Expression here is like that of *Jacob's*, *Few and evil have the Days of the Years of my Life been*, Gen. xlvii. 9. and that of *Job*, *Man, that is born of a Woman, is of few Days, and full of Trouble*, ch. xiv. 1. allowing only for the Difference of the Speakers.

Ibid. *In the Death of Man there is no Remedy.*] There is no Prevention of, or Remedy against, Mortality. Death is the Portion of every Man, though the particular Time is uncertain; according to that of *Job*, *His Days are determined, the Number of his Months are with thee, thou hast appointed his Bounds that he cannot pass*; ch. xiv. 5. But neither does our Author, nor this Passage of *Job*, countenance that Notion of the *Predestinarians*, That every particular Man's Time of Life is so absolutely circumscribed, and so strictly and peremptorily assigned him by God, that nothing can shorten or lengthen it beyond such predetermined Bounds: For though all Things, even the Number of our Months, are allowed to be foreknown by God, yet does it not from hence, nor from any Passage of Scripture, appear, that he has predetermined the precise and particular Time of any Person's Death by any absolute Decree: For if every Man's Time of Life is unconditionally fixed, to what Purposes serve the Promises of long Life to good and pious Persons, where God sees it best for them; or the many Threats of a short one to the Ungodly and Wicked? Or why does the wise Son of *Sirach* say, that *there is a Time when there is Success in the Hands of the Physician*, or that *they should pray unto the Lord, that he would prosper that which they give for Ease and Remedy to prolong Life*? Eccles. xxxviii. 13, 14. For vain is the Help of Art, and even Prayer itself must be supposed fruitless, where the Case is unalterable, and the Doom irrevocable. The *Vulgate* renders, *In fine Hominis non est Refrigerium*, from a corrupted Copy probably, which read *ἰανθις*, from *ἰαίνομαι*, *Refrigeror*, *Latitia perfundor*; instead of *ἰανσις*, the true Reading. *Coverdale's Translation* follows this Mistake. [But it may be questioned whether any such Word as *ἰανθις* or *ἰανσις* is to be found.]

Ibid. *Neither hath any Man been known to have returned from the Grave.*] Both the Observation and Inference of these vain Reasoners is false; for that Persons have returned from the Grave, appears from several Instances under the *Old Testament*; 1 Kings xvii. 22. 2 Kings iv. 35. xiii. 21. Nor does it follow, if there were no Instances of Persons returning from thence, that the Dead altogether cease to be,

or that there is no future Life after this, as such Libertines would gladly infer. See *Anacreon* Ode 59. who has many Thoughts and Expressions like the loose and jovial ones in this Chapter.

Ver. 2. *We were born at all Adventure.*] i. e. We came into the World by Chance, without any Appointment or Direction of Providence: And as we came from Nothing (*Vulgate* reads, *Ex nihilo nati sumus*, which *Coverdale* follows) so upon our Deaths shall we return to Nothing again. This Language is very natural and agreeable to the Persons here introduced speaking, viz. *Materialists* and *Infidels*.

Ibid. *And a little Spark in the moving of our Heart.*] According to the Notions of these false Reasoners, the Soul was nothing else but a little Fire about the Heart, the Smoke of which was perceivable by our Respiration, and the Sparks of it by our Words: That when this Fire was extinguished, as they imagined it was by Death, the Body was reduced to Embers or Ashes, and the Soul vanished into Air. In like manner the Atheistical Philosophers, who made *Atoms* the Principles of all things, thought the Soul to consist of some little brisk fiery Spirits, which kept in for a while, but were afterwards extinguished by Death. Hence we find them using the Similies of Air, Fire, or Smoke, with respect to the Soul. The *Latin* also and the *Hebrew*, it is well known, express both Spirit and Wind by the same Word: And from this Agreement only in Name, some, for want of better Argument, have been so weak as to infer, that they agree likewise in Nature, and at last mix together. The true reading of the Original, and which occurs in all the Copies, and is followed by the *Oriental*, and most ancient *English Translations*, is *ὁ λόγος ἀνιθῆρ*; the *Vulgate* also with *Junius*, render it in like manner by *Sermo*. By which we are to understand Reason, or the Soul: That this is the true Reading appears undeniably from a parallel Passage in *Lucretius*, whose Philosophy is the same with that of these false Reasoners,

*Consilium, quod nos animum mentemque vocamus, Idque situm media in regione pectoris hæret.*

Lib. III.

And from that of *Empedocles*,

*Αἷμα γὰρ ἀνθρώποις περικαρδίον ἐστὶ νόημα.*

*Our Translations*, 'tis certain, made use of a corrupted Copy, which read *ὀλίγῃ ἀνιθῆρ*, and have given the Sense accordingly. If there was any Authority for this Reading, or just Reason for its Preference (see *Flamin. Nobil. in loc. ap. Polygl.* though it seems to be owing only to Affinity of Sound) I should chuse to read the whole thus, *καὶ ὀλίγῃ ἀνιθῆρ ἐκίνησε καρδίαν ἡμῶν*, i. e. *a little Spark of Fire moves, or hath put our Hearts in motion.*

[Ver. 3. *διαχυθήσεται*, will be dissipated, not shall vanish.]

Ver. 4. *Our Name shall be forgotten in Time.*] When we are dead, our Names will not live long after us, but our Memorial shall perish with us; our Actions will not be remembered in the next Generation, much less in future Ages: So that as to the Shame or Infamy arising



arising from them, we are quite unconcerned and indifferent as to what Posterity may think or say of them. As there is a commendable Ambition in good Men to be remembered with Honour hereafter, which is a Spur to virtuous and laudable Actions; so a Carelessness as to the present or future Opinion of Mankind, is an Encouragement to Wickedness, and a certain Sign of a profligate and abandoned Mind.

[Ibid. *Our Life shall pass away as the Trace of a Cloud.*] *ὡς ἵχνη νεφέλης*, as the Traces of a Cloud, which is unintelligible; probably it should be *ἄχνη*, which properly signifies *Lanugo*, Down, and therefore is transferred to any slight and yielding Matter. The Translation may be, *as the soft Substance of a Cloud, which is continually passing away, and changing its Figure and Situation.* Job vii. 9. *As the Cloud is consumed and vanishes away.*

Ibid. *Our Life shall be dispersed as a Mist, that is, driven away with the Beams of the Sun, and overcome with the Heat thereof.* *βαρυνθεῖσα ὑπὸ θερμότητος*, *αὐτῆς*, made heavy with Heat; and so *Vulg. à calore illius aggravata* — both very improper. Overcome with Heat, according to our Version, is not agreeable to the Greek; and oppressed with Heat, as in the Margin, is no better. *Big with Heat*, has no better Pretence to be allowed, because in the Sentence immediately foregoing, Mention is made of Dispersion by the Rays of the Sun. If I might indulge Conjecture, I would, to avoid these Difficulties, read here *μαρνανθεῖσα ὑπὸ θερμότητος*, i. e. *wasted away with the Heat thereof.* *Sophocles* applies the same Word to Time, *πανθ' ὁ μέγας χρόνος μαρναί τε καὶ φλέγει.* — See *Ajax Flagell.* [This Conjecture of *μαρνανθεῖσα ὑπὸ θερμότητος*, instead of *βαρυνθεῖσα*, the common Reading, is confirmed by a Passage, ch. xix. 21.]

Ver. 5. *For our Time is a very Shadow that passeth away.* [rather, is the Passage of a Shadow: i. e. Life is as the passing by of a Shadow.] The Comparison of Life to a Cloud, and a Shadow, is almost every where to be met with; but Mr. Norris has set this latter Resemblance in the best and, as it were, a new Light; as that *our State here is partly Life and partly Death, as the other is partly Light and partly Darkness — that, like a Shadow, wherever it passes, it leaves no Track behind it — that it seems to be Something, when indeed it is Nothing — that it is always altering, and ends on a sudden; and, when at its full Height and Prime, is often nearest to its Declension, as a Shadow is, to disappear when at its full Length: Miscellanies, p. 178.* Hence *Pindar* calls Men *ἡμέτεροι*, *People for a Day*; and, upon account of the Shortness and Uncertainty of Life, the ancient *Patriarchs*, though their Span was much longer than ours, thought it hardly worth while to build Houses, but contented themselves to sojourn and grow grey in Tents.

Ibid. *For it is fast sealed, so that no Man cometh again.* The Arabick Version runs; *Est enim res obsignata* (scil. *mors nostra*) *quam nemo revocaverit.* The Comparison here is taken from the ancient Custom of Sealing the Grave or Sepulchre, and rolling a great Stone

to the Mouth of it, to make it the more secure and undisturbed. See *Dan. vi. 17. Matth. xxvii. 66.* *Pausanias* has a Thought which very much resembles this, *ἔχει δὲ Πλάτων κλεῖν, καὶ λέγουσιν ἐπ' αὐτῇ τὸν καλεόμενον Ἄδην κεκλεισθῆαι ὑπὸ τοῦ Πλάτωνος, καὶ ὡς ἐπ' αὐτοῖς ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς ἔξω αὐτῆς, i. e. Pluto has a Key, and with it, as they say, he locks up the Place commonly called Hades, and from thence no Man returns; lib. v. c. 20.* See *Apo. i. 18.* Holy *Job* has the like Sentiment upon Death, chap. vii. 9, 10. *As the Cloud is consumed and vanishes away, so he that goeth down to the Grave shall come up no more; he shall return no more to his House, neither shall his Place know him any more.* Where it is very observable, that the LXX. express this Impossibility of returning by Three strong Negatives following one another, *οὐδ' οὐ μὴ ἐπιστρέψῃ*, repeated twice in the same Verse.

Ver. 6. *Let us enjoy the good Things that are present.* *ἀπολαύσωμεν τὰ ὄντων ἀγαθῶν.* The Writer of the *Ἑθικῶν μεγάλων*, supposed to be *Aristotle*, makes a just and proper Distinction between *καλὰ* and *ἀγαθὰ*. The former includes Virtues, and the good and commendable Actions proceeding from thence; the latter, Power, Riches, Glory, Pleasures, and the like: *Καλὰ μὲν, οἷον, τὰς ἀρετὰς, καὶ τὰς ἀπ' αὐτῶν προάξεις. — ἀγαθὰ δὲ, ἀρχὴν, πλεον, δόξαν, τιμὴν, καὶ τὰ τοιαῦτα.*

Ibid. *Let us speedily use the Creatures like as in Youth.* i. e. whilst the good Things or Creatures are in their Prime, or rather, whilst we ourselves are vigorous and young, which is the Sense of the Syriac and Arabic Versions; Youth being the Season for the high Relish of Pleasure, for chearing the Heart and gratifying the Senses: For every aged Person may say with *Barzillai*, *Can I discern between Good and Evil? Can I taste what I eat, or what I drink? Can I hear any more the Voice of singing Men and singing Women?* 2 Sam. xix. 35. There is also a third Sense of these Words, viz. Let us live as if we were young again, which *Grotius* prefers, and seems contended by the *Alexandrian MS.* [In the Greek distinguish thus, *καὶ χρησώμεθα τῇ κλίσσει, ὡς ἐν νεότητι, σπουδαίως, And let us, as being in our Youth, use the Creatures carefully, that is, so as to let slip no Occasion of Pleasure.* So that there seems to be no Foundation for *Grotius's* Sense, as if we were young again, for it does not appear that these are old Men who are here arguing in this Manner, but rather young ones, who, ver. 10. declare against paying any Reverence to the grey Hairs of the Aged. The *Alex. MS.* reads, *ὡς νεότητος*, I suppose, for *ὡς ἐν νεότητι*, the Meaning of which would be, *as we have done from our Youth up;* but even this would not prove them old Men.

Ver. 7. *Let no Flower of the Spring pass by us.* Flowers have always been esteemed Symbols or Emblems of Joy, and in the Revellings of Debauchees they were usually crowned with them; and so peculiar are they to Times of publick Festivity and Rejoicing, that they are looked upon as incompatible with Mourning. The Spring seems more particularly to be mentioned, because it is the chief Season of Flowers: But some Copies instead of *ἐαρό* read *αὐτοῦ*, which *Junius* prefers: But if this Reading



ing be admitted, I would not with him understand it barely of Fine Weather, *jucundus aer*, but rather, *Let no fragrant Breath of Air arising from the Wine or Ointments*, just before mentioned, *pass by or escape us*. *Ὁς αἰδοομένης*, *Vinum odoratum & fragrans*, see *Hesychius* in *voce*, was not unusual in such Meetings.

Ver. 8. *Let us crown ourselves with Rose-buds before they be withered.*] It is certain that not only the Guests at the Feasts of the Ancients, but the Rooms, were strewed with Flowers, and the Waiters, and even the Drinking-Bowls, crowned with them. Roses are mentioned here in particular, because the Rose is reckoned to be *ῥοσὶς φέρων*, the Plant of Love, and was accordingly consecrated to *Venus*; and Rose-Buds are Symbols of Youth, and of the Spring, and from their soon withering, the properest Emblems of the Shortness of Life, and the fleeting Nature of its Pleasures. See *Anacreon* *Od. 5. de Rosa*, and *Od. 53*.

Ver. 9. *This is our Portion, and our Lot is this.*] *Coverdale's* Version is more explicit, *For that is our Porcyon, els get we nothyng*. This is the Language of *Epicurus's* Scholars, the Sum of whose Ethics was, *Dux vitæ dila voluptas*. Life, in the Opinion of such Libertines, is bare Existence without their sinful Pleasures: And it is observable, that in *Plautus*, *Catullus*, and *Martial*, and such Writers, *vivere* is taken for a merry Life, as *ζῆν* is sometimes among the *Greeks*: And in this Sense we are to understand that old Inscription, *Amici, dum vivimus, vivamus*. Those that are persuaded that the Soul is absolutely mortal, their Conclusion must be that of these Sensualists: Such Persons act agreeably to their own Principles, if they pursue every thing that their Appetites are inclined to, be it Pleasure or Profit. Such Maxims, and a Conduct suitable to them, may be expected from Persons who had no Views beyond the Grave. And therefore the *Epicureans* endeavoured to efface the Belief of another Life out of Mens Minds, as well knowing that Men could never arrive to an undisturbed Sensuality, whilst any Notions of Futurity checked them in the Commission of their Crimes. Accordingly --- *Metus ille foras præceps Acherontis agendus*. *Lucret. lib. iii.*

Ver. 11. *Let our Strength be the Law of Justice.*] The Assertion here, that Right is founded in Might, is a very old Opinion, as old probably as *Nimrod*, but long since confuted by the wisest Men and soberest Philosophers: *Falsum est*, says *St. Austin*, *quod à quibusdam non recte sentientibus dici solet, id esse jus, quod ei, qui plus potest, utile est*; *De Civit. Dei, lib. xix.* Upon which, *Ludov. Vives* remarks, that this false and dangerous Opinion is confuted by *Plato, lib. i. De Repub.* *Hobbs* in vain endeavoured to revive this Notion, so injurious in its Consequences to the Property, and destructive of the Peace and Comfort of Mankind.

Ver. 12. *Let us lie in Wait for the Righteous, because he is not for our Turn.*] i. e. *Let us lurk privily for the Innocent without a Cause*, as it is expressed *Prov. i. 11.* where there is the like Consultation of the Wicked. It is no Wonder that Atheists and Unbelievers, and Persons

of such vile and libertine Principles, should encourage one another in Wickedness, and in attempting the most ortragious Acts of Violence and Injustice, in the Manner here represented, especially against such, as are most likely to cross or contradict their Pleasures, and to reprove them in the sinful Use of them. Such a kind Monitor is not for the Turn of the Wicked, he is rather *δύσμενος*, as the Original has it, i. e. officious, troublesome, and disagreeable to them. *St. Cyprian*, who quotes this Passage of our Author, reads accordingly *insuavis, lib. ii. cont. Judæos*; and so does *St. Austin, lib. xvii. c. 20. De Civit. Dei*. There is exactly the same Expression, and upon the same Occasion in *Isaiah iii. 10*. According to the Version of the *LXX*, *δύσμενος ἡμῶν ἐστὶ δίκαιος*, from which this seems to be taken; and it is the more probable, because in the *Greek Text of Barnabas*, where this Passage of the *Book of Wisdom* is cited, the Reading is, *δύσμενος ἡμῶν ἐστὶ δίκαιος*, and not *ἐνεδεδωμένος*, as in the common Editions.

Ver. 14. *He was made to reprove our Thoughts.*] *ἔρρόετο ἡμῶν εἰς ἐλεγχὸν ἐνομιῶν ἡμῶν*. Our Version seems here neither just nor proper: The Meaning is, He is a Reprover of our Schemes and Designs. The *Arabic* renders it *consilia nostra*; and the *Syriac*, *est nobis objurgator cogitationum nostrarum*: Thus I would understand *ἔρροετο*, and not in the Sense of our Translation.

Ver. 15. *He is grievous unto us even to behold, for his Life is not like other Mens.*] The very Sight of him is uneasy and disagreeable to us: For the Presence of a good Man is a Check to the Proceedings of the Wicked; and his Virtuous Example, and singular Goodness, is a living Reproof which they do not relish in their Sight. Hence the many Attempts and Combinations of ungodly Men against the Life of the Righteous, so frequent to be met with in sacred and profane History. Thus *Joseph's* Virtue was an Eye-fore to his Brethren, and therefore they conspired his Destruction. Thus *David*, for his superior Excellence and uncommon Merit, was persecuted by *Saul*. Hence *St. Peter* observes of the Wicked, that it is their Custom to speak evil of, and abuse, *such as run not with them to the same Excess of Riot*, *1 Pet. iv. 4.* And *St. John* asks this Question, *Wherefore did Cain, who was of that wicked one, slay his Brother?* and returns for Answer, *Because his own Works were evil, and his Brother's righteous*, *1 John iv. 12.* The like may be observed of the primitive Martyrs and Confessors, who were persecuted, afflicted, tormented, because, instead of countenancing fashionable and popular Vices, they chose rather to reprove and rebuke them. *Tacitus* assigns this as the Cause of the Death of *Thraseas Patus*, "That *Nero* could not bear even the Sight of that Senator, who was of so unblemished a Character, that his Life was, as it were, animated Virtue itself." *Annal. lib. xvi.*

Ver. 16. *We are esteemed of him as Counterfeits.*] Our Version seems here faulty, for such abandoned Persons as are here described would not be at the pains to act under the Disguise of



Piety, or assume the Mask of Religion: The Meaning is, that he esteems us like Dross, or as an impure and filthy Mixture; which Sense is confirmed by the very next Sentence, and so the original Word means, and the Syriac and Arabic Versions understand it. The Vulgate reads *Nugaces*, i. e. we are looked upon by him as Persons that pursue Trifles (for such do all the Pleasures of the World appear to a truly humble and good Spirit) but this Term seems too soft and favourable for Persons of such bad Morals, and wicked Principles.

[Ver. 17. *τα ἐν ἐκείναις αὐτῷ.*] I should prefer *αὐτῶν*, sc. λόγων. Let us see if his Words be true, and let us try the Event of them.]

Ver. 18. For if the just Man be the Son of God, he will help him, and deliver him from the Hand of his Enemies.] Thus the primitive Martyrs were insulted, and treated in the like opprobrious Manner, *πῶς ὁ Θεὸς αὐτῶν, καὶ τί αὐτὸς ἀνήσεν ἡ θρησκεία, ἣν καὶ πρὸς τὸ ἐαυτῶν εἰλοντο συχῆς*; Euseb. Eccles. Hist. lib. v. c. 1. The Expressions from ver. 16 to 21 of this Chapter, very much resemble those of the Psalmist, Ps. xxii. 8. He trusted in God, that he would deliver him, let him deliver him now, *εἰ θέλει αὐτόν*, if he loveth him. Compare likewise Matt. xxvii. 43. where the Taunt and Irony used by the Jews, by way of Insult, to our Saviour then expiring on the Cross, very much resemble the Manner of Expression here. And indeed St. Austin thus understands and expounds our Author, and says, that in this, and the following Verses, there is a plain Prophecy of Christ's Passion, and that the Unrighteous here mentioned are his wicked Murderers; De Civit. Dei, lib. xvii. c. 20. St. Ambrose, St. Cyprian, and many others of the Fathers assert the like; but Lactantius is most express, and presses the Jews home with this Testimony, which, he says, is so full and particular in describing the wicked Counsels against him, that this Author may seem almost to have been present. Lib. iv. But I am not so sanguine as to imagine or assert, that there is any direct Prophecy of our Blessed Saviour's Sufferings in these Verses, which would be doing too much Honour to this Author, and the Times in which he wrote; yet, I think, by way of Accommodation, they are applicable to our Saviour, who, in Scripture, is called, the Just one, by way of Eminence, and in a very particular and appropriate Manner calls God his Father.

[Ibid. The Son of God.] In the Original *υἱὸς Θεοῦ*, a Son of God, without the Article; which in the singular Number, I believe, is not used, but when it either is, or may be applied to our Blessed Saviour. In the Plural *υἱοὶ Θεοῦ* often occurs. See likewise xviii. 13. where there is the same Mistake in the Version, and in this chap. ver. 13.]

Ver. 19. — Let us examine him with Despatchfulness and Torture, that we may know his Meekness, and prove his Patience.] The Vulgate renders, *interrogemus eum*, i. e. let us make Proof of his Patience, and treat him like a Criminal that is put upon the Rack. The Verbitaζεν, *interrogare*, in this Book and Ecclesiasticus, signifies to chastise or punish. See Chap. i. 9. vi. 3. xi. 10. Eccles. xvi. 22. xxiii. 10. Such

a Resolution in wicked Men is not to be wondered at. We may observe, that the best Men among the Heathens were generally, through their Enemies Malice, the most unfortunate and unhappy. Socrates, Aristides, Cato, Seneca, are all Instances of this Truth, suffering either Persecution, Banishment, or Death. See Plato De Rep. lib. ii. where he enumerates the Punishments to which a good Man stands exposed, which Tully has copied, and expresses thus, *Bonus ille vir vexetur, rapiatur, manus denique ei auferantur, effodiantur oculi, damnetur, vinciat, uratur*. Lib. ii. de Repub.

Ver. 20. Let us condemn him with a shameful Death, for by his own Saying he shall be respected.] i. e. if his own Word may be depended upon, God will have Respect unto him, *ἐξ αὐτῆς ἐπισκοπῆς ἐν λόγῳ αὐτῆς*, there shall be a Visitation or Interposition of God in his Favour, probably by bringing him from the Dust of Death again. The Expression here very much resembles that of Joseph's Brethren, Gen. xxxvii. 20. Come now and let us slay him, and we shall see what will become of his Dreams. See also Jerem. xviii. 18. It is a severe Irony and a sneering Sarcasm upon the Hopes of the Just Man, not unlike that of the Heathens upon the Ashes of the primitive Christians, who gloried in the Hopes of a Resurrection: Their Persecutors pleased themselves with reducing the dead Bodies of the several Martyrs into Atoms, with scattering them in the Air, or throwing them into Rivers, and then scoffingly said, Let us now see whether they can rise again, or whether their God can help them, and deliver them out of our Hands; Euseb. Eccl. Hist. lib. v. c. 1.

[Ibid. For by his own Saying he shall be respected.] [This is very obscure, I would translate it thus, For his Trial shall be according to his own Words: alluding to Verse 16. He pronounceth the End of the Just to be happy.] For the Sense of *ἐπισκοπῆς*, see Chap. iii. 7.

Ver. 21. For their own Wickedness hath blinded them.] See the like Sentiment, ch. iv. ver. 12. St. Chrysostom observes, "that Sin doth so blind the Senses of Sinners, that, seeing not the Ways of Falshood and Error, they run headlong into them: Nor could any Errors ever have prevailed over Man, if Sin had not made the Way; for first a Man is blinded by his Sins, and then drawn away and seduced; for Error, saith he, begetteth not Sin, but Sins beget and bring forth Error." Homil. xix. in Matt. vii. But still it is no less true, on the other Hand, that Error, especially in fundamental Principles, produces generally wicked Practices. St. Austin accordingly observes, that the different Degrees and, as it were, Gradations of Licentiousness, are very justly described in this Chapter: "That Men first efface all Impressions of a Deity, then deny the Immortality of the Soul, and a future State; That Immorality is the certain Consequence of such Infidelity; That Debauchery and Intemperance is their Resort in particular, as being the most effectual Remedy to drown Thought; and that when Men are once heated, they easily fly



“sily proceed, through Excess, to Oppres-  
sion, Cruelty and Murder.” In *Psal. liii.*

Ver. 21. ταῦτα ἐλογίζοντο. [i. e. Thus did they  
reason; as ver. 1. λογισάμενοι, reasoning. See to  
Chap. iii. 10.]

Ver. 22. As for the Mysteries of God, they  
knew them not, neither hoped they for the Wages  
of Righteousness, nor discerned a Reward for  
blameless Souls.] Not unlike this is what St.  
Paul says of the Wicked, That the God of this  
World blinds the Minds of those which believe  
not, lest the Light of the glorious Gospel should  
shine unto them, 2 Cor. iv. 4. And it is very  
observable, that a Course of Sin, and a State  
of Darkness are reciprocal Terms in Scripture.  
With great Propriety, therefore, the Wicked  
are here represented as blinded to such a Degree,  
that they had no Regard for any thing serious,  
much less did they concern themselves about  
Revelation, or the great and mysterious Truths  
contained in it; they considered not God’s  
Proceedings, nor were affected by any of his  
Judgments or Threatnings; and, as they be-  
lieved not another Life, they did not expect  
any great Day of Account, and could have no  
Grounds or Reason to hope for future Rewards,  
which are the Wages of Righteousness, and the  
blessed Portion of blameless and undefiled  
Souls.]

Ver. 23. For God created Man to be immor-  
tal, and made him to be an Image of his own  
Eternity.] God not only created Man ἐκ  
ἐκείνου, to be free from Corruption, but made  
him εἰκὼν τῆς αἰῶνος, which is a very  
strong Expression to denote a peculiar Resem-  
blance of the Deity; and accordingly the  
Arab. Interpreters render, fecitque illum imagi-  
nem peculiarem; and the Syr. ad imaginem  
ideæ suæ. Our Translators undoubtedly read,  
αἰδιότης, which properly signifies Eternity;  
and this Dr. Grabe has inserted in the Text,  
esteeming it, as most certainly it is, the best  
Reading. Nobilius says most MSS. have  
αἰδιότης.

Ver. 24. Through Envy of the Devil came  
Death into the World.] The Devil, jealous at  
the future Happiness designed for Man, resolv-  
ed to tempt him to Disobedience, that he  
might deprive him of the Blessing of Immor-  
tality, and reduce him to the same forlorn  
Condition with himself and his apostate Bre-  
thren. St. Chrysostom makes the same Obser-  
vation upon the Devil, ὅτι ἰδὲν παρ’ ἡμῶν ἡδονή-  
μας, ἰδὲν τιμωρίαν, ὃ ἀδελφόν, ἀδελφὸς ἐβόηκεν  
νεν αὐτῷ τοῖς ἀγαθοῖς. Homil. 25. de Diabolo  
tentat. That though Man had given the Devil  
no Occasion of Offence, yet, when he saw the  
Honour designed him, he immediately envied him  
the Favour. See also Euseb. Præp. Evangel.  
lib. vii. St. Austin observes, “That Death  
“began at the same Time with the Trans-  
“gression; and that neither Age nor Pain  
“could have touched our first Parents, so  
“long as they held the Privilege of eating of  
“the Tree of Life; but afterwards their Bo-  
“dies, even in a natural Way, contracted  
“the Seeds of Diseases and Death.” De Genes.  
lib. ii. And thus the Apostolical Constitutions,  
ἀποστολικοὶ κανόνες, ccc. Dux sunt viæ vitæ; una, mor-

tis altera; illæ autem nullam habent inter se  
convenientiam. Naturale quidem est vitæ iter,  
adscitum autem iter mortis, quod non ex volun-  
tate Dei exiit, verum ex insidiis adversarii.  
Constit. lib. vii. c. i. But St. Bernard is more  
explicit than St. Chrysostom, or the other Fa-  
thers, upon the true Cause of the Devil’s En-  
vy: “According to him, the Malice and  
“Conspiracy of the Devil against the Happi-  
“ness of Man, proceeded principally from  
“the Honour which he foresaw was designed  
“to be conferred upon the human Nature,  
“by the hypostatical Union of the λόγος with  
“it: He flattered himself, that so great a  
“Mark of Distinction belonged to the Ange-  
“lick Order preferably to Man; and from  
“hence arose his Jealousy, which deter-  
“mined him upon Mischief and Revenge.”  
Bern. Serm. in Cantic. And to this Sense  
some other Writers have interpreted *Isaiah*  
xiv. 14.

Ibid. And they that do hold of his Side do find  
it.] The Vulgate reads, Imitantur autem illum  
qui sunt ex parte illius; and Coverdale’s Transla-  
tion renders in like manner, And they that holde  
of bys Syde, do as he doth; and so does Fulgen-  
tius, de Prædestin. ad Monimum, lib. i. but  
the Construction before given would be more  
consistent and agreeable, and the Relation  
between the two Chapters more apparent, if  
the Rendering here was, they tempt it (i. e. they  
solicit, they court, they draw Death upon  
themselves) as many as are Partakers of it; for  
the οἱ τῆς ἐκείνου μερίδος οἵτις, and the οἱ ἀδελφοὶ  
ἐκείνου μερίδος εἶναι, ch. i. 16, are the same Sons  
of Perdition, those over whom is ἄδης βασιλεὺς,  
ch. i. 14. which is not of God’s appointing,  
but their own seeking and procuring. The  
present rendering of this Place is little less than  
Tautology, for to be Partakers of Death, is  
certainly to find it. I shall only observe, that  
it appears, from the whole Drift of these  
Chapters, that the Death, which Wicked Men  
call, correspond, or covenant with, and at last  
partake of, is all along to be understood of  
Death Eternal. And thus Fulgentius understands  
this Passage. Mors est impietatis quam non fecit  
Deus, quæ per Diabolum introivit in orbem ter-  
rarum; huic uni marti, quam peccator sibi per con-  
temptum Divinæ jussionis arcessivit, duplam Deus  
mortem retribuit, primam in separatione animæ  
et corporis, secundam in eterna cruciatione ani-  
mæ et corporis. Ibid. If such then as hold on  
the Devil’s Side, i. e. imitate and copy after  
him, shall have a Part in the Second Death,  
Rev. xxi. 8. let the Libertine and Freethinker,  
who are equally the Subject of this Chapter,  
consider and tremble, whose detestable Ambi-  
tion and inglorious Triumph is, to confound  
the Simple, seduce the Innocent, pervert the  
Unwary, and, by propagating loose Notions  
and irreligious Principles, to make Converts  
to Vice and Infidelity, and enlarge the King-  
dom of Darkness.

Ibid. Find it.] i. e. Feel it, as ch. xii. 26.  
νεῖμα πνεύματος. Nobil. translates it, experi-  
untur.

CHAP.



## CHAP. III.

## The ARGUMENT.

**I**N order to confute the false and dangerous Principles maintained by the irreligious and profane Scoffers in the foregoing Chapter, in this is displayed the great Happiness of the Righteous, and the impotent Malice of the Wicked against them. For tho' God, for wise Ends of his Providence, permits the Righteous sometimes to be afflicted, and even to die under the Severity of their Persecutions, yet do they not totally cease to be; but as they die in the Lord, so they still live unto, and with God, in whose Hands their Souls are. But the Wicked, on the contrary, though they promise themselves great Happiness in their sinful Courses, are miserable both here and hereafter. The Chapter concludes with the Praise of Chastity, and the sad State and Condition of Adulterers and their Children.

Ver. 1. *The Souls of the Righteous are in the Hand of God.* i. e. in the State of Separation, the Souls of the Righteous that are departed, shall after Death find great Refreshment and Comfort of their Labours; and being in God's Keeping, enjoy a State of the greatest Happiness and Security. This State of the piously-deceased, the ancient Jews, according to *Genesis*, called *Paradise*, or the *Garden of Pleasure*; where, though they enjoyed not the consummate Happiness which they were in Expectation of hereafter, yet even at present, and in their intermediate State, they had some Foretaste and Anticipation of their future Happiness; but they held none to have this pleasing Sense, but the *wise and righteous*, such as had their Souls well purified before they departed from their Bodies. From this Expression, *that the Soul is in God's Hand*, we may infer, that the human Soul is not only a Substance distinct from the Body, but that it lives after it in a State separate from it, and such a State as is susceptible of Happiness or Misery: For why are the Souls of the Righteous here said to be deposited in the Hand of God, but because it denotes a Place of Rest and Safety? where the departed Souls shall not only live and survive, but live too in a manner far different from that in which they lived here: where no Temptation shall be able to assault, no Sin to pollute, no Affliction to discompose them.

[*The Souls of the Righteous are in the Hands of God.*] This is opposed to the last Clause of the foregoing Chapter, *and they who are his* (the Devil's) *Portion* (or of his Party) *do find it* (Death) *But the Souls of the Righteous*, &c. whence, and from Verse 2, 3, it appears that the author is speaking of the Souls of those who are dead, and that this cannot well be understood of the Afflictions which the Righteous may undergo in this Life.]

*Ibid.* *And there shall no Torment touch them.* Nor are such as die in the Lord only freed from Temptations and Dangers, from Injuries and Persecutions, from Diseases and Death, and all other Burdens of the Flesh, but we may piously believe, that more is here implied than

a bare Freedom from Evils, that they are possessed of some positive degree of Happiness; that, in particular, they have pleasing Anticipations of their Reward, and wait for it with a holy Impatience; and in the mean time are in *Paradise*, or in *Abraham's Bosom*, or some Place of Rest and Refreshment appointed for them by God: But with respect to the *Martyrs* in particular, who had suffered gloriously in God's Cause, it was a Notion very early entertained in the primitive Church, that these entered immediately upon a perfect State of Happiness and Glory. Or we may understand this Passage, of the Afflictions which the Righteous may undergo in this Life, that, though their Torments be the most exquisite that Heathen Malice can invent, yet, by the Strength of their Faith, and a sure Dependence upon God, they shall overcome the Reluctance of Nature, and not only suffer with Patience, but with Joy and Thanksgiving. Not that this Resolution of the Righteous is the effect of any Stoical Apathy, or that they have not Flesh and Blood, like other Folks, to feel the Force of Sufferings, but 'tis the Power of a strong Faith that makes them more than Conquerors. "If the Souls of the Martyrs were indeed in their Bodies when they had Trial of such a Variety of Sufferings, they could never, says *St. Bernard*, have been able to have gone through them; but while their Bodies were in the Hands of their Persecutors, and mangled by them, their Souls were in the Hand of God; and the Holy Spirit, with which they were filled, kept them above all Sense of Pain, and rendered them quite invulnerable." And whoever reads the Letter from the Churches of *Lyons* and *Vienna* to those of *Asia* and *Phrygia*, wherein the exquisite Sufferings of the Martyrs, and their invincible Constancy in the most severe Trials is described, (see *Euseb. Eccles. Hist.* lib. 1. c. 1.) will acknowledge the Truth of this Observation, and at the same Time be convinced, that the History of their Sufferings is the most complete Comment upon the Beginning of this Chapter.

Ver. 2. *In the Sight of the Unwise they seemed to die.* This is a very happy Expression, for good Men rather sleep than die; their Hope and well-grounded Assurance changes the Nature of Death, and turns it into a Sleep. *St. Chrysostom* expresses himself to the same Purpose. "Death is no longer to be counted Death, 'tis only a Name; nay, the very Name also is gone, for Christians call it not Death, but Rest and Sleep." *Homil. 29. in Genes.* Accordingly, in many Places both of the Old and New Testament, where the Death of good Men is mentioned, it is expressed by Sleeping; *John* xii. 11. *Acts* viii. 60. *1 Thess.* iv. 14. Hence the Day, on which the *Blessed Virgin* died, is in the *Greek Church* called *her Rest*; and the Places where the first Martyrs were buried, *amongst us*, of *Resting Places*.

Ver. 3. *And their going from us to be utter Destruction, but they are in Peace.* The Wicked, who are also in the former Verse called the Unwise (for in the Book of *Proverbs*, *Wisdom*, and



and Ecclesiasticus, Wickedness and Folly are synonymous Terms) imagine the Righteous to be miserable, because, when alive, they were mortified, as to all Pleasures; and when dead, extinct and annihilated; according to their Opinion. To such vain Reasoners, who had no Notion of a Life beyond this, it is here very justly replied, that the Righteous are so far from being Sufferers by Death, that when dead they are in Peace, and their Happiness the greatest; see Job. iii. 17, 18. And this the Voice from Heaven confirms, Rev. xiv. 13. *Blessed are the Dead that die in the Lord, for they rest from their Labours.* Instead of being Objects of Ridicule and Contempt, the Character of the Righteous is rather that beautiful Contrast of St. Paul's, *as Deceivers and yet true, as dying and behold they live, as chastened and not killed, as sorrowful yet always rejoicing*; 2 Cor. vi. 8, 9, 10. The Word *ὄψωμινα* which our Translators render *utter Destruction*, is a Metaphor taken from Potters Ware, which when broken by some Casualty to Pieces, cannot, by any Skill or Ingenuity, be reunited, as Vessels of Silver and of other Metal may, by being melted again, be in some measure restored. See Psal. ii. 9. Rev. ii. 27. where the Word is thus applied. It is designed here to denote by a Figure Annihilation and Extinction, or an absolute and entire Ruin of the human Body beyond all Possibility of Recovery from its Dust, which the Comparison drawn from an Earthen Vessel will better suit: And this indeed was the Sentiment of the Epicureans, and as such maintained by the Libertines here introduced, that when the Soul quitted the Body, it was dissipated into Air, *in tenues evanuit auras*; and thus Calmet explains this Term as meaning, *suivant le Grec, un brisement, un dissipation entiere, comme un chose qu'on brise, & qui s'en va en poussiere.* Comm. in loc.

Ver. 4. *Yet is their Hope full of Immortality.* In the midst of their Misery and Afflictions, they comforted themselves with the pleasing Hopes of a happy Resurrection to a blessed State of Immortality, as the seven Brethren did, 2 Maccab. vii. and when, as a Reward of their Constancy and Virtue, the Saints shall be finally in Possession of their Happiness, and receive their *μισθὸν πλήρη*, 2 John 8. then in another and no less proper Sense of these Words may it be said *ἡ ἐλπίς αὐτῶν ἀθανάσιος πλήρης*, *their Hope of Immortality is full*, i. e. fulfilled and compleated. [To this is opposed *κενή ἐλπίς*, ver. 11.] — It was even the Opinion of the wiser Heathen, that a good and virtuous Life was the surest Way to Immortality. Thus Antisthenes in Laërtius, *Τὸς βυλομύθευ ἀθανάτους εἶναι δὲν τῷ δόξουσιν ἢ δικαίως*, i. e. those who aim at Immortality ought to live justly and righteously.

Ver. 5. *And having been a little chastised, they shall be greatly rewarded.* This cannot relate to the Smallness or Lightness of the Sufferings, which are above described so violent, as to affect even the Life of the Righteous; but the Meaning seems to be, that, having suffered through the Malice of their Persecutors for a small space of Time, with respect to Eter-

nity, those Afflictions which were comparatively but for a Moment, will work for them a far more exceeding and eternal weight of Glory. Thus the Writer to the Hebrews having described at large, ch. xi. the Sufferings of the Worthies mentioned there, says, that such chastening (*ῥάσκεια*, the Word here used) *tho' for the present it seemeth grievous, yet afterwards it yieldeth the peaceable Fruit of Righteousness to them which are exercised thereby*; ch. xii. 11. St. Gregory observes, *that God permits the Afflictions of good Men, that he may draw much Benefit from them*: For this reason he permitted Jacob to be persecuted by Esau, and David by Saul, that the Persecutions they suffered, might be at once the Exercise and Crown of their Virtue. And the Reward of such suffering Virtue follows in the next Sentence, that God having tried their Faith and Constancy, and found them worthy, is pleased finally to translate them to himself, to live with him, and with the blessed Society of just Men made perfect, of whom the World, in their several Ages, was not worthy to enjoy his beatific Presence.

Ver. 6. *As Gold in the Furnace bath he tried them, and received them as a Burnt Offering.* According to the best Explanation which the Commentators and Jewish Writers give of the Burnt-offering, the Victim's Throat was to be cut, its Body dissected into Quarters, and the Bowels taken out, and afterwards it was to be burnt to Ashes, that, if possible, there might be nothing of it left. 'Tis a very strong and beautiful Image which this Writer has chose to represent the great Variety and Intensity of Sufferings, which the Saints undergo for Righteousness Sake: For as, in the Oblation of the Holocaust, the Victim was entirely consumed in the Flames by the Appointment of God, and in Honour of him, *so right dear and precious in the Sight of the Lord is the Death of his Saints*, when, *enduring a great Fight of Afflictions*, they expire in the Cause of Virtue; for Martyrdom is, of all others, a Sacrifice the most perfect and pleasing, that a Creature is capable of offering; 'tis, as an Instance of the most consummate Fortitude, in the Language of Seneca, *Spēctaculum Deo dignum, ad quod respiciat Deus intentus operi suo*. His Description of suffering Innocence, as I find it cited by Lactantius, comes nearest to that of the inspired Writers, and is indeed a surprizingly fine Sentiment from an Heathen Philosopher: *Hic est ille homo honestus — qui sive toto corpore tormenta patiēda sunt, sive flamma ore recipienda est, sive extendenda per patibulum manus, non querit quid patiat, sed quā bene.* Ap. Lactant. lib. vi. Instit. cap. 17.

Ver. 7. *And in the Time of their Visitation they shall shine.* The Vulgate, which Coverdale follows, joins this to the former Verse, and reads, *Et in tempore erit respectus illorum*, i. e. that God will in due time have a respect to, and reward, such Saints and Martyrs who sell a Sacrifice in his Service, who, like the Victim in the Burnt-offering, were consumed in the Flames, and whose Souls are purified by their Afflictions, and prepared for Heaven, and made fit Offerings for God to receive. This Sense



Sense the Syriac Interpreters prefer. Our Version, with the Arabic, follows the Greek, καὶ ἐν καιρῷ θησκοπῆς αὐτῶν ἀναλάμψουσιν; which Expression may be taken in two Senses; either it may be understood of the Afflictions and Sufferings of the Righteous in this Life, for so θησκοπή and ἡμέρας θησκοπῆς often signify in the LXX, particularly *Isai. x. 3.* According to this Acceptation, the Meaning of this Place is, that the Righteous shall shine the brighter for their Afflictions, and that God will glorify his Saints in and by them. Thus God promises to such as set their Love upon him, not only that he will be with them in Trouble, but that he will deliver them from it, and bring them to Honour by it, *Psal. xci. 15.* We cannot have a more remarkable Instance of the Presence of God with his Servants in Afflictions, than in the History of the three Children cast into the Furnace, where the Text acquaints us, that One in the form of the Son of God, probably an Angel, conspicuous and distinguishable by his Brightness, walked with them, and accompanied them in the very Flames; and that this Accident, and their miraculous Deliverance from it, was the Occasion of their being promoted in the Province of Babylon, *Dan. iii.* The Sentiments of the primitive Writers, upon occasion of the Martyrs Sufferings, are most noble and magnificent: "A Christian, says *Tertullian*, never thinks himself so fine, never so illustrious, as at the Stake; he is then in his Triumphal Chariot, going to Heaven in State." *Apol. pro Christianis.* Nor is what *Eusebius* writes less observable: "That it was a most charming Sight, to behold the Martyrs in Prison, to see how their Misery became them, how they adorned their Fetters, and looked as captivating in their Chains, as a Bride in all her Glory upon the Day of Marriage." *Ecclef. Hist. lib. v. c. 1.* Or we may understand this Passage in another Sense, viz. That the Righteous shall shine with glorified Bodies, ἐν θησκοπῇ ψυχῶν, ver. 13. For the Jews have a Tradition, that the Bodies of the Righteous shall be cloathed at the Resurrection with a Clothing of Light, as of a pure Flame. This is agreeable to the Descriptions made in the Old Testament, of the Just rising from their Graves, That they shall shine as the Brightness of the Firmament, and as the Stars, for ever and ever, *Dan. xii. 3.* And in the New it is said, That they shall shine as the Sun in the Kingdom of their Father, *Matth. xiii. 43.* Hence in Scripture, and particularly in the Writings of St. Paul, the State and Happiness of the Blessed is expressed by the Word *Glory.* See also *Matt. xvii. 2. Acts ix. 3. Rev. i. 14, 15.*

*Ibid.* And run to and fro like Sparks among the Stubble.] By the Stubble it is certain the Wicked are meant, called also Chaff, by a like Metaphor, *Psal. i. 5.* The Expression here is Proverbial; and if it be understood of the Righteous in this Life, and of their Conduct, as distinguished from the Wicked, the Meaning then will be the same with that of St. Paul, *Phil. ii. 15.* That the Sons of God, i. e. the Righteous, shine as Lights in the World, in the midst of a crooked and perverse Generation. But if it is

applied to the future State of the Righteous, it seems to intimate their great Swiftneſs in their heavenly Vehicles. Our Translation, it must be confessed, which renders ἀναλάμψουσιν, by running to and fro, conveys but a flat and low Idea, the Image only of a few random Sparks. The Sense would be more sublime and just, after this manner, "They (the Saints) shall run or pass thro' the Ranks of the Wicked (discurrent, says the Syriac Version, *justi inter impios*) as Fire spreads through the Stubble every where, uncontroled and irresistible." Hereby probably is intimated their Power over them; a farther Description of which follows in the next Verse.

Ver. 8. They shall judge the Nations, and have Dominion over the People, and their Lord shall reign for ever.] [or, the Lord shall reign over them. καὶ βασιλεύσει αὐτῶν κύριος εἰς τὰς αἰῶνας.] Tho' the Righteous may be said even in this Life to judge the Nations, i. e. to condemn the Wicked, by the Conspicuousness of their Faith and Virtue, in which Sense κρίναι is taken by the Arabic Version, and is often understood so by St. Jerom, and by St. Austin, *De Civitate Dei, lib. xx. c. 5.* see also *John v. 24.* yet I rather incline to apply this Passage to the next Life, "That in the great and final Judgment of the World, the Saints shall be Assessors with God in judging the Wicked." For 'tis piously thought by many learned Men, that the Saints, when crowned themselves by God, shall be invested with the Authority of pronouncing Sentence even against evil Angels and wicked Spirits. And it was an Opinion that prevailed generally in the early Times of Christianity, that at the Resurrection every Man should rise in order, ἐκαστος ἐν τῷ ἴδιῳ τάγματι, i. e. according to the Degree of his Goodness; and that they who were raised and judged first, should themselves have a Part in judging those which followed. See *Dan. vii. 18, 22. Matth. xix. 28. 1 Cor. vi. 2, 3. Rev. ii. 26.* See Note on Chap. i. and Ver. 1. of this Book.

Ver. 9. They that put their Trust in him, shall understand the Truth, and such as be faithful in Love shall abide with him.] i. e. Persons so qualified shall happily experience this Truth in particular; or the Meaning may be, that they are the fittest and most likely to attain the Knowledge of Divine Truths in general, which is the Sense of *Messieurs Du Port Royal*; for the Author seems to point out two Ways or Conditions for that Purpose; the first is, Trust in God, or rather a Distrust of a Man's Self, and of his own Perfection and Abilities, because Humility is the surest way to Divine Knowledge; the second is, a sincere and unfeigned Love of God, which displays itself in Obedience and a Readiness to do God's Will; for an honest and well-disposed Heart, free from any corrupt Passions or Affections, may soonest hope to receive spiritual Illuminations, and the Knowledge of Saving Truths, according to that Observation of our Blessed Saviour, That if any Man will do his Will, he shall certainly know of his Doctrine, *John vii. 17.* According to the different pointing of the Greek Text, the last Clause of this Passage of our



our *Author* may be differently understood : Either we may render with the *Margin*, and the *Geneva Bible*, *Such as be faithful shall remain with him in Love* ; and thus the *Oriental Versions* point the Place : Or, as our *Translators* take it, *Such as be faithful in Love, shall abide with him, i. e. cleave to him with so firm and unshaken a Resolution, that neither Tribulation nor Distress, Life nor Death, shall separate them from him* ; and in this Sense *προσμένειν τῷ κυρίῳ* is taken, *Acts* xi. 23. The *Syriac Interpreters* seem to understand this Clause in the Sense of not falling away, *qui sunt fideles, per charitatem permanebunt ipsius ; quia gratiam & misericordiam electis suis impertitur.*

Ver. 11. *Whoso despiseth Wisdom and Nurture, he is miserable.*] This and the former Verse refer to those vain Reasoners, and wicked Libertines, whose Character is so justly drawn in ch. ii. The Sentiments of this Writer agree frequently, we may observe, with the Book of *Proverbs* ; and this Passage very much resembles that fine Advice in the Conclusion of the eighth Chapter of that inspired Writer, particularly the two last Verses, where Wisdom speaketh thus of herself, *Whoso findeth me, findeth Life, and shall obtain Favour of the Lord ; but he that sinneth against me, wrongeth his own Soul ; all they that hate me, love Death.* See also *Psal.* ii. 12. in the LXX Version. St. Cyprian opens his Treatise, *De habitu Virginum*, with an Encomium of Discipline, too fine and remarkable to be here omitted : *Disciplina custos spei, retinaculum fidei, dux itineris salutaris, fomes ac nutrimentum bonæ indolis, magistra virtutis, facit in Christo manere semper, ac jugiter Deo vivere, & ad promissa cælestia & divina præmia pervenire. Hanc & sectari salubre est, & aversari ac negligere lethale.* Tertullian, throughout his Works, is equally full of its Commendation.

Ver. 12. *Their Wives are foolish, and their Children wicked.*] It is obvious to observe, that the Book of *Proverbs* not only calls Wickedness in general by the Name of Folly, but seems to brand the Sin of Uncleaness, or Lust, with that Name more particularly. What therefore our *Translators* here render *foolish*, in the *Marginal Reading* is, *light*, or *unchaste* ; and the *Arabic Version* confirms this Sense, which reads, *Uxores ejus procaces* ; and the *Port-Royal Comment*, *Les Femmes sont dereglées.* As to what is here observed, that the Children of such Parents are generally vicious and wicked ; this is almost unavoidable : For as the *Apocryphal Esdras* speaks, *Like as the Field is, so also is the Seed ; and as the Flowers be, such are also the Colours* ; 2 *Esd.* ix. 17. This so natural and constant a Resemblance shews the great Duty and Necessity incumbent on Parents to be good and virtuous themselves, upon account of their Children, and the good or evil Consequences derived to them ; for according to their own Conduct and Behaviour, they entail either a Blessing or a Curse upon their Children, as it follows in the next Words, which the *Oriental Versions* join with great Judgment to this Verse.

Ver. 13. *Blessed is the barren, that is undefiled, which hath not known the sinful Bed.*]

This is to be understood of the *barren Wife*, that is chaste and free from Adultery, whose great Commendation in Scripture is *κοίτη ἀμώβη*, *Heb.* xiii. 4. And though she may be reproached by some upon account of her Barrenness, as was the Sentiment of the Jews particularly, through their Hopes and Expectations of the Messiah, yet shall her Virtue be recompensed by God, as far preferable to the most fruitful Adultery. In vain have some *Popish Writers* endeavoured to ground upon this Place, which undoubtedly relates to married Persons, the Order of Perpetual Virgins ; as if that was established and approved of in the Age of this Writer, and known to the ancient Jews, which is certainly the Invention of more modern Times — In this Passage no Reflexion is intended against Marriage, nor any Preference given to a continued Celibacy ; the Comparison is between married Persons only, viz. a barren Wife, and a teeming Adulteress : See *Chemnitii Examen*, par. iii. p. 17. Nor does this Writer commend a Person in general, *ἥτις οὐκ ἔγνω κοίτῳ*, but such a chaste Wife in particular, who has not defiled the Bed *ἐν ἀπαμίωσιν*. I shall only observe upon the Greek reading of this Passage, that the Particle *οὐ*, which introduces it, and seems harsh and ungrammatical, is here, as 'tis often in the sacred Writers, *pleonastical* : See Instances of this in *Blackwall's Sacr. Classics*, vol. i. p. 118.

[I would distinguish it thus : *ἐνικατὰ ἐγὼς ἡ γένεσις αὐτῶν. "Οὐ, &c.* In our Version "Οὐ is rendered, *Wherefore.*]

Ibid. *She shall have Fruit in the Visitation of Souls.*] Though she has not the Blessing of Children, and the Fruit of the Womb which cometh of the Lord, yet shall she have her Fruit, i. e. her Recompense and Reward, when hereafter she shall be crowned, and reign in Glory with other pure and immaculate Souls. The Writer of this Book probably entertained that Notion, so frequent to be met with among the *Rabbins*, and even primitive Fathers, That after 6000 Years there will be a glorious *Millennium*, when the Saints shall reign a Thousand Years upon Earth. This they call *Dies Magnus Judicii*, and is probably the *ἡμέρα τῆς ψυχῶν* here referred to. In this Sense the learned Mr. Mede understands this Passage ; as likewise ver. 7 and 8 of this Chapter. See *Comment. Apocalyp.* lib. iii. p. 536.

[Ibid. *She shall have Fruit.* *ἔξει καρπὸν.* The Particle *ᾧ* is not absolutely necessary here, and yet it is probable it has been omitted by means of the Similitude of the Syllable *καρ* ; thus, *ἔξει ᾧ καρπὸν, &c.* as in the next Verse, *δοθήσεται ᾧ αὐτῇ, &c.* where the turn of the Sentence, and the Reason is like this.]

Ver. 14. *And (blessed is) the Eunuch, which with his Hands hath wrought no Iniquity — unto him shall be given the Special Gift of Faith.*] The Meaning is not, that the Special Gift of Faith shall be given him, as our *Version* has it, but rather that some Special Gift or Reward shall be given him for his Faithfulness : And so the *Syriac Interpreters* renders, *Dabitur ei pro ipsius gratia & fidelitate hereditas desiderii.* And in this Sense of Faithfulness we are to understand St. Paul, when he says, *I have kept the Faith :*

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Henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness, 2 Tim. iv. 7. And though Eunuchs were forbidden under the Law to enter into the Congregation of the Lord, Deut. xxiii.

1. that is, were not admitted to Honours and Offices either in the Church or Commonwealth of Israel; yet the inward Qualifications, and rare Endowments of the Soul shall be sufficient to give such pure Persons, as offend not against God by any loose Action or impure Thought, a Title to the Communion of Saints, and not only take off the outward legal Restraint, but give them an honourable Place in the Temple of the Lord, and even make them, for their Victory in overcoming the Flesh, Pillars in it; Rev. iii. 12. The Sense of this Passage greatly resembles that of *Isai. lvi. 4, 5. Thus saith the Lord unto the Eunuchs that keep my Sabbaths, and choose the Things that please me, and take hold of my Covenant, Even unto them will I give in my House, and within my Walls, a Place and a Name better than of Sons and Daughters.*

[Ver. 15. *For glorious is the Fruit of good Labours.* αγαθῶν ὁ πόνος καρπὸς ἐνδοξός. As the Author is here speaking of conjugal Chastity in particular, and the Bed undefiled, the Word πόνος seems too lax and undetermined; and therefore it is probable that, instead of πόνος, he wrote ὕπνιος. *For the Fruit of honest Embraces is honourable.* And to καρπὸς αγαθῶν ὕπνιων is opposed τέκνα μοιχῶν, ver. 16. and ἀνόμων ὕπνιων τέκνα, iv. 6. see ch. vii. 2.]

Ibid. *And the Root of Wisdom shall never fall away.* [rather fail.] i. e. of Chastity, which is the Subject of the foregoing Verses: And so the Syriac Version understands it, *Radices castitatis non evellentur.* The Sense of the whole Verse is, that every good Work will be attended with a Reward. And thus the Arabic Version, *Bonorum enim operum eximius ac pulcherrimus est fructus;* and that Chastity in particular, which is a glorious Victory over ourselves, hath this pleasing Prospect and Comfort in Reversion, that many Blessings and Privileges will descend from God upon the Branches of a chaste and holy Stock; and that the Virtue and Goodness of Parents is a Security and Treasure to their Posterity. We may observe, that, as in the Book of Proverbs the Adulterer is described to be a Man void of Understanding, ch. vi. 32. so this Writer makes Chastity to proceed from Wisdom: And this possibly St. Paul might intend, Rom. xii. 3. when he advises, *Φρονεῖν εἰς τὸ σωφρονεῖν*, which St. Jerom renders, *Sapere ad pudicitiam*, Cont. Jov.

Ver. 16. *As for the Children of Adulterers, they shall not come to their Perfection, and the Seed of an unrighteous Bed shall be rooted out.* Τέκνα μοιχῶν ἀτέλεια ἔσται, which we may understand in two Senses; either that a Bastard shall not be Partaker of holy Things, i. e. shall not be admitted to officiate in the sacred Mysteries, nor to hold public Dignities, according to the marginal Reading, and the Geneva Version; and so the Sense will be the same with that in Deut. xxiii. 2. *A Bastard shall not enter into the Congregation of the Lord, even unto the tenth Generation.* And indeed some Lawgivers anciently fixed

such a Mark of Infamy upon Bastards, as to forbid their coming to the sacred Offices: Even the Heathens themselves excluded Bastards, as well as the Prophane and Wicked, from the Participation of their Mysteries; and according to the old Ecclesiastical Laws, Bastards were not capable of being ordained without a Dispensation: See *Watson's Compl. Incum.* p. 102. That ἀτέλεια will admit this Sense, see *Hesychius*, and *Leigh's Critica Sacra*, in voce; and thus it is sometimes understood by the ancient Greek Fathers—Or we may understand this Place, with our Translators, of the short and uncertain Continuance of such a spurious Offspring, upon whom God may visit the Iniquity of their Fathers. And indeed we meet with in Scripture a most remarkable Instance of the Divine Vengeance in this Particular, viz. that the darling Offspring of David's Guilt was smote by God, and perished quickly from before his Eyes; and God gives this very Reason for it, *Because thou hast done this Thing, the Child that is born unto thee shall surely die;* 2 Sam. xii. 14.

[The Metaphor here is taken from Fruits. See ch. iv. 5. x. 7. *Ecclus xxiii. 25.* This Verse depends upon the foregoing, and is opposed to it.]

[Ver. 17. *And their last Age shall be without Honour.* καὶ ἀτιμὸν ἐπ' ἡλικίᾳ τῇ γῆρας ἀνέλῳ. *Their old Age at last shall be without Honour.*]

Ver. 18. *If they die quickly they have no Hope, neither Comfort in the Day of Trial.* [ἐξουὶα, SHALL have no Hope.] Some learned Men have thought (see *Usher's Body of Divinity*, p. 16.) that what is said here, and in the Context, is a hard and uncharitable Sentence upon Bastards, whose very Birth and Entrance into the World, though it be indeed by a Crime of their Parents, yet themselves may be thought guiltless, and as such, undeserving of Punishment: But the Observation of this Writer will be less liable to Exception, if we consider, that there is often a natural and hereditary Taint in wicked and debauched Families, and that some particular Sins run as it were in the Blood, the Seeds of future Wickedness. Hence holy Job, speaking of such wicked Parents, says, in very strong and significant Terms, that *they lay or treasure up Iniquity for their Children*, ch. xxi. 19. which natural Propensity and vicious turn of Temper God foreseeing, sometimes has recourse to Extremities to stop the Infection, and hinder the spreading Guilt. Though viciously disposed Children more generally hasten their own Death by Irregularity and Loose living; or, if by chance they live long, like the wanton Elders that tempted *Susanna*, being grown old in Wickedness, they lose all the Respect and Reverence otherwise paid to Grey-hairs. And when they come to die, their Case, like that of other wicked Men, is most desperate; nor will they have any thing to alledge in their Favour in the Great Day of Enquiry, ἀναίρεσις. Thus the Psalmist describing the End of the Wicked says, *The Ungodly shall not be able to stand in the Judgment*, Psal. i. 6. where the LXX read, *οὐκ ἀναστήσονται οἱ ἀσεβεῖς ἐν κρίσει*, which has been unaccountably perverted in favour of the Opinion,



Opinion, that there shall be only a Resurrection of the Just. But that Passage of the Son of Sirach, *Ecclus xli. 9.* comes nearest the Sense of this Writer, *Woe be unto you, ungodly Men; if ye be born, ye shall be born to a Curse; and if ye die, a Curse shall be your Portion.*

Ver. 19. *Horrible is the End of the unrighteous Generation.*] Calmet very properly observes, (see *Comment. in loc.*) that what is said in this and the following Chapter, of the sad Prospect and miserable Fate of the Children of Adulterers, ought not to be understood as spoken absolutely by this Writer, but only of such, as being abandoned and debauched themselves, imitate and follow the vicious Courses of their Parents; for otherwise, the Crimes of their Ancestors cannot be imputed to them in the Judgment of God, nor will they be answerable for them before his Tribunal: For it is very possible, that Children thus born in Sin, and from a criminal and forbidden Commerce, may yet prove virtuous and regular in themselves; and that the Children of even good Men and Saints may be lewd and vicious; as was the Case of old *El's* Children in particular, who made the Lord's People to transgress through their scandalous Uncleanness, *1 Sam. ii. 22.*

## CHAP. IV.

## The ARGUMENT.

**I**N this Chapter the Author pursues the same Subject with which he concluded the former, and shews how much happier, upon the comparison, chaste and virtuous Persons are, though without Children, than Adulterers and the Brood of a sinful and polluted Bed: That the former, if they enjoy Long-life, as they generally do, are in a State of Peace and Security; and if taken away by an early and untimely Death, it is an Instance of Mercy to them, that they may escape thereby some imminent Danger or approaching Evil.—But the Life of the Vicious and Debauched, is, on the contrary, both short and unhappy; their Death is dishonourable, their Hope desperate, and their future Estate full of Misery and Torment.

Ver. 1. *Better it is to have no Children, and to have Virtue: For the Memorial thereof is immortal, because it is known with God and with Men.*] *καλὴν ἀρετὴν μετ' ἀρετῆς.* Better is a Childless State with Virtue. The Vulgate reads, *O quam pulchra est casta generatio cum claritate!* which is not a just Translation of the original Words, *καλὴν ἀρετὴν μετ' ἀρετῆς*; for *ἀρετὴν* is very improperly rendred by *generatio*; and then it seems, as does our Version, either to confine Chastity to Celibacy, or to such, as being married, have no Children; as if Virtue and Fruitfulness were incompatible. Whereas the true Meaning is, that though a Person hath no Children, and seeks not any by Acts of Incontinence, or unlawful Mixtures, his Virtue supplies what is wanting to him in that respect, and his good Actions shall be like Children to him, and hinder his Name from being lost in Oblivion. Such a Virtue as can

withstand a criminal Passion, and is Proof against all the dangerous Temptations of it, is approved by God, and will be finally rewarded by him, and cannot fail of being respected and well spoken of by the valuable part of Mankind. And however the Libertine may pride himself in his spurious Issue, and the Adulteress value herself on the Fruit of her Womb, yet Incontinence will always differ from Barrenness, as a Crime does from a Misfortune.

Ver. 2. *When it is present, Men take Example at it.*] [The Reading of the *Alexandrian MS.* is much better, *τιμῶσιν, honour it.*] This Observation is not true of Men in general, that they have an Esteem for Virtue; for with respect to very many of the Species, that Reflection of *Horace* is still too true, *Virtutem incolumem odimus.* The Meaning therefore must be, that good Men esteem, admire, and follow after Virtue; that they will make virtuous Men, while they live, the Patterns for their Imitation, and honour their Memory when they are dead.—And even wicked Men have been known to regret the Loss of good Men, and to lament and even pity their suffering Fate.—Thus *Antiochus Epiphanes* wept for the Death of *Onias the High-priest*, *2 Maccab. iv. 37.* and the *Athenians* for that of *Socrates*, though they occasioned it.

*Ibid.* *It weareth a Crown, and triumpheth for ever.*] *ἐν τῷ αἰῶνι σεφανηφορεῖσα πομπῆει, or σεφανον φορεῖσα πομπῆει.* *Junius* understands *αἰῶν* of the present World, and renders, *in seculo hoc triumphat, i. e.* That Virtue, through a Consciouness of having done its Duty, through Hope anticipates, even in this Life, its future Reward, and by Faith triumphs, as already sure of a Crown. And indeed the *Syriac* and *Arabic Versions* confirm this Conjecture, both of which render, *in hoc seculo.* There is a manifest Allusion in this Verse to the *Olympic Games*, and the crowning of the Conquerors therein; for in the Original the following technical Terms are worth noting, *viz. σεφανηφορεῖν, πομπῆειν, ἀθλον, αἰῶν.* From whence the Learned, among other Reasons, infer, that this Book was not written by *Solomon*, who was dead above two hundred Years before the first *Olympiad.* See *Usher's Annals.*

*Ibid.* *Having gotten the Victory, striving for undefiled Rewards.*] The Sense of these Words, as they stand in our Translation, seems obvious enough, and is not much unlike that of *Horace*, *Virtusrepulse nescia sordida, Intaminatis fulget honoribus;* *Carm. Lib. iii. Od. 2.* but it does not agree with any of the ancient Versions. The Vulgate reads, *Incoquinatum certaminum præmium vincens;* *St. Cyprian* yet more obscurely, *Incoquinatum certaminum proelium vincens;* and the Greek, *τῶν ἀμείνων ἀθλον αἰῶνα νικῶσα.* The Expression in each of these Passages is very unusual and singular; with respect to the first, a Conqueror that receives the Reward of his Services, is not properly said, *vincere præmium certaminum*, but *reportare præmium*, or something to that effect: But the next, *certaminum prælum vincens*, which is the Rendering of *St. Cyprian* (*De singularitate cleri*) and of the Greek, has still less Authority



Authority to justify it; *vincere praelio* is classical, but *vincere praelium certaminum*, I believe, is quite without Precedent. Nor is ἀμείνων ἄθλων without its Difficulties and Objections. If I might be indulged the Liberty of proposing a very small Alteration, I would read the Passage thus, ἐν τῷ αἰῶνι σεφανηφορεῖσα πομπεύει, τὸ τῶν ἀμείνων ἄθλων, ἀγῶνα νικήσασα; where by ἄθλων I would understand, the Reward of the Contest, and not the Contest itself; and by ἀμείνων, those that had merited this Crown or Reward by being undefiled. And I have the Pleasure to find this Conjecture confirmed by the *Syriac Version*, which renders, *præbet se victtricem agonis eorum qui sine macula sunt*, applying it manifestly to the Persons, to the *Agonista* himself, and not to Contests, or the Nature of their Rewards. *Calmet's* Comment is likewise to the same Effect, and that of *Messieurs du Port Royal* still more explicit; *Elle triomphe & elle est couronnée comme victorieuse, apres avoir remporté le prix dans les combats pour la Chasteté.*

[The Difficulty in the vulgar Reading of the Greek will be, perhaps, somewhat removed, if ἄθλων be translated *laborum*, which is an usual Signification of the Word. But as the *Alex. MS.* (which seems much preferable to the others) instead of πομπεύει has πομπέμει, for ἀποπέμει or προπέμει, perhaps it might originally be thus, καὶ ἐν τῷ αἰῶνι σεφανηφορεῖσα, προπέμει (or ἀποπέμει) τὸ τῶν ἀμείνων ἄθλων ἀγῶνα νικήσασα. And bearing a Crown in this Life, it attendeth or sets forwards (or dismisseth) him who hath got the Victory in the Contest of the undefiled Labours; that is, it attendeth or dismisseth him to a better Life. I have before, in the Note on this Verse, taken Notice of the Baldness and Obscurity of *Cyprian's* and the *Vulgate's* rendering here; I shall only observe further, that it is probable [they gave a mere literal Translation of the Greek, without a strict Regard to the Propriety of the *Latin* Tongue, suitable to the Latinity of that Age. So *Ὀλύμπια* is, by *Ennius*, translated *Vincere Olympia*. Of which see more Instances in *Fred. Gronov. Observat. in Scriptor. Ecclesiast. C. x. præmium* in the *Vulgate* is probably nothing but a mistake of the Copy for *prælium*.]

Ver. 3. *The multiplying Brood of the Ungodly shall not thrive, nor take deep rooting from Bastard slips.* ἐν ῥόθων μοχθιδμάτων: probably the true Reading may be μοχθιδμάλα, Slips from spurious Trees, i. e. without a Metaphor, Children begotten of unlawful Beds, as it follows in Verse 6. The Sense, as well as *ἠπισφαλῶς βεβηκότα*, seems to require this. And this Reading is confirmed by *Coverdale's* Version, which renders, *And the Things that are planted with Whoredom, shall take no deep Rote, nor laye any fast Foundation.* And it has been observed in the vegetable World, that Slips from such irregular Productions do not thrive to any purpose. The Book of *Job* describes the Generation of the Wicked in like Terms; *This is the Portion of a wicked Man with God, and the Heritage of Oppressors which they receive of the Almighty: If his Children be multiplied, it is for the Sword; and his Offspring shall not be satisfied with Bread: Those that remain of him*

*shall be buried in Death, and his Widow shall not weep:* ch. xxvii. 13, 14, 15. The Description in this and the following Verses is agreeable to the Scripture Dialect, where Mankind in general is often represented under the Metaphor of Trees or a Plantation; see *Psal. i. 3. xcii. 12, &c.* According to the *Hebrew* Style, a Bough or Branch often denotes a Son; the Word *Ben*, or Son, nearly according with *Banna*, which signifies the Root; see *Gen. xlix. 22.* where the *Hebrew* Word *Banoth*, which we translate *Branches*, literally signifies *Daughters*. In like manner we find the Wicked in particular compared to unpromising Plants, or withered and decayed Trees: Thus *St. Jude*, speaking of such Libertines as defile the Flesh, emphatically describes them, as *Trees whose Fruit withereth, without Fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the Root*, ver. 12. The Sense of this Passage is briefly this, That God will visit the Posterity of such loose and debauched Persons, and that even their Children shall not continue for any long time, but as *Plants which God hath not planted, shall be rooted up.* Besides the Instance before given, of *David's* Child struck with Death, *St. Austin's* Account of his is very particular; he ingenuously acknowledges, that he had a Son *carnaliter ex se natum de peccato suo*, but that God quickly deprived him of the Child, though one of very promising Hopes; *Annorum erat fere quindecim, & ingenio præveniebat multos graves & doctos viros:* *Confess. lib. ix. c. 6.*

Ver. 4. *For though they flourish in Branches for a time; yet standing not fast, they shall be shaken with the Wind.* i. e. Though they equal, or even overtop the Prosperity of the Good and Virtuous, yet having laid their Foundation in Wickedness, they shall be overthrown by Calamities; like a Tree that has taken no deep root in the Earth, and is violently shaken with Storms and Tempests: To which agrees that Observation of the *Psalmist*; *When all the Workers of Wickedness do flourish, then shall they be destroyed for ever;* i. e. they are then hastening the more to their Excision, their Flourishing being in order to their Destruction, *ὅπως ἀν' ἐξολοθρεῖσθωσιν*, say the *LXX, Psal. xcii. 7.* but the Righteous are compared to the immovable Cedars in *Libanus*, ver. 12. According to that of *Solomon*, *A Man shall not be established by Wickedness, but the Root of the Righteous shall not be moved*, *Prov. xii. 13.* See also *Eccles. xl. 15.* where the Children of the Ungodly are called, *Unclean Roots upon a hard Rock.*

Ver. 5. *The imperfect Branches shall be broken off.* Rather, *Their Branches shall be broken off imperfect.*

*Ibid. Their Fruit unprofitable.* ὁ καρπὸς αὐτῶν ἀχρεὺς. This Adjective, though it has indeed this Signification of *unprofitable*, yet it means rather here *insuavis*, i. e. that the Fruit is unpleasant, not of a kindly Sort, and has not the right Taste or Flavour, as Fruit will always be that comes from a Tree which is wrongly planted, either in a Soil that is not proper for it, or where it wants its natural Sun, or when the Ground is too hot or too cold, too wet or too dry, too sour or too stubborn.

Ver. 6.



Ver. 6. *For the Children begotten of unlawful Beds are Witnesses of Wickedness against their Parents in their Trial.* [Of unlawful Beds, rather, Of unlawful Embraces.] ἐκ τῶν ἀνόμων ὕπνων τέκνα· ἁρπάγματα. Ὑπνῶ here does neither mean *Bed*, as our Translators render; nor *Sleep*, as the Margin and Vulgate have it; it rather means, *concubitus*, in which Sense it occurs, ch. vii. 2. and accordingly the Syriac Interpreters render, *Liberi ex illegitimo congressu procreati*; who, being Monuments of their Parents Guilt, are a perpetual Brand, while they live, of Infamy upon them. Agreeable to the Sentiments in this and the foregoing Verses is that Description of the Adulteress, and the Punishment of her unlawful Offspring, *Ecclus xxiii. 25, 26. Her Children shall not take root, and her Branches shall bring forth no Fruit; she shall leave her Memory to be cursed, and her Reproach shall not be blotted out*: But the Reproach does not terminate in the Parent only; the Children likewise, according to the Sense and Opinion of the World, are Partakers of the Shame, according to that farther Observation of the same wise Writer; *The Inheritance of Sinners Children shall perish, and their Posterity shall have a perpetual Reproach: For the Children will complain of an ungodly Father, because they shall be reproached for his sake*; *Ecclus xli. 6, 7*. But such illegitimate Children being here mentioned, as *Witnesses of Wickedness against their Parents in their Trial* (which Calmet understands to be the same with ἡμεῖς ἀδικήσας, ch. iii. 18.) I am inclined to think there is this further Meaning in the Words, viz. that such Children will be Accusers of, and Witnesses against, their guilty Parents in the other World. And thus the Geneva Bible expressly reads, which is confirmed by the Arabic Version, which renders in the future, *Testes erunt nequitie parentum suorum, cum explorabuntur*.

Ver. 7. *Tho' the Righteous be prevented with Death, yet shall he be in Peace.* That the Righteous are often snatched away before they arrive at any Maturity of Age, is evident from Observation. This is frequently the Effect of God's Goodness, which removes them from the Evils or Dangers of Life; but in what Time or Manner soever they depart, their Death ought not to be considered as a personal Misfortune, since God fixes them in a Place of Rest and Repose, free from the Temptations, as well as Troubles and Inquietudes of Life, waiting with a holy Impatience for further degrees of Happiness. The Prophet *Isaiah* has the same Reflexion, *That righteous and merciful Men are taken away from the Evil to come, and shall enter into Peace*, ch. lvii. 1. And one of the Ancients has made the like Observation, "That he that is a Favourite of the Gods, dies young;" ὁν φιλοῦσιν ἀποθνήσκει νέος. By the Righteous being prevented with Death, we are not to understand his being surprized by Death when he least thought of it; for the good Man can never, properly speaking, be surprized; he is always on the watch, prepared and ready to leave the World and appear before God; his Death may be indeed sudden or hasty, but not careless or unguarded.

Ver. 9. *But Wisdom is the Grey-hair unto*

*Men; and an unspotted Life is Old-age.* [ἡλικία γήρως. Our Translators seem not to have expressed ἡλικία at all in their Version, which yet has a strong and significant Meaning here, viz. That an unspotted Life is mature Old-age, or the Standard of Old-age. *Fulgentius* quotes this and the preceding Verse, and adds most excellently by way of Comment; *Ad cognoscendum, quantum possibile est, cujuslibet defuncti meritum, non quantum vixerit, sed qualiter quisque vixerit, intuentum. Sicut enim vita mala, quanto magis fuerit temporaliter prolongata, tanto magis delinquentibus multiplicat pœnam; sic vita bona, quamvis hic brevi tempore terminata, magnam sempiternamque conquirat bene viventibus gloriam. Vita igitur mala immaturos acerbosque senes demergit in Tartarum, vita vero bona defunctos juvenes maturos perducit ad Regnum.* De Statu Viduali, epist. 2. *Philo* observes of their great Legislator *Moses*, τὰς ἡλικίας προήκουσας, &c. *Ut provectos ætate appellet Juvenes*, &c. *qui nondum senuerunt, Seniores, non respiciens annorum numerum, aut tempus breve longumve, sed potentias animæ, prout movetur melius aut deterius.* De Resipisc. Noe, & de Vita Contempl. Agreeably to this the Romans styled their chief Council *Senatus*, and the *Lacedæmonians* called theirs γερουσία, not so much upon account of their Age, as the Wisdom and Prudence of those that composed it: In like manner *Presbyters*, in Ecclesiastical History, had their Name assigned them on the same Account. There is hardly any Subject on which the Sages have moralized more finely than on this; *honeste acta ætas* is, in the Opinion of one of them, the surest way to lengthen our Lives, and frustrate the Malice of Mortality. *Cicero* has many beautiful Sentiments upon this Occasion; particularly in his Book *De Senectute*, in the eighteenth Chapter there is a Thought which is very like what is contained in this and the foregoing Verse; *Non cani, non rugæ repente auctoritatem arripere possunt; sed honeste acta ætas superior fructus capit auctoritatis extremos.* And so the Poet:

*Ampliat ætatis spatium sibi vir bonus; hoc est Vivere bis, vita posse priore frui.*

But no Reflection of the Ancients is more judicious, than that of a learned Modern, "Grey-hairs, says he, consist not in the Multitude of Years, but in the Number and Variety of useful Observations that are made; nor is there any Reason why Wisdom should be peculiarly ascribed to the Aged, except such Persons, by having lived longer in the World, and having had the Opportunity of many and various Occurrences to ripen their Judgment, have accordingly improved it; for it matters not much, whether a Man makes his Observations in a longer or a less Time, provided he makes them well." *Boyle's Occasional Reflexions.*

Ver. 10. *So that, living amongst Sinners, he was translated:* This Passage is undoubtedly to be understood of *Enoch*, whom, being the first Example of eminent Sanctity, God was pleased to translate, as he had condemned the first Instance of Transgression, to shew his great Detestation of Sin. The great Question is, whether these



these Words signify a natural Death, or a miraculous Translation, as that of *Elijah* was: From some Expressions in the Context, many learned Men have been inclined to conjecture, that the Author of this Book thought *Enoch* died a natural Death, and that his Translation here mentioned, was only such a Translation: One Reason in particular, that has induced them to think an ordinary Death is here spoken of, is, that the holy Scripture often uses the like Expressions to signify Death: See 1 Kings xix. 4. *Jonah* iv. 3. and particularly *Job* xxii. 16. where the *Vulgate* renders *qui sublatus sunt ante tempus*, tho' the Writer is speaking of such as die a sudden Death. And it must be confessed, that the *Hebrew* Phrase in all these Passages is the same with that which *Moses* makes use of to express the Translation of *Enoch*; and from hence some have inferred, that even *Moses's* Words, *Gen.* v. 24. may be understood of a natural Death, and do not necessarily imply a miraculous Translation. But the Reasons and Arguments for a miraculous Translation seem to carry with them much greater Weight: For, 1st, Tho' the Text of *Moses* above-mentioned does not absolutely imply the miraculous Translation of a Man, yet living, into Heaven or another World; nevertheless, when we compare what he says of *Enoch* with what he relates of the other *Patriarchs*, it is plain he intended to distinguish the Manner in which *Enoch* went out of the World from that in which the other *Patriarchs* left it; for of all the rest mentioned in that Chapter it is said, *they died*, but of *Enoch* this is not said, but only, that *he was not, cum de seculo, was not found on Earth*, because God had translated him from it. Further, *Moses* takes notice of the eminent Probity of *Enoch's* Life, which made him well-pleasing to God, as this Writer does here, and then immediately adds, according to the *Vulgate*, *Et non apparuit, quia tulit eum Deus*; implying, that tho' he was no more seen upon Earth, yet he was still alive. This is the Sense which the *Chaldee Paraphrase* takes it in, which renders expressly, *Subductus est, & ascendit in caelum coram Domino*. Again, it is said of *Noah* and of *Abraham*, that *they walked with God*, *Genes.* vi. 9. xvii. 1. but it is not said, that *they were not*, because God took them. This Phrase therefore must import something that happened peculiarly to him. 2dly, The holy Penman, 2 Kings ii. 3, 5, 9. giving an Account of *Elijah's* Translation, which was confessedly miraculous, uses the very same Word, viz. *taken away*, several times, to express it by. 3dly, The Son of *Sirach* seems most favourable to *Enoch's* being translated alive, *Ecclus* xlv. 16. where, to avoid any Equivocalness, the *Vulgate* reads, *translatus est in Paradisum*, a Term not commonly made use of to express the ordinary Death of a Man. But, 4thly, The Writer of the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, xi. 5. puts this Matter beyond all dispute, and understands it clearly of a miraculous Translation, *by Faith Enoch was translated, that he should not see Death*. Lastly, Many of the Fathers expressly assert a miraculous Translation; the Author of the *Recognitions*, bearing the Name of *St. Clement*, says, "*Enoch*

"having pleased God, was translated into "Immortality." And *St. Cyprian*, "That he "deserved to be taken from the Contagion of "this World by a singular Favour." *De Mortal.* *St. Jerom* yet more fully, "That he was "translated into Heaven, and fed with celestial "Bread." *Epist.* 38. *ad Pammach.* See *Calmet's Dissertation* more at large.

[*Ibid.* *So that, living &c.* The Author seems to have meant something more than is here expressed, viz. *So that he was translated alive from amongst sinful Men.* καὶ ζῶν ἀπὸ μισαῶν ἀμαρτωλῶν μετέβη. For there was nothing extraordinary in *Enoch's* living amongst Sinners (for so did other good Men) nor in his being translated (for so are all Men by Death) but what was peculiar to him was, that ζῶν μετέβη, *he was translated whilst he was living*: μετέβη γὰρ μὴ ἰδὼν θάνατον, *Heb.* xi. 5. So that the Sense seems to require that ζῶν should be added to μετέβη, if this Passage is to be understood of *Enoch*: For it may be understood of the short-lived Righteous mentioned ver. 7.]

Ver. 12. *For the bewitching of Naughtiness doth obscure Things that are honest; and the Wandering of Concupiscence doth undermine the simple Mind.* This seems to refer to the Corruptions introduced by *Cain* and his Descendants, by which the holy Seed, by degrees, fell off, and became infected. *Calmet* observes, that there is a particular Beauty in the Word βαρκαντα, here rendred *Bewitching*, and that 'tis with the greatest Propriety applied to sinful Pleasures; for as there is a sort of *Magick* or *Fascination*, which imposes upon Men's Eyes, and makes them see false Appearances, and obscures what is real; so a like fatal Mistake arising from the Blindness of Men's Understandings, or the Perverseness of their Wills, makes them fancy there is Truth and Reality in false and imaginary Pleasures, and tempts them to overlook the real Danger that attends them. Nor is this true only of Pleasures in general, but applicable in a more particular Manner to the Sweetness of Love, or amorous Delights; I have therefore sometimes fancied φιλοτιμία to be the true Reading, which seems warranted by what follows. The like Observation we may make upon περιπατισμός, which the *Vulgate* renders, *inconstantia concupiscentiae*; and the *Lexicographers*, who refer to this Place, no less imperfectly, *occupatio mentis*. The Meaning is, that a continual Round or Circle of criminal Pleasures turns Peoples Heads; for so περιπατισμός properly signifies, and transforms Things and Persons into other Natures, like *Circe's* Enchantments; for so μελαμφοίς may be interpreted, which probably too is a technical Term. *Dr. Grabe* thinks the Verb μελαμφοίς would be more agreeable to this Place, and likewise more proper in *ch.* xvi. 25. See *Prolegom.* cap. iv. tom. ult. The Sense of this whole Verse is not improperly expressed by those Words of *Tully*; *Impedit consilium voluptas, rationi inimica est, ac mentis, ut dicam, praestringit oculos, nec habet ullum cum virtute commercium*: *De Senectute*, c. xii. [φαιδότητος is certainly right: And I doubt whether φιλότης for *res venera* is used in that Sense even by the Poets, without some Adjunct which may point out and restrain it



to that Signification: As in *Homer*, ἐν ἐνὶ φιλότητι, and φιλότητι μιγῆναι. The Reasoning too and Connection seem to require φιλότητος. See the foregoing Verse, where καὶ δόλας are specified.]

[Ibid. Simple Mind, γῆ ἀκακον, rather harmless.]

Ver. 13. *He being made perfect in a short time, fulfilled a long time.* It may be asked, with what Propriety *Enoch* is here said to have fulfilled a long time, since he was the shortest lived of the *Patriarchs* before the Flood, and lived but 365 Years? To this the Answer is very obvious, "If we measure not his Life by the Number of Years, but by the Perfection of his Goodness, δι' ἀρετῆς δρετῆς τελείωσιν, by his consummate Virtue and extraordinary Sanctity in the corrupt Age he lived in, he may be allowed, to all useful Purposes of Living, to have fulfilled an honourable Age." *Euseb. Præp. Evangel. lib. vii. c. 8.* So of *Abraham* it is said, *Gen. xxv. 8.* that he died in a good old Age, an old Man, and full of Years: Expressions exaggerated on purpose to denote an extraordinary length of Life. But here again it may be as justly enquired, how *Abraham* can properly be said to die in a good old Age; when, if we compare his Age with those that lived before him, it comes much short of theirs: For One hundred seventy-five Years may be considered as a small point of Time, with respect to those several hundreds of Years that the Fathers before the Flood arrived at; see *Gen. v.* And in the Computation of the Lives of the Fathers after the Flood, *Gen. xi.* we find all of them, except one, to be older than *Abraham* was. The true Answer therefore to this Difficulty is, that *Abraham* died in a good old Age, not as to the Measure of his Life by Days or Years, but in regard to the great Progress he had made in Faith and Holiness.

[Ver. 14. *Therefore hastened he to take him away from among the Wicked.* διὰ τὸ ἐσπευσεν ἐν μέσῳ πονηρίας, i. e. hastened him from amidst Wickedness.]

Ver. 15. *Neither laid they up this in their Minds, that his Grace and Mercy is with his Saints, and that he hath respect unto his Chosen.* Ἐπισκοπή, though it often signifies Visitation by Punishment, yet here means that Favour and Regard which God shews to his Elect: And the Sense of the whole Passage is, that the Wicked, among whom *Enoch* conversed, considered not the true Reason for which God took him, that it was an Act of his Mercy, rather than Severity, to remove a Saint, whose righteous Soul was vexed with the filthy Conversation of the Wicked, to a State of Purity, Perfection, and Happiness: Much less did they consider, that he was taken up alive into Heaven, to be an Example of that Happiness which God has prepared for those who walk with him and please him; and also a Proof, that our Bodies are capable of Immortality. Nor did they make any Use or Improvement of his Translation, tho' it certainly was the noblest Exhortation to Piety and Virtue that can be imagined.

The Construction of the Greek in the former part of this Verse is singular, λαὸν ἰδόντων is a

more usual way of Expression, than οἱ δὲ ἰδόντες, ἢ μὴ νοήσαντες.

[If some other Verb be not wanting at the End of the Verse, ἦσαν must be understood, ἰδόντες ἦσαν, i. e. ἔδον, and so νοήσαντες and δέοντες. So *xix. 18.* μαθὰρ—μοζόμενα, sc. ἦν. *2 Cor. v. 12.* διδόντες, sc. ἔσμεν, i. e. δίδομεν.] The latter part of this Verse being the same with *ch. iii. 9.* should be also translated alike.]

Ver. 16. *But the Righteous that is dead, shall condemn the Ungodly which are living.* Our Version and the Commentators understand this in the Future Tense, following the present Accenting of the Greek; but the Vulgate reads the Passage in the Present Tense, *Condemnat autem justus mortuus vivos impios*, which all the ancient English Versions follow; *Junius* also and *Calmet* render in like manner: So that probably the original Reading was that of the Complut. ed. καλανεῖν. If we follow this Reading, the Passage may relate to any righteous Person speedily taken away, whose good Life condemns or leaves without Excuse the Wicked that outlive him, and grow old in their Wickedness: Or it may relate to *Enoch* in particular, who may be said to condemn his Contemporaries, either virtually by his Word and Doctrine, or judicially, by denouncing God's Judgments against the Ungodly of his time. See the same Expression applied to *Noah* upon a like Occasion, *Heb. xi. 7.*

[This Verse may depend upon the former, and be connected to it by understanding and repeating the Particle ὅτι, thus ὅτι καὶ εἰς τὸ εἶδος—τοῖς ἐλεγκτοῖς αὐτῶν, ὅτι καλανεῖν δὲ (the same as ἢ ὅτι καλανεῖν) δικαίος, &c. *Unto his Chosen. And that the Righteous who is dead condemneth the Ungodly who are living—For they will see the End of the Wise, and yet will not consider what God in his Counsel, &c. i. e. for tho' they see—yet will they not consider, &c.*]

Ibid. *And Youth, that is soon perfected, the many Years and Old-age of the Unrighteous.* This is what the Prophet *Isaiah* means, when he says, *ch. lxxv. 20.* That the Child that has an early sense of Goodness and perfects Holiness betimes, shall die an hundred Years old; but the Sinner, being an hundred Years old and confirmed in Wickedness, shall die as an over-grown Child and be accursed.

Ver. 17. *And shall not understand . . . to what End the Lord hath set him in Safety.* The Wicked triumph over a godly Man suddenly snatched away, as if God had forgotten to be gracious, and was unmindful of his Piety, or was induced through some secret Fault to cut his Life short; not considering (for such have not the Knowledge of God or his Counsels) that it was in Mercy to him and for his greater Safety and Reward. This is assigned by learned Men as the Reason why *Lazarus* is mentioned, *Luke xvi.* as dying before the Rich Man, because God graciously removed him from the Evils of Life, but continued the Profligate in order to his Repentance, or to fill up the Measure of his Iniquity.

Ver. 18. *They shall see him and despise him, but God shall laugh them to scorn.* *Grotius* says, that the Future is used in this Description for



for the *Præteritum*, and calls it a *Hebraism*; though 'tis certain that such Changes are not unusual in the best *Classick* Writers.—The Repetition, *they shall see him*, is beautiful, upon the Supposition of this Book's being metrical; and is otherwise very defensible, especially as supported by the Authority of all the Editions: I should else have thought (καὶ οὖν) the true Reading, which seems to make the Opposition in the Words following more beautiful; and so small an Alteration might easily be occasioned by the Nearness and Affinity of the Sound.

Ibid. *And they shall hereafter be a vile Carcase.* [ἔσονται πάλαι τὸ ἐν αἰῶμα ἄτιμον. Can all the Wicked before referred to with Propriety be said to be a vile Carcase, or to compose one vile Carcase? and is not this Sense in some measure comprized in the Sentence following? Possibly πτωχὸν may be the true Reading here, which opens a new Sense, and yet proper to the Occasion, viz. that they should be confounded and fall shamefully; which Signification αἰῶμα will equally admit of; and 'tis as certain, that αἰς is frequently to be understood in the Sense of ἐν: And I have the Satisfaction to find this Interpretation confirmed by the Authority of the *Vulgate*, which reads, *Erunt posthac decedentes sine honore*; and by the *Syriac* Version, *Erunt posthac in ruinam turpissimam*. *Junius* also is to the same purpose; and to these agrees the *Geneva Bible*, which renders, "They shall fall hereafter without Honour."

[From the *Vulg.* and *Orient.* rendring, it seems more probable that ἔσονται is the true Reading, as erunt occurs in them all. It has been thought that the Author, instead of αἰς αἰῶμα the present Reading, wrote αἰς ἑκώμαα ἄτιμον, a vile laughing Stock, with which αἰς ὕψαν is very well joined: ἔσονται αἰς ἑκώμαα, is ἑκωφθῆσονται, as αἰς ὕψαν is ὑψωθῆσονται. *Isaiah* xxviii. 18. ἔσονται αἰς καταπάτημα, i. e. καταπατηθήσονται, ye shall be trod upon, *Job* xxvii. 14. αἰς σφάγην ἔσονται, i. e. σφαγισθήσονται.]

Ibid. *And a Reproach among the Dead for evermore.* [αἰς ὕψαν ἐν νεκροῖς δι' αἰῶνα. This Expression may seem to relate to the everlasting Disgrace of wicked Men in *infernis*, that, like the Giants of old, they shall stand upon a lasting Record there; but it is more probable, it should be taken in a more limited and confined Sense, for the Phrase νεκροὶ αἰῶνα or δι' αἰῶνα, is a *Hebraism*, and may receive some Light from *Lamentations* iii. 6. where the Prophet, complaining of his terrible Situation in his Dungeon, says, *He has made me stay in dark Places, αἰς νεκρὸς αἰῶνα, veluti mortuos sæculi, as those that have been long dead, as those that lie buried in their Graves.* And that the Term *evermore*, does not here mean Eternity, strictly so called, seems the more probable from the Order of the Description, because the Judgment, or Day of Accounts, is mentioned after, ver. 20.

[A Reproach, &c. [Rather, Among those who have been long dead, or the dead of old, according to the Reading of the *Alexandrian MS.* ἐν νεκροῖς αἰῶνος, which is the true one.]

Ver. 19. *For he shall rend them, and cast them*

down headlong, that they shall be speechless, &c.] Rather, dash them speechless headlong. ῥίξει αὐτοὺς ἀφ' ὧντος περὶ νῆς. Calmet observes, that the Author here has expressed in three Words three different Punishments; ῥίξει implies, that God shall beat or dash them against the Ground; and the other two probably allude to a more infamous kind of Death, viz. that they shall be strangled, and suffocated, and burst asunder. And thus περὶ νῆς is used, *Acts* i. 18. in the Description of Judas's Death. See *Wall's Critical Notes* in loc. and *Hammond*. *Oslander* thinks ἀφ' ὧντος the true Reading, rather than ἀφ' ὧντος, (see his Observations on the *Vulgate*) but he assigns no Reason, and is supported by no Authority of MSS. The Description of the Punishment here is not unlike that supposed to be inflicted upon the *Rephaim* of old, to whom *Enoch* in his Prophecy refers; and possibly such wicked ones as resembled them in their proud and blasphemous Speeches and notorious Acts of Violence and Oppression, are here meant: For can there be a properer Punishment for a γιγανώδης θυμὸς (for so the Son of *Sirach* calls a proud and defying Temper) than what is here described to be its Fate; or can Pride and Insolence be represented under stronger Circumstances of Meanness and Disgrace? The Opposition is too beautiful in what follows not to be taken notice of: For, were they swollen with Pride? the Almighty shall burst them. *Disrumpet illos inflatos*, says the *Vulgate*. Did they aspire against Heaven? they shall be cast down headlong. Did they use great swelling Words and Threats of Defiance? they shall be speechless. Did they pride themselves in Works of Greatness, and trust in their strong Holds of Security? they shall be shaken from their Foundations and become desolate. Did they love Noise and Disturbance, and was their Name terrible upon Earth? they shall come no more into Remembrance, but their Memorial shall perish with them. Were they such desperate and bold Wretches, as to set every thing at Defiance? they shall be afraid even of their own Consciences. Did they finally ridicule God and his Justice? they shall tremble at the Apprehension of their sad Punishment.

## CHAP. V.

### THE ARGUMENT.

TO shew the great Difference, in point of Happiness, between the Virtuous and the Wicked, the latter are introduced as groaning under inexpressible Misery, and lamenting before the Tribunal of God their former ill Courses, and the sad Consequences of them. From hence the Writer takes occasion to shew, that the Vengeance of God always pursues Sinners, either immediately from himself, or by the Agency of Second Causes, his appointed Instruments and Executioners. Calmet thinks the six first Chapters may be considered as a sort of Preface to the rest of this Work.

Ver. 1. *Then shall the righteous Man stand in great Boldness before the Face of such as have afflicted him.* At the End of the former Chapter, the Wicked are represented as trembling



bling under a Sense of their Guilt and the Apprehension of Punishment due to it: Here, by way of *Antitthesis*, is shewn the holy Confidence and sweet Security which will arise in the Breast of every good Man in the Day of Trial, from the Justice of his Cause, and the Testimony and Approbation of his Conscience. Thus *παρρησία* is used in many Places in the *New Testament*; see particularly, 1 *John* ii. 28. and iv. 17. where the righteous Man is said to have Boldness in the Day of Judgment.

Ibid. *And made no Account in his Labours.*] We may understand this of such as laughed at the good Man's Deeds as fruitless, or endeavoured to make them so by their Opposition: But St. *Austin*, and others of the *Fathers*, understand this Passage of such Oppressors as by Violence spoiled the righteous Man's Goods, which he had acquired by his honest Labours. Thus St. *Cyprian*, *diripuerunt labores eorum*; Testim. lib. iii. ad *Quirin.* c. 16. And the *Vulgate* renders accordingly, *abstulerunt labores eorum*, which *Coverdale* and the *Geneva Bible* follow. *Calmet* explains the Passage in both these Senses. [They seem to have read ἀφελόντων instead of ἀβελόντων.]

Ver. 2. *When they see it, they shall be troubled with terrible Fear.*] The *Syriac* and *Arabic Versions* read, *him*. The Sense is, the Wicked shall be confounded at the Sight of him whom they have so much abused, and shall behold with Amazement the sudden and wonderful Turn of Providence in favour of the Righteous, beyond what they expected or thought of; and from the Happiness conferred upon the Righteous, shall conclude and anticipate their own Misery. To give the more lively Impression of this, the *Author* represents them both as standing together before the Judgment-seat of God, and as Witnesses of each other's Happiness or Misery. The Circumstances of the Surprise upon the signal Deliverance of the Righteous, are very justly here preserved; and the Consternation and Despair of the Wicked, from the killing Reflection of a too late and fruitless Repentance, are no less beautifully described, with all the Terror and Exaggeration of Expression. For it will be no small Torment to the Wicked, to see those, whom they most despised for their great Advances in Piety and Goodness, very highly advanced in Honour by God, and rewarded by him as his faithful Servants: Envy at others Happiness, and Despair of their own, will render them completely miserable. This is finely represented in the *Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus*.

Ibid. *Strangeness of his Salvation.*] Rather, *unexpectedness*.

Ver. 3. *And they, repenting and groaning for Anguish of Spirit, shall say within themselves, This was he whom we had sometime in derision, and a Proverb of Reproach.*] The *Prosopopœia* here is very natural, and may be considered either as a Soliloquy in each repenting Sinner's Breast, or as a joint Reflexion made by them all, and a set Discourse which they had one to another. The *Greek* will admit of either Sense, but *Calmet* thinks the latter most agreeable to the Context. It is very observable, that there are

three Words in this Verse to express the same Thing, viz. γέλως, πρῶβολή, ὀνειδισμός, which are designed to denote an Excess of Abuse and Rudeness: But that in *Psal.* xlv. 14, 15. is still more remarkable, where *David* uses five synonymous Terms upon the like Occasion; ἔθε ἡμᾶς ὀνειδίζουσιν τοῖς γέιτοσιν ἡμῶν, μυκηλασμένον καὶ κατὰ γέλωτα τοῖς κύκλῳ ἡμῶν· ἔθε ἡμᾶς εἰς πρῶβολὴν ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσι, κίνησιν κεφαλῆς ἐν τοῖς λαοῖς. The Confession of these Scoffers may be applied to all others of the like Turn and Denomination; for it has been the unhappy Fate of good Men in all Ages, to be thus ridiculed by Libertines. It was the Observation of *Job* long since, that the just upright Man is laughed to scorn, ch. xii. 4. And with respect to himself, he complains particularly, that he was made a By-word of the People; and before them, as the *Margin* reads, he was as a Tabret, ch. xvii. 6. i. e. for them to make Sport with; see *Mercer in loc.* which is no improbable Interpretation of the Place, the *LXX* rendering it by γέλως.

Ver. 4. *We Fools counted his Life Madness.*] Religious Men, and such as retire from the World for the Opportunity of a greater Piety, are often represented by Debauchees as melancholy and disordered; but in the End, such Libertines as abuse the World, will be found to be the only Fools, and Religion acknowledged to be the truest Wisdom. The like Reflection was thrown upon such of the Primitive Christians as were dead to the World; they were looked upon as senseless, for despising the Pleasures that courted them, and foolishly credulous, for trusting to invisible Rewards: "Let Fools and Idiots (says *Celsus* in his sneering Way) come to the Christian Mysteries, for such are the most agreeable Disciples to the God they worship." *Origen. cont. Cels.* lib. iii. Nor did our Saviour himself escape the Censure of having a Devil, and being mad, *John* x. 20. So certain an Attendant upon extraordinary Sanctity is Obloquy and Reproach. There is seemingly the like Reflexion on him, *Mark* iii. 21. and even uttered by his own Friends, as our Translation has faultily rendered it: For as the Learned now generally agree in interpreting the Place, ἐξέστη does not relate to our blessed Saviour, but to the clamorous Multitude, whose Behaviour often gives just Occasion for such a Suspicion [The Fault is not in our Translation, but in the wrong Acceptation of the Word ἐλεγον, which does not mean they (i. e. his Friends and Relations) said, but Men said, it was commonly said; the same as ἐλέγετο, which is very usual. Thus *Luke* vi. 36. δάσουσιν, i. e. δοθήσεται. *ibid.* 44. συλλέγουσι and πρυγῶσι. In like manner *Luke* xii. 20. τὴν ψυχὴν σου ἀπαιτῶσιν, which our Translators render, Thy Soul shall be required of thee, as they might here have rendered, ἐλεγον γὰρ, for it was said, He is beside himself; and the Scribes, and not barely Scribes, but the Scribes who came down from Jerusalem, said &c. So the Passage is to be understood, and to be distinguished in the Original. ἐλεγον γὰρ ὅτι ἐξέστη, καὶ οἱ γραμματεῖς οἱ ἀπὸ Ἱεροσολύμων καταβαίνοντες ἐλεγον, &c. The Repetition of the Article οἱ is emphatical, and intimates that not ordinary Scribes, but Scribes from Jerusalem, who may be



be supposed to have more *Learning* and Skill than others, said *be bath* Beezebub.]

Ver. 5. *How is he numbered among the Children of God, and his Lot is among the Saints!*] How different are the cool Reflexions of an unbodied Spirit, from the wild Sallies of a heated Fancy; and how do the Sentiments of the same Persons vary, considered in this different Light! The very same Scoffers, who rallied the just Man upon his glorious Title of *A Son of God*, ch. ii. 18. at length confess the Truth of what he said; they perceive the invaluable Privileges of such a Relation in the next Life, and that the true Inheritance of the Sons of God is among his glorified Saints: ἐν αἰσίοις ὁ κληρὸς αὐτοῦ. See Dan. xii. 13. where the Angel tells him, that *he shall rest in a happy Condition, and stand in his Lot, at the End of the Days*; i. e. in the Resurrection of the Just; which the LXX render, ἀναστήσει εἰς τὸν κληρὸν σου. The Phrase alludes to the Division of the Land of Canaan (a Type of Heaven) among the twelve Tribes by Lot.

Ver. 6. *And the Sun of Righteousness rose not upon us.*] [Rather, *bath* not risen upon us.] Coverdale's and the other English Versions read in like manner, following the *Vulgate*; but all the Greek Copies omit the Words, *of Righteousness*, and so likewise do several of the Fathers, when they quote this Passage: See particularly St. Gregory, lib. xxxiv. Moral. c. 6. St. Ambr. Serm. 3 & 16. and St. Cyprian in many Places. The Syriac and Arabic Versions likewise omit them. They seem either to have been put in the Margin by way of Explanation, and to have crept from thence into the Text, or else to have been added from the former Sentence, for they are neither in the *Alexandrian*, nor any other Copy.

Ver. 7. *We wearied ourselves in the way of Wickedness and Destruction.*] One cannot help observing at first sight, how closely *Wickedness* and *Destruction* are here linked together, and that one seems to follow naturally at the Heels of the other: Nor is Sin, however represented to be all Pleasure, without its Drudgery: The Prophet *Jeremiah* expresses himself like this Writer, *They weary themselves to work Iniquity*, ch. ix. 5. See also *Habak. ii. 13.* 'Tis a pretty Observation of a very learned Writer, that the Greek Word *πονεία*, which signifies *Wickedness*, comes from another that signifies *Labour*, viz. *πόνος*. *Sanderson's Sermons*, p. 596. And it is not without great Elegance and particular good Reason, that the Lusts and Practices of Sinners are so frequently in Scripture styled *Works*, and Sinners emphatically called *Workers of Iniquity*, and said *to work Wickedness*; Expressions all implying the Toil and Drudgery of wicked Courses. St. *Chrysostom* is very copious on this Subject, and shews, both from Scripture and Reason, that the Life of a wicked Man has more real Weariness and Slavery, than all the Mortifications and Severity of a godly Life. And this Truth the Wicked here confess, though too late, *ambulavimus vias difficiles*, as the *Vulgate* renders. And here again the Subject suggests to me the same useful Reflexion, viz. That when Men are about leaving this World, and their Soul is a

little more at liberty to reflect (which holds much stronger of an unbodied Spirit) there will then be a strange Alteration in their Judgment and Opinion concerning the Things of this World; they will *then* be sensible of the extreme Vanity and Folly of them, and fruitlessly wish for a few Hours of their irrevocable Time, mispent in a Succession of Vanities. But bitter will be the Remembrance of former Pleasures not innocent, and so much the greater will the Detestation and cursing of them be, as they have taken more Delight in them. But this will appear in a stronger Light from what follows. Our Version follows the present Reading of the Greek, ἐπεπλήθημεν τείλοισι, but ἐπεπλάγχθημεν seems to be more suitable, viz. *We wandered up and down in the Paths of Wickedness and Destruction.* [But ἐπεπλήθημεν τείλοισι, I believe, is not Greek. To make it so, it should be τείλων, as *Prov. xiv. 14.* τῶν ἐαυτῶν ὁδῶν πλανηθήσεται. The true reading seems to me to be ἐπεπλανήθημεν τείλοισι, *we have wandered in the Paths*, which answers well to the foregoing Verse, *We have erred from the Ways of Truth.*]

Ver. 8. *What bath Pride profited us, or what Good have Riches with our Vaunting brought us?*] i. e. What Good have all our proud and haughty Conceits, our Admiration of worldly State and Riches, our Pursuit of vain Curiosities and unlawful Pleasures, done us, since these admired Trifles are so uncertain, and all vanished into Nothing? It is obvious to observe, from this Self-reflexion of a wicked Man, very naturally here represented, that the sensual Person in a future State will condemn himself in the first Place, that by pursuing with Eagerness the uncertain Pleasures of this World, he has forfeited his Title to more durable and lasting Delights. 2dly, That he is for ever incapable of recovering his lost Happiness; and the sad Prospect or Reflexion upon that Happiness, which he might have enjoyed, but lost thro' his own Folly, will greatly encrease his Misery. 3dly, That the Remembrance of his Imprudence in this respect, will be a Part of his future Punishment; all his favourite Pleasures and Enjoyments being past and gone, they will, by a miserable Exchange, be succeeded with dreadful and tormenting Reflexions: For it will be an Addition to the Torments of the Wicked, that they shall not be able to forget all those Sins and Follies which they have ever been guilty of, but must have always in their Remembrance, as it were purposely to haunt and disturb them, all those once dear Delights, which they would now willingly at any Rate purchase the Oblivion of.

Verses 9, 10, 11, 12.] We meet with several of these Similies and Comparisons, with respect to the Shortness of Life, and its Satisfaction; in the Book of *Job*, ch. ix. 25, 26. *My Days are swifter than a Post, they flee away, they see no Good: They are passed away as the swift Ships, as the Eagle that hasteth to the Prey.* And among the memorable Sayings of *Agur*, *Prov. xxx. 19.* *The Way of an Eagle in the Air, and the Way of a Ship in the midst of the Sea, are taken notice of as so obscure and uncertain, as to leave no Traces behind them.* The Comparisons



parisons made use of in the course of these Verses, to represent the Uncertainty of Life and its Enjoyments, we may observe, thicken apace, as if the Wicked described in this Chapter, took pains and were concerned to impress upon others that lively Sense of the Vanity of worldly Pleasures, which, by a sad Experience they had unhappily gained. The Images are very natural, and placed in different Lights, to be more affecting; they seem compassionately designed as Notices to warn others, *lest they also come into that Place of Torment*: And they are each of them particularly proper to express what they are brought to illustrate. I shall only observe thus must of them further, That though they very naturally describe the Licentiousness of the Wicked, and the Eagerness with which they abandon themselves to their Lusts and Passions, and the Rapidity with which they are carried away by them; yet herein all the Images are deficient, that they do not sufficiently point out the destructive Consequences and mischievous Effects of a mispent Life: For can a wicked Life be thought as harmless as a *Shadow*; or will it, like *that*, pass away without any further Notice? Is the Speed of a *Messenger* an adequate Resemblance, without considering the Consequence of his Errand, and how he will be received at the End of his Journey? Does the soaring of *Birds* into the upper Regions, and their aspiring even towards *Heaven*, sufficiently denote the contrary Course of Sinners, and their certain Tendency *downwards*? Or should a *Ship* be described only as passing swiftly over the Sea, and no Notice taken of the Danger of a *Shipwreck*? And will the *great Gulph* finally be as easily passed over as the *Waves*, or come together like the *light Air*? The Propriety of our *Translation* too in some of the foregoing Similies may be a little suspected; for, ver. 9. ἀγέλια ἀεγέχουσα, which in our *Version* is rendered, *as a Post that hasteth by*, may probably with more Justice be translated, *as a flying Report*, [as a *Post that hasteth by*.] And thus *Calmet* explains it, *comme une nouvelle qui court; comme la renommée qui vole*; and then he quotes *Virgil's* Description of *Fame*, *Aeneid*. iv. And indeed ἀγέλια properly means the *Rumor* itself, and not the *Messenger* that carries it. Again, ver. 11. the *light Air* is said in our *Version* to be parted with the violent Noise of the Bird's Wings, ἀεζόμενον βία ροίζου, (the next Word expresses the Motion of them :) But certainly this is inaccurate, for the Noise does not part the Air, but follow from it. *Coverdale's*, and the other ancient *Versions*, render more justly, *parting the Air thorow the Vehemency of her goinge*: *per vim itineris*. Vulg. Our *Translators* were led into this Mistake by the double Sense of ροίζου, which signifies both *stridor* and *impetus*, but the latter Signification is far preferable here: And thus the *Syriac* and *Arabic* Interpreters understand it. [The *Greek* may be pointed and read thus: Ἀεζόμενον βία, ροίζω κινούμενων πτερύγων διδεδύθην, &c. *impetu motarum alarum; parted by the violent Force of moving Wings*.] The last Observation is upon the *Greek* Text, ver. 12. ὁ ἀνὴρ ὡς εἰς ἑαυτὸν ἀνελύθη, where I would read with *Grotius*, ἀνελήλυθε, which

seems more proper. [It is right ἀνελύθη. See Chap. ii. 1. where ἀναλύω is used in the same Sense of returning, ἀναλύσας ἐξ ᾧδε. And hence the true reading ch. xvi. 14. seems to be ἐδὲ ἀναλύνει ψυχὴ παρεληλυθῆσα.]

Ver. 13. *Even so we in like manner, as soon as we were born, began to draw to our End.* i. e. Our Life has been wasting ever since it was first given us, and we are continually dying by degrees; like that of the Poet, *Nascentes morimur*, which *Seneca* seems to explain, *Quotidie morimur, quotidie enim demitur aliqua pars vitæ*;—*We die daily, for our Life is daily decreasing*. But that of *St. Austin* is still closer, *Profecto ex quo esse incipit in hoc corpore, in morte est homo*. De Civit. Dei lib. xiii. An Expression not unlike that moving one in our *Burial Service*, *In the Midst of Life we are in Death*, for Life is continually exposed to so many Perils, that what *David* says of himself, *Psal.* cxix. 109. is true of every Man, *My Soul is always in my Hand*; i. e. 'tis always in danger to be taken from me. The *Hebrew* Word signifies the Palm of the Hand, out of which any thing will easily slip; and intimates, that he esteemed his Life always in danger, and always was ready to resign it.

Ibid. *And had no Sign of Virtue to shew.* *Coverdale's* Translation is much better, *And have shewed no Token of Virtue*. The *Greek* reads in the *Present Tense*, *We have no Sign of Virtue to shew*; i. e. We have nothing to urge in our Defence, no good Action to produce in our Favour. One cannot help observing from hence, how insignificant, even in his own Confession, a wicked Man is; he is born and dies, can say no good of himself, nor any body else for him.

[Ver. 10, 11, 12, 13. The Connexion of these four Verses lies thus: As a *Ship sailing*—*a Bird flying*, *an Arrow shot at a Mark*, leave no Traces behind them: So we, dying as soon as we were born, have no sign of Virtue to shew. This last Clause contains the Application of the Similitudes; and the preceding, *dying as soon as we were born* (i. e. dying to all Virtue, dead in Trespasses and Sins) gives the Reason why they have no Marks of Virtue to shew: And it is the same in Sense with that of *Psal.* lviii. 3. *The Ungodly are froward, even from their Mothers Womb: As soon as they are born, they go astray and speak lies*. Our Translation of ἐξελίπομεν, *began to draw to our End*; has nothing peculiar (as it ought to have) to the Persons here spoken of; for all Men, as soon as they are born, begin to draw to their End: And it is contrary to the Use of the Word ἐκλείπειν, which signifies to die, to be quite extinguished. *Luke* xvi. 9. ἵνα, ὅταν ἐκλείπητε, δέξωνται ὑμᾶς, &c. *That when ye are dead, they may receive you* (i. e. ye may be received) into the everlasting Tabernacles. xxii. 32. ἐγὼ ᾧ ἐδεήθην ὡς σὺ, ἵνα μὴ ἐκλείπῃ ἡ πίστις σὺ. *But I have prayed for thee, that thy Faith may not be totally extinguished*: Not, that *thy Faith* fail not, for *Peter's* Faith did certainly fail, but it was not quite extinguished; ἐλίπει, but not ἐξέλιπε. Our Translators have put in *And* at the Beginning of the 10<sup>th</sup> Verse, and have joined that Verse to the 9<sup>th</sup>, neither of which should have been done;



done; for the Sense is fully ended at the 9<sup>th</sup> Verse, and there is nothing in the Original to Countenance such Connexion.]

Ibid. *But were consumed in our own Wickedness.* [*καὶ καταπνήθημεν, have been laid out or expended.*] i. e. We spent our whole Life in Wickedness; and as we died in our Sins, we justly suffer the Reward of our evil Deeds.—These and such like dreadful Reflexions will the Wicked make in their Torments.—Thus far the Wicked are introduced speaking: Accordingly the *Vulgate* here inserts, *Talia dixerunt in Inferno bi qui peccaverunt.* And indeed such a Soliloquy from a great Sinner, or such repenting Strains from a Company of them in Despair, seem very natural; for such is the Power of a guilty Conscience, that the Wicked shall be self-condemned even before the *Books are opened*; they will anticipate their Doom, and acknowledge the Justice of their Sentence, before it be passed upon them. The making the Scene of this long *Protopopæia*, which reaches from the beginning of ver. 3. to the end of this, to be in *Hell*, as the *Vulg.* does; and the representing them, by an ingenious Fiction, as really speaking and lamenting *there*, in the way they would have done if they had Power, can never be enough admired in this Writer. We have a remarkable and beautiful Instance of this in *Luke* xvi. 24. where an imaginary Discourse is carried on between *Abraham* and the *Rich Man*.

Ver. 15. *But the Righteous live for evermore.*] The *Author* having shewn the dreadful Consequences of Sin, according to the inward Sense and Acknowledgment of the Wicked themselves, their sad Prospect, and the final Ruin of all their Hopes; and illustrated by several just Comparisons the Shortness of Life, especially of one spent in a continual Round of sinful Pleasures; proceeds in this and the next Verses to set down, by way of Contrast, the Glory of the Righteous, and their exceeding great Reward; that it is not only *with*, but *in* the *Lord*, for so it is in the Original; and the *Syriac* and *Arabic* Translations render accordingly in *Domino*. It is also observable, that their Reward, and even their future Life, is expressed in the *Present Tense*, to denote probably the Certainty of their Reward, and their immediate Entrance upon it.

Ibid. *And the Care of them is with the Most High.*] The true and common Acceptation of these Words is, that God careth for the Righteous, will defend them with his favourable Kindness as with a Shield, and will provide for them a Reward, great even beyond Imagination or Expression. *Stella* understands this Passage in a different Sense, “That the chief Care of the Righteous is about the Most High, and his whole Study and Endeavour to please the Lord in all Instances of Duty.” *Tota sollicitudo & diligentia justorum circa id versatur, ut Deo placeant, illi enim vere justi dici possunt, qui Deo curant placere.* *Stell. Enarrat. cap. i. Lucæ.* This Sense would indeed have been very proper, if the original Reading was, *ἡ φρονίσι αὐτῶν πρὸς ὑψίστον*, as he seems to have understood it; but the true Reading in all the Editions is, *ἡ φρονίσι αὐτῶν πρὸς ὑψίστον, Cura eorum penes altis-*

*simum*, as the *Arabic* renders. That of the *Syriac*, *Cogitatio illorum in altissimo*, may seem to favour either Sense.

[Ver. 14. *Like as the Smoke which is dispersed here and there with a Tempest.* The Greek literally is, *And is dispersed like Smoke by the Wind.*]

[Ver. 15. *And the Care of them is with the Most High.* In *Bos's* Edit. of the LXX he observes that *Ald.* has *πρὸς ὑψίστον.*]

Ver. 16. *Therefore shall they receive a glorious Kingdom, and a beautiful Crown from the Lord's Hand.*] [*τὸ βασίλειον, Palace, see on i. 14.*] The *Arabic* reads, *Diadema pulchritudinis*; and the *Syriac Version* more explicitly, *Diadema bonorum operum*. The Greek, *τὸ βασίλειον τῆς ἀρετῆς*, *ἡ τὸ διαδήμα ἐκάλεσε* which manner of Expression by the *Substantive* is very beautiful. Instances of it are frequent in Scripture and prophane Authors: Thus, ch. i. 10. we have *ἡ ζήλωσις* for the *jealous Ear*; and *πνεῦμα δυνάμεως*, a *mighty Wind*, ch. v. 23. And in *Luke* xviii. 6. the *unjust Judge* is, *ὁ κριτὴς τῆς ἀδικίας*; and the *forgetful Hearer*, *ἀκούων ἡμετέρας*, *James* i. 25. See more Instances, *John* xvii. 12. *James* v. 15. *2 Thess.* ii. 8. This must be allowed to be a fine Description of future Happiness, and, considering the Times of this Writer, very clear and distinct. The *New Testament* indeed speaks of the Righteous in Heaven under the Idea and Character of mighty Kings and Princes; and no wonder if there are better and clearer Promises therein; but in the *Old Testament*, at least under the particular *Œconomy* of *Moses*, we meet with no such explicit Discovery of the happy and glorious State after Death.

Ibid. *For with his Right-hand shall he cover them.*] As by the Organs of *Sense* attributed to God, the *Knowledge* of God is set forth; so by the Organs or Instruments of *Action* is his *Power* decyphered, and most eminently by the *Hand*: So that the Hand of God, in Scripture, means ordinarily the Power of God; but the *Right-hand* being more active than the *Left*, and the more usual Instrument in outward Works, hence it is taken to intimate the exceeding Abundance of the Power of God. The Sense of this Passage is much the same with that of the *Psalmist*; *The Righteous shall dwell under the Defence of the Most High, and shall abide under the Shadow of the Almighty: He will defend them under his Wings, and they shall be safe under his Feathers; his Faithfulness and Truth shall be their Shield and Buckler*; *Psal.* xci.

Ver. 17. *He shall take to him his Jealousy for complete Armour.*] I have before observed, that Sin, in Scripture, is often compared to spiritual Adultery; see Note on ch. i. 10. So that the Sense is, *That his Jealousy, i. e. his enraged Justice, will furnish him with complete Armour.* The *Syriac Version* expresses this very fully, *In gratiam ipsorum in zelo suo armabit omnia.* The following Descriptions, to the End of the Chapter, are full of the sublimest Imagery; God is drawn in all that terrible Glory with which the strongest Imagination can paint him; his whole Figure strikes us in the highest and most amazing manner: He is represented, as completely armed with Terror, we see his

Helmet,



Helmet, his Breast-plate, his invincible Shield, his sharp Sword, his Thunderbolts, and, in fine, his whole Artillery of Heaven. He is more dreadful than Mars moving to Battle, while he commands the Creation round him (for so I would render τὴν κτίσιν in the following Sentence) to execute his decreed Vengeance upon his Enemies, and to determine the Fate of guilty Nations. In Moses's Song, the Lord, or *Jehovah*, is represented, in like manner, as a fierce *Man of War*, Exod. xv. 3. Nor is the Description of the *Psalmist* less to be admired, where he says of God, *If a Man will not turn, he will whet his Sword, he hath bent his Bow, and made it ready; he hath prepared for him the Instruments of Death, he ordaineth his Arrows against the Persecutors.* Psal. vii. 12, 13.

Ver. 18. *He shall put on Righteousness as a Breast-plate.* [ἐνδύσεται θώρηκα δικαιοσύνης. So Ephes. vi. 14. ἐνδυσάμενοι τὸ θώρηκα τῆς δικαιοσύνης. As *ὡς* is omitted, the Author might as well have wrote δικαιοσύνης. See the Notes upon *Lysias*, Ed. Lond. p. 579. But in *Isaiab* lix. 19. from whence probably this, as well as that of *St. Paul*, is borrowed, *ὡς* is expressed. See ver. 19. of this Chapter, and vii. 9. φάμος ὀλίγη, where *ὡς* is likewise omitted; and Note on ver. 22.] The Breast-plate is known to cover the Heart, which is the Source of all the Passions: Hence this Writer says, that God will arm himself with Justice as with a Breast-plate, to intimate, that he will do nothing out of mere Passion, or by an absolute uncontrouled Power, without regard to the Rules of Equity; but that he will conduct all his Proceedings and Determinations, even against his Enemies, according to the eternal Rules of Justice: And therefore it follows very properly in the next Sentence, *that he will put on true Judgment instead of an Helmet; i. e. as a wise Judge*, whose infinite Wisdom searches into the Secrets of every Crime and Action, and who cannot be mistaken or imposed upon, he will give true and impartial Judgment; and as a just Judge, he will observe a strict Proportion between the Crimes and the Punishment. With great Propriety therefore is *true Judgment* here described as the Ornament of his Head. This can only be exceeded by that sublime Description in the inspired Writer upon the like Occasion, *He put on Righteousness as a Breast-plate, and a Helmet of Salvation upon his Head; and put on the Garments of Vengeance for a Clothing, and was clad with Zeal as with a Cloak;* Isai. lix. 17. How much more amiable is the Description of this Writer, representing the Almighty, clothed with the Breast-plate of Righteousness, than that of *Jupiter* in *Homer*, whose *Aegis* grinned terribly with the Figures of *Horror*, *Affright*, and *Discord*?

Ibid. *Instead of a Helmet.* [καὶ ἐπιθήσει κόρυθα κέσιν ἀνυπόκλειον. The learned Editor of *Philo Judæus* applies the Epithet to κόρυθα, rather than κέσιν, and conjectures the true Reading of this Place to be, ἐπιθήσει κόρυθα κέσιν ἀκαθαίρετον, *Accipiet pro galea inexpugnabili judicium*; which he justifies by two parallel Passages in *Philo*, where the same Sentiment occurs, δῶκεν ἀκαθαίρετον τὸ δίκαιον ἡγήμενον; and in another Place, ἀκαθαίρετον ἡγήμενον τὸ δίκαιον Συμμαχίαν. Phil. de Mose.

Ver. 19. *He shall take Holiness for an invincible Shield.* St. Bernard observes upon this Passage, that at the Time when this *true Judgment* is passed, God's Equity, as the *Margin* rightly renders, will be so absolutely inflexible, that he will not suffer himself to be overcome by any Arguments of Pity that can be offered; nor can he possibly relent by any Weakness or Tendernefs of Nature. As the Wicked have so long abused the Riches of his Goodness and Long-suffering, his Dignity calls upon him to do Justice to his injured Honour. And since this Judgment or Proceedure is founded upon the most perfect Equity, it will in all respects be so irreproachable, that even the Wicked themselves shall be convinced of the Justness of their Sentence; and while they experience the Greatness of his Power, shall acknowledge the Justice of all his Determinations, and that his Equity is no less infinite.

[Ibid. *And true Judgment.* κέσιν ἀνυπόκλειον. So xviii. 16. ἀνυπόκλειον ἐπιταγήν· κέσιν ἀνυπόκλειον (see *Maccab.* lib. ii. 1. 13.) would have been nearer than ἀκαθαίρετον, had there been any need of a Change.]

Ver. 20. *His severe Wrath shall be sharpened for a Sword.* This is capable of two Senses, either that he shall sharpen the Sword of his fierce Wrath, as the *Syriac Version* understands it, *Mirum in modum exacuet lanceam iræ suæ*; [which seems to have read ἐκλοπον instead of ἀπότομον] or that he shall sharpen his Wrath into a destructive Sword, εἰς δότιτομον ῥομφαίαν, as the *Arabic* renders, *Iram suam expoliet in gladium acutum.* And thus God punished the Transgression of our First Parents, he sharpened τὸ θυμὸν τὸ ὀργῆς, *Numb.* xiv. 34. into a Flaming Sword, to guard the Avenue of Paradise against them; "To keep the Delinquents, says *St. Chrysostom* in *loc. Hom.* 18: "in continual Remembrance of what had passed, and to strike frequent Terror into them by so menacing an Object." The Description in this and the following Verses is agreeable to the Language of Scripture; for when God is mentioned as angry with the Wicked, he is represented as standing continually with his Bow bent, with his Arrow upon the String, as ready to let fly; and with his Sword not only drawn, but whetted, as if he was just about to strike; *Psal.* vii. 13.

Ibid. *And the World shall fight with him against the Unwise.* This is the same in effect with that Sentence in the 17th Verse, *He shall make the Creature, i. e. the Creation his Weapon for the Revenge of his Enemies.* Not that Almighty God has any need of all, or any of his Creatures, to assist him in executing his Vengeance, but he sometimes chuses to make use of them, as Instruments of his Wrath, to convince the Unwise, i. e. the Wicked, of their Folly, in their immoderate or unlawful pursuit of them; and therefore his Wisdom purposely punishes them by such Creatures as they have abused, and makes the Objects of their Pleasures become the Instruments of their Punishment; *Quia in cunctis deliquimus*, says *St. Gregory*, in *cunctis ferimur*; *Homil.* 35. in *Evang.* 'Tis an Observation of the Book of *Job*, that all the Works of Nature are prepared



pared by God to be his Instruments, either for Judgment or for Mercy: Thus ch. xxxvii. 12, 13. it is said of the Clouds in particular, that *they are made to do whatsoever he commandeth them upon the Face of the whole Earth, either for Correction or for Plenty.* And of the Treasures of Snow and Hail, the same Writer observes, that *they are reserved by God against the Time of Trouble, against the Day of War and Battle;* ch. xxxviii. 23. In the Song of *Deborah* it is said, *That the Stars in their Courses fought against Sisera.* And indeed God can make all the Elements in their turns to conspire against the Wicked: He can discomfit them with Thunderbolts and Tempests, ver. 21. as *Livy* says it happened to the *Romans* in the great Battel at *Cannæ*; or command the Air to be his destroying Angel: He can make the Waters to rage and swell horribly, ver. 22. and to destroy them by another Deluge; He can make the Fire to fulfil all the Purposes of his Providence, and his *Flame shall burn up the Ungodly*: Or, he can command the Earth to open her Mouth, and *Death shall come hastily upon them.*

Ver. 21. *Then shall the right-aiming Thunderbolts go abroad.* Βολίδες ἀσπετών, the Arrows of the Lightnings; and so the Syriac Version has it, *Jacula lancearum ignearum ac fulgurum.* The Meaning is, that the Lord shall shew his Wrath and Indignation against the Wicked by terrible Thunder from Heaven, like that in the Days of *Samuel*, 1 Sam. vii. 10. when the Lord thundered with a great Thunder upon the *Philistines*, and discomfited them: And that these his Instruments of Destruction shall be so infallibly directed, as to execute his designed Vengeance with an unerring Certainty. An ingenious Writer observes, “That compound Epithets highten the Diction; and that “even one of these is itself a short Description.” *Pope’s Pref. to Hom. Iliad.* We see the Justness of this Observation in εὐσχετοί, or *Right-aiming*; for can any thing convey a finer or more lively Idea, than Thunderbolts animated as it were with Sense, and discharging themselves with Judgment and Discretion? We see the uplifted Hand of Vengeance, and the Bolt not only grasped and levelled *rubente dextera*, but executing its fated Commission with as much Certainty, as if each particular Stroke had its Charge assigned it. *Aristotle* justly commends *Homer*, for having found out *living Words*, “His Heroes Arrow is impatient to “be on the wing, and his Weapon thirsts to “drink the Blood of the Enemy”—δρόν μαίνο.—Here the Almighty’s Thunder is winged with Death, and his unerring Wisdom guides it to the Mark; *Jehovah* but sends out his Arrows, and they know where to go, and what to do.—In short, to use the Words of another polite Writer upon a like Occasion, the Description here and in the Context, “is “a noble Picture, in which the Gusts of Hail, “and Flashes of Fire, burst out from the “Clouds with as much Spirit and Force as in “a real Tempest.”

*Ibid.* And from the Clouds, as from a well-drawn Bow, shall they fly to the Mark.] Ὡς ὅτι ἀπὸ τοῦ τόξου τῆς νεφέλης, i. e. As from the

well-arched or well-bent Bow of the Clouds. Not any well-drawn Bow is here alluded to; but that particular Bow, the τὸ τόξον ἐν τῇ νεφέλῃ, which was at first set in the Cloud, Gen. ix. 14. And thus the *Vulgate* renders, *A bene curvato arcu nubium.* To which agree the Syriac and Arabic, and most ancient *English Translations*; but *Coverdale’s* is more explicit than the rest, *Then shall the Thunderbolts come out of the Rayne bowe of the Cloudes to the Place apoynted; i. e. to execute God’s Will, and to fulfil their own Commission, as is explained above.* There is an Expression in the *Psalmist*, with respect to God’s Vengeance, which, if rightly understood, is much to this Purpose; He (God) made a Way to his Indignation, Ps. lxxviii. 51. ὡδοποίησε τοῖς βουδοῦσιν αὐτοῦ, LXX. i. e. He directed his Anger where, or to what Quarter, it should fall: It does not mean in general only, that God was angry, but that he had appointed a certain Tract or Path for his Vengeance, which it must follow and pursue; the *Latin Version* therefore expresses this with great Judgment, *Libavit semitam iræ suæ*; see 2 Esdr. xvi. 13. *Isaiah* describes the surprizing Massacre of the *Assyrian Army* by the just Vengeance of God in the like figurative way, and with a Sublimity suitable to his Grandeur, which the *Vulgate* thus expresses; *Auditam faciet Dominus gloriam vocis suæ, & terrorem brachii sui ostendit in comminatione furoris, & flammâ ignis devorantis, allidet in turbine & in lapide grandinis. A voce Domini pavebit Assur, virgâ percussus*; which the LXX expresses more properly, τῇ πληγῇ ἣ ἀνὸς παλάμη (κύρα) αὐτοῦ, Isai. xxx. 30, 31. See also Psal. xviii. 13, 14. In the *Pagan Theology* the Vengeance of the Gods is expressed in the like manner: Thus *Homer* describes the Wrath of *Apollo*, according to *Mr. Pope’s* excellent Translation:

*Bent was his Bow the Grecian Hearts to wound;  
Fierce as he mov’d, his silver Shafts resound.  
Breathing Revenge, a sudden Night he spread,  
And gloomy Darknes roll’d around his Head.  
The Fleet in view, he twang’d his deadly Bow,  
And hissing fly the feather’d Fates below.*

Book i. v 63.

*Virgil* has expressed the same Sentiment:

*Arcum intendebat Apollo*

*Desuper. Omnis eo terrore Ægyptus & Indi,  
Omnis Arabs, omnes vertebant terga Sabæi.*

*Æneid. viii. v 704.*

I shall only observe further, that the Comparison of Lightning to Arrows, as applied by this Writer is not unusual in some of the *Greek Poets*:

Κελαδηνόμοιθα βροντῶν, ἢ πυρπάλαιμον ΒΕΛΟΣ  
Ὀρσικλύπης Διός — *Pind. Pyth. Od. x.*

Ἄλκι’ ἤλθεν αὐτῷ Ζηνὸς ἀγρυπνον ΒΕΛΟΣ  
Καλαβᾶτης κεραυνός — *Æschin. Prom. 358.*

Ver. 22. *And Hail-stones full of Wrath shall be cast (as) out of a Stone Bow.* Hail-stones, the Artillery of Heaven, shall likewise come down upon the Heads of his Enemies, as in the Days of *Joshua*, when God sent Hail-stones and Lightnings from Heaven in the Face of the Enemies of his chosen People, *Joshua* x. 11. which shall come with such Fury and Vehemence,



hemence, as if they were discharged by the Force of some Machine, which our *Version* calls a Stone-bow, and among the *Romans* had the Name of *Balista*. The *Vulgate* renders here, *Et à petrosa ira plena mittentur grandines*; which is followed by *Coverdale's* and *Pagnine's interlinear Version*, and is indeed a close Translation of the *Greek*, as it is pointed in all the Editions; But if I might offer a Conjecture, I think, by the help of a Comma only, the Sense might be rendered more complete, in this manner, *καὶ ἐκ πετρῶδων, θυμῷ πλήρεις ριφίσαντες χαλάσαι. ἐκ πετρῶδων, ἴ. ὀργάνων, or πύλων, from the preceding Verse.* I am aware of an Objection which may be urged, that the *Particle* *ὡς*, or some such-like Note of Comparison, is here omitted; but besides that *ὡς* may, without any Force, be fetched from the foregoing Verse, Instances of this *Ellipsis* are very frequent in Scripture and prophane Writers. See *Gen.* xvi. 12. *Psal.* xi. 1.—xii. 6.—xxii. 13.—xlv. 2. *Gen.* xlix. 9. *Cant.* i. 15. In all which Places this *Particle* is omitted in the *Hebrew*, and supplied in the *Versions*. Our *Translators*, 'tis plain, understood the Words in the Sense which I have given them, and have inserted *as*, though this *Particle* be not in the Original. In the *Prophetical* Writings this Metaphor of Hail-stones is frequently used to denote an Enemy's falling on a Country: See *Isai.* xxviii. 2. and xxx. 30. It conveys a grand and terribly magnificent Idea, and is but imperfectly compared with the Volleys from the Artillery of Walls closely besieged.

*Ibid.* And the Water of the Sea shall rage against them, and the Floods shall cruelly drown them.] i. e. God shall take such Vengeance of wicked Nations, that their Enemies shall come pouring upon them like a Flood. Rain, Showers, Storms, Floods, and Seas, are all Symbols of Multitudes of Men in Motion and Disorder; or else of Armies ravaging and destroying Countries. Hence *Servius* has observed, that the Sea in a Storm, and People in Confusion, are reciprocally compared to each other; *Virgilius tempestati populi motum comparat, Tullius populo tempestatem.* *Servius* in *Aeneid.* lib. i. In the inspired Writings, Multitudes are frequently compared to *Waters*, and the Invasion of an Army to the Inundations of the Sea, or a rapid River, which carries all before it. It is familiar with *David* particularly, to represent a vast hostile Force under the Idea of a Flood of Waters, a noble Instance of which is to be found in *Psal.* xlv. See also *Isai.* viii. 7. and xvii. 12. *Dan.* ix. 26. and xi. 22. [But may not all these Denunciations be understood in the literal or natural, not metaphorical Signification of the Words, because of what went before ver. 20. *The World shall fight for him against the Wicked*, i. e. the whole Creation shall fight, &c. And then immediately he instances in *Thunderbolts*, *Hail-stones*, the *Sea*, *Rivers*, and *Winds*. This (ver. 17.) is expressed by, *He shall make the Creature (or Creation) his Weapon for the Revenge of his Enemies.* [Instead of *πύλωνι—ἀποτόμῳ*, I fancy the Author wrote *πύλωνι—ἀπότομῳ*.]

Ver. 23. A mighty Wind shall stand up against them.] Wars and Commotions are likewise metaphorically denoted by Winds; so

here by a most powerful Wind blowing, *πνεῦμα δυνάμεως*, is signified the Storm of War, and the Calamity attending it, which shall be brought upon the Wicked. The Description of the Fate of the wicked Man, *Job* xxvii. 20, 21. is so close and parallel to this, that I shall set it down at large; *Terrors take hold of him as Waters, a Tempest stealeth him away in the Night, the East-wind carrieth him away, and he departeth, and, as a Storm, hurleth him out of his Place.* The *East-wind*, which is mentioned particularly in this Passage, being a very blasting Wind, is most frequently used in Scripture, and especially in the *Prophetical* Writings, to denote the Calamities of War, and such-like wasting Judgments. The Prophet *Jeremiah* often applies this Metaphor to those Enemies and Destroyers whom God makes use of as his Instruments of Vengeance: See ch. iv. 11.—xlix. 36.—li. 1. And in *Ezekiel*, the Destruction of *Jerusalem* by the *Chaldean* Army is foretold under the Figures of stormy Winds, and overflowing Showers, ch. xiii. 11, 13. By these and such-like figurative Expressions God's severe Judgments upon the Wicked are usually denoted in Scripture. But it is not improbable that the Writer of this Book had in mind, and herein alluded to, a particular wicked Nation, punished in this extraordinary manner, viz. the *Egyptians*, to whom most of these Instances of Vengeance happened; for God smote their Cattle with Hail-stones, and their Flocks with hot Thunderbolts, *Psal.* lxxviii. 49. By the *East-wind* also he plagued them with the *Locusts*, which laid waste their whole Land; and the Waters of the *Red-Sea* at last cruelly drowned them. *Calmet* understands by *πνεῦμα δυνάμεως* not a mighty Wind, as our *Version* has it, but *un vent envoyé par la puissance de Dieu*. And the Sense of a mighty Wind may seem perhaps not so proper here, as it is compared immediately to *λαίλαψ*, or a Whirlwind. If we should understand this Expression of the Spirit of Power, or the powerful Breath or Spirit of the Almighty, the vengeful Breath of God, expressed significantly, and displayed terribly, by the Desolation of a Whirlwind, furnishes as grand an Idea as our Imaginations are perhaps capable of. This seems confirmed by ch. xi. 21. where there is the like Expression.

*Ibid.* And like a Storm shall blow them away.] The *Translators* do not seem here fully to have expressed the Sense of the *Greek* Word *ἐκλιμνίσαι*; it is a technical Term, and means, that God will make use of his Fan and thoroughly purge his Floor, when the Wicked, in the Language of the *Psalmist*, shall be like the Chaff, which the Wind scattereth away from the Face of the Earth, *Psal.* i. 5. With what dreadful Pomp is the Wrath of God here displayed! How magnificently and nobly hath the Writer of this Book drawn the Artillery of Heaven, the Rapidity of its Motion, the Terror of its Appearance, the Desolation occasioned by it, and the certain Death attending it! What an Assemblage of terrible Ideas in a small Compass? The Earth, the Sea, the Rivers, the Clouds, the Winds, the Heavens, like so many auxiliary Forces, are all listed, and



and conspire against the Wicked! What a lively Idea of God's infinite Power over all his Creatures does this Description convey! This latter part of the Chapter must certainly be allowed to be a great Instance of the *Hypotyposis*, a Figure well known to Orators and Poets.

Ibid. *Thus Iniquity shall lay waste the whole Earth.* By this Expression we may understand all the Earth strictly, *terram universam*, as the Arabic renders; and thus the old World, with its Inhabitants, was destroyed by Water for their Iniquity; and St. Peter seems to intimate, that the present Earth, and all the Works that are therein, shall at length be burnt up for the same Reason; 2 Pet. iii. 7, 10. or we may understand this Sentence, of Judgments that shall befall any particular Land or Country. And thus the Syriac Version expounds it, *Vastabitque totam terram impiorum*; and Coverdale's Translation takes it in the same Sense, *Thus the unrighteous Dealings of them shall bring all the Land to a Wylderness*; according to that Observation of the Psalmist, *A fruitful Land maketh be barren, for the Wickedness of those that dwell therein*; Psal. cvii. 34. [But the literal Translation is, *And Iniquity shall lay waste the whole Land*; and it is very probable that this is meant of Egypt in particular, and the Clause that follows of *Pbarabob*.]

Ibid. *And Ill-dealing shall overthrow the Thrones of the Mighty.* The Truth of this Observation cannot be better exemplified than in the Fate of *Nebuchadnezzar* and *Sennacherib*; the latter prided himself in being called the Great King, the King by way of Excellence, and considered himself as the Lord of the Earth, and the Vanquisher of Men and Gods: This Prince, so proud and haughty, God seems to despise as below an ordinary Man; he treats him as a Wild Beast, puts his Hook in his Nose, and a Bridle in his Mouth, and turns him back with Disgrace and Infamy, by the same Way that he came triumphant and glorious. See *Rollin* on the *Belles Lettres*, Vol. III. p. 167. [*ἡ κακοπραγία*, the Ill-dealing: Which looks as if the Author designed the Construction to be, *ἡ κακοπραγία δυναστῶν περὶ τὰς ἐξουσίας δυναστῶν*, or *αὐτῶν*, the Ill-dealing of Princes shall overthrow their Thrones.]

## CHAP. VI.

### THE ARGUMENT.

HAVING established the Preference of Wisdom or Religion above Vice and Wickedness, the Author presses upon Princes and Rulers, whom he addressed in the first Chapter, the Study and Observance of it, as the Means of ruling well; that through a Conceit and imagined Privilege of their high Station, they should attempt nothing injurious; because God careth for all alike, being the common Father of Small and Great, and will punish them proportionably to the great Trust which they abuse. He concludes with an Elogium of Wisdom, its general Use to Mankind, and the Means of obtaining it.

Ver. 1. *Hear, therefore, O ye Kings.* In Coverdale's Translation this Chapter begins, *Wisdom is better than Strength, and a Man of Understanding is more worth than one that*

is strong; which he copied undoubtedly from the *Vulgate* which is single in inserting this Verse, and renders, *Melior est sapientia quam vires, & vir prudens quam fortis*: But it is not to be found in the Greek, nor in the Syriac or Arabic Translations: It seems taken either from *Prov* xvi. 32. or from *Eccl* ix. 16. but more probably from the latter. However that be, or however true and useful the Reflexion may be, yet it is certainly quite out of place here; the Connexion between the Beginning of this Chapter and the Conclusion of the last, is really better without it; for if Ill-dealing, or Wickedness, shall overthrow the Thrones of the Mighty, ch. v. 23. the Advice here given to Kings, to attend to good Instruction, and to conduct themselves with Religion and Justice, is very seasonable and natural. From the great Liberty here taken in giving Advice and Direction to Persons in such high Authority, some have inferred, that a King is the Writer of this Book; for who so proper to take this Freedom with Kings, as one of their own great Rank, or who so able as the wise Solomon? But what Foundation there is for this Pretence, see in Note on ch. ix. 7. of this Book.

Ver. 3. *For Power is given you of the Lord.* [Probably the Original should be pointed thus: *ἐνταῦθα οἱ καὶ ἐξουσίαν — ἐθνῶν, ὅτι ἐδόθη, &c.* So that *ἐθ* may depend upon *ἐνταῦθα*; and be translated *that*, and not *for*. Perceive, or learn with your Ears — that Power was given you, &c. See *Psal* xlviii. 12, 13. and *Acts* i. 4, 5. where there are the same Mistakes in the Pointing and Version.] *By me Kings reign*, says God, *Prov* viii. 15. And to the same high Original does this Writer ascribe their Power. *Irenæus* very properly remarks, "That the Devil never more truly proved himself to be the Father of Lies, than when he said to our Saviour concerning the Kingdoms of the World, *All this Power will I give thee, and the Glory of them, for that is delivered unto me, and to whomsoever I will, I give it.*" The Hint here given to Princes concerning the Original of their Power is very properly inserted, lest, being exalted so high, they should be ignorant or forgetful of him from whom they received their Authority; "For they are accountable to God for the Abuse of their Power, as well as Subjects are for Disobedience to it; because it was committed to them, not for their own Pleasure or Advantage, to gratify their Pride, or to enable them to do Acts of Tyranny and Oppression, but for the Good of those who are under their Charge." See *Homily of Obedience to Magistrates*. *Cyrus* has not only given in his own Person a perfect Model of the Manner in which Princes should govern their Nations, and the real Use they ought to make of absolute Power; but he lays down excellent Rules for the Conduct of other Princes: *Ἐγὼ μὲν οἶμαι δὲν ἢ ἀρχοῦν ἢ ἀρχομένου ἀφ' ἑαυτοῦ, ἢ τῷ πολλοῦ ἐξουσίαν, κ. τ. λ.* "That a King ought not to be distinguished from his Subjects by the Splendor of Riches, the Pomp of Equipage, or Luxury of Diet only, but by a Superiority of Merit of every



"every kind, by an indefatigable Application  
 "to make his People happy—that the ve-  
 "ry Glory of their Character, and the true  
 "Use of their Eminence and Greatness, is  
 "being devoted to, and studious of the Pub-  
 "lick Good." *Cyrop.* lib. i. Tully has the  
 same Opinion of Government; *Mibi quidem*  
*videntur huc omnia esse referenda ab iis qui*  
*præfunt aliis, ut ii, qui eorum in imperio erunt,*  
*sint quàm beatissimi:* *Cic. epist.* i. lib. i. ad  
 Quint. Fratr. This has been assigned by Cri-  
 ticks as the Reason why Homer calls his Kings  
 by such Epithets as *διογενής*, born of the Gods;  
 or *διογενής*, bred by the Gods, viz. to point  
 out to themselves the Offices they were ordain-  
 ed for; and to their People, the Reverence  
 that should be paid them: Expressions corre-  
 spondent to those Places of holy Scripture where  
 Princes are called Gods, and the Sons of the  
 Most High: Annot. on Book i. ver. 229. And  
 the like Reasoning will hold in proportion with  
 respect to Judges, Magistrates, Ministers of  
 State, Generals of Armies, Governors of Pro-  
 vinces, and Ecclesiastical Superiors, and all  
 other Persons in Authority.

Ver. 4. *Because, being Ministers of his King-*  
*dom, you have not judged aright, nor kept the*  
*Law.]* Both the *Vulgate* and *St. Austin* read,  
*Nec custodistis legem justitiæ.* The Meaning is,  
 that being appointed by God, who is your So-  
 vereign in a much higher degree, as his Mi-  
 nisters and Vicegerents, you have acted as if  
 you were absolute and uncontrollable, and ac-  
 countable to none for your Proceedings; ye  
 have made your own Wills and Passions the  
 Rule of your Conduct, and have forgot that  
 for this Cause God raised you up to such an  
 Eminence above the rest of his Creatures, that  
 you might resemble him in Goodness, and  
 impartially distribute Justice. Tully's Reproof  
 of Verres upon this Occasion is very remark-  
 able and fine, *Nunquam tibi venit in mentem,*  
*non tibi idcirco fasces, & seures, & tantam*  
*imperii vim, tantamque ornamentorum omnium*  
*dignitatem datam, ut earum rerum vi & aucto-*  
*ritate omnia repagula juris, pudoris, & officii*  
*perfringeres, & omnium bona prædam tuam du-*  
*ceres?* *Orat.* 5. But nothing can exceed that  
 Charge of King Jehoshaphat to the Judges  
 which he set over the Land, and it ought to be  
 considered as the *Urim* and *Thummim* of every  
 publick Magistrate; *Take heed what ye do, for*  
*ye judge not for Man but for the Lord, who*  
*is with you in the Judgment; wherefore let the*  
*Fear of the Lord be upon you, and take heed*  
*unto it, for there is no Iniquity with the Lord*  
*our God, nor Respect of Persons, nor taking of*  
*Gifts:* *2 Chron.* xix. 6.

Ver. 5. *Horribly and speedily shall he come*  
*upon you; for a sharp Judgment shall be to*  
*them that be in high Places.]* Not that this  
 sharp Judgment shall come upon the Mighty,  
 and such as are in high Places, merely for be-  
 ing mighty; the Expression in this Sense is  
 too lax and rigorous, for there is no Offence  
 in the Office, as such, nor would God raise  
 any of his Creatures to such an Honour and  
 Dignity, as to be his Vicegerents, and even  
 to be called Gods, *Psal.* lxxxii. 6. in resem-  
 blance of him, if the Office and elevated

State itself was faulty or punishable: The  
 Meaning is, that, if Kings and Rulers pervert  
 the Order and original Design of their Institu-  
 tion, and act contrary to the established Rules  
 of Justice, they will then not only be answer-  
 able for this Abuse of Power to him that  
 entrusted them with it, but be punished in a  
 greater degree, in proportion to their superior  
 Station, and the weighty Talents committed  
 to them.

Ver. 6. *For Mercy will soon pardon the*  
*Meanest.] i. e.* God will sooner or more easily  
 pardon a small Fault or breach of Duty in a  
 private Person, from whom so great a Perfec-  
 tion is neither expected nor required, as ha-  
 ving wanted perhaps Opportunities of know-  
 ing his Duty, and being deprived of the Means  
 of Instruction: Such a Person's Transgression,  
 being to himself, proceeding rather from Ig-  
 norance than Malice, and not attended with  
 a Train of bad Consequences to others, will  
 be less regarded: But the Sins of Kings and  
 Rulers are, as *St. Austin* styles them, conta-  
 gious and mortal, their bad Example has the  
 most powerful Influence; it is fatal through  
 their Eminence and Authority, and they ruin  
 as many as are led away by it. Hence God  
 commanded *Moses* to apprehend all the Princes  
 of the People, and the Rulers of Thousands  
 and of Hundreds, and other principal Persons  
 in their Tribes, who had been guilty of foul  
 Idolatry, and to hang them up before the Lord,  
*i. e.* before the Sanctuary, as Men who had  
 forsaken the Worship of their God. And this  
 was to be done openly, or against the Sun,  
 that all the People might see and fear, when  
 they saw Persons of their Distinction and Au-  
 thority made publick Examples of God's Dis-  
 pleasure: *Numb.* xxv. 4. This is the Sense  
 of the *LXX*, who read *ἐκδυσμάρτισον αὐτούς.*  
 The *Vulgate* and *Symmachus* understand it in  
 like manner, and *Selden*, *De Synedr.* lib. ii.  
 "Nor can we better, says *Calmet*, account for  
 "God's Severity to *David*, for an Act of  
 "seeming Curiosity only in numbering the  
 "People, *2 Sam.* xxiv. and his Threats to  
 "*Hezekiah*, *2 Kings* xx. for a piece of secret  
 "Vanity in shewing his Treasures, than by  
 "considering them as public Persons, who  
 "should rather have regarded God's Glory than  
 "their own." See *Comment. Literal. in loc.*

*Ibid.* But mighty Men shall be mightily tor-  
 mented.] *δυνατὶς ἢ δυνατὸς ἐταδύσσεται.* *As ἐταδύσσει*  
 signifies tormenting by way of Examination,  
 it might not be amiss to translate, Men of great  
 Power shall be powerfully, or strictly, examined;  
 as is further threatned by *ἐταδύσσει*, ver. 8.  
 One cannot but observe many Instances in this  
 Author of playing with the Sound or Similitude  
 of Words; see ch. v. 22. xiv. 29. Private  
 Persons seldom dare take the Liberty to repre-  
 sent to Kings, and Persons in great Authority,  
 the Wickedness or Injustice of their Pro-  
 ceedings, much less to remind them of the  
 Danger of such Steps: This Writer therefore  
 very artfully, as *St. Bernard* observes, assumes  
 the borrowed Character of *Solomon*, to give the  
 greater Weight to his Reflexions: As a King,  
 superior to all others of the same rank in  
 Experience and Wisdom, he assures them  
 I with



with the greater Confidence, that however they may flatter themselves from their high Station, that they are out of the reach of Danger, and have nothing to fear; their great Eminence ought rather to possess them with contrary Apprehensions; nothing being more difficult than to fill a high Post with Sufficiency and Credit, nor any thing so easy as to abuse it and miscarry. That God, though he has established them his Vicegerents, has not made them independent of himself; he considers them still as his Creatures, and from the Nature of their Trust, accountable in a greater Degree. That if at any time they abuse their Authority by notorious Acts of Violence and Oppression, they must expect that God will display his own Power by punishing them very remarkably, and make them as terrible Instances of his Vengeance, as many others of their high Rank, whose Sufferings are recorded both in sacred and prophane History. This is finely illustrated in *Isai. xiv. 9.* where all the Ghosts of deceased Tyrants, condemned to the infernal Mansions, are represented as rising from their Thrones, called so by way of Irony, and coming to meet the King of Babylon, and congratulating his Arrival among them. Ver. 8 of this Chapter our Author again adds, *A sore Trial shall come upon the Mighty*; which is the very same Sentiment, but is not here to be considered as a Tautology, but as a repeated Warning. It is observable, that all the ancient Versions express this sore Tryal in stronger Terms than our Translation; the Vulgate reads, *Fortioribus instat fortior cruciatus*, which all the old English Versions follow; but the Arabic expresses it more terribly by the Superlative, *Potestate præditos rigidissimum obruet examen, ad vos enim spectant sermones mei, O rebelles, refractarii.* And this sore Tryal or Punishment will be more disagreeable and insupportable to Princes, even upon account of their former delicate way of Living, and their former absolute Sway over others, because Disgrace, Adversity, and Suffering, are far more painful and vexatious to those that have been in high Stations, and lived at Ease, than to those of an inferior Rank, who have been inured to Hardships: Hence we may imagine *Lucifer*, the Chief-tain of the Devils, as Mr. Mede calls him, to be more deeply affected with his sore Punishment than any of the rest of his inferior Accomplices.

Ver. 7. *For he, which is Lord over all, shall fear no Man's Person, neither shall he stand in awe of any Man's Greatness, for he hath made the Small and the Great, and careth for all alike.*] There is a Passage in *Job xxxiv. 19. 24. 27.* which very much resembles the first part of this Verse, and probably this was taken from it; *God accepteth not the Persons of Princes, nor regardeth the Rich more than the Poor, for they all are the Works of his Hands: He shall break in pieces Mighty Men without number, because they turned back from him, and would not consider any of his Ways.* And the Sense of the latter part is agreeable to that of the Psalmist, *The Lord is loving unto every Man, and his Mercy is over all his Works,* Psal. cxlv.

9. As common Father of All, he is desirous that All should be saved, and not willing that even the meanest should perish. *Magna Dii curant, parva negligunt*, was an unbecoming Notion of God, and worthy only of an Heathen: *Cic. de Nat. Deor.* How much better is that most excellent Sentiment of St. Austin, *Tu sic curas unumquemque nostrum tanquam solum cures, & sic omnes tanquam singulos*;—God takes as much care of every particular Person, as if each were all; and as much care of all, as if all were but one. St. Cyprian has a Sentiment upon this Occasion no less beautiful; *Deus se omnibus ad celestis gratiæ consecutionem æqualitate libratæ præbet parem.* “A true Knowledge of Providence, as it is an Attribute of God, is most necessary, and of the greatest Importance, as it influences all Events both publick and private, and every Man ought to have it in his view in every Circumstance of Life, and every Action of the Day: It makes us more thoroughly sensible of our entire Dependance upon God, of our Weakness and Wants, and presents us with Opportunities of exerting the greatest Virtues, such as Confidence in God, a grateful Acknowledgment of his Mercies, Humility, Religion, and Patience; and is the very Basis of Religion, and of all those holy Exercises of Prayers, Vows, Thanksgivings, Sacrifices, &c.” *Rollin on Sacred History*, Vol. III. p. 130.

Ver. 10. *For they that keep Holiness holily, shall be judged holy.*] [*Φυλάξαντες, have kept.*] Calmet applies this Sentence to dignified Ecclesiastical Persons, to such as composed the Jewish Sanhedrim, and were the judges of their Nation; *Le Sage parloit aux Juges de sa Nation, qui estoient pour l'ordinaire de l'Ordre des Prêtres.* St. Bernard and St. Austin de Pastor. Cur. c. 4. both apply what is said of Rulers here and in the Context to the Christian Clergy, whose Duty likewise rises in proportion to the high Dignity of their Office. Moses, who had the care of God's chosen People, was considered by him as their Law-giver and chief Ruler; and accordingly we find, that even a small Transgression of his, (if any can be called so that is committed against God) was the Reason, in the judgment of many learned Men, of his not being permitted to enter into the Land of Promise. And the like may be said of the Severity which befel the disobedient Prophet, 1 Kings xiii. 21. But I think it more agreeable to the Context, to understand this of good Kings, who are full of Zeal for the Glory of God, the Establishment of Religion, and the Security of its Rights; such as are in Scripture said to be *after God's own Heart*; who consider themselves as his Ministers, and whose Authority is employed to make their Subjects happy, by making them better. 'Tis a Reflexion very commonly to be met with upon the Kings mentioned in the Old Testament, that they did evil in the sight of the Lord, according to all that their Fathers had done; but yet there are some particular Exceptions, some Instances of illustrious Goodness recorded there, which ought in justice to be remembered, and must with pleasure



pleasure be related, for the Credit of their high Calling: Let any one but carefully reflect upon the Sentiments of Piety which David expressed in the Translation of the Ark; and his magnificent and almost immense Preparations for the building of the Temple: *Jehoshaphat's* pious Visitation of his Kingdom, and his Zeal to send Levites with the Princes, to instruct the People in the Law, 2 Chron. xvii. 7. 8. *Hezekiah's* great Care and Concern to restore Religion, to sanctify the House of the Lord God of his Fathers, and carry forth the Filthiness out of the Holy Place; and the many other good Works, which he began in the Service of the House of God, and in the Law, and in the Commandments, to seek his God with all his Heart; 2 Chron. xxix. 5.—xxx. 21. *Josiah's* indefatigable Zeal from the very Beginning of his Reign to reform Religion, and restore the true Worship, not only in Judah, but in the ten Tribes also; 2 Chron. xxxiv. And he will plainly see, that these Princes thought themselves placed on the Throne as Guardians of the Faith, and as nursing Fathers of the Church, to establish and promote the Kingdom of God in their Dominions. Such righteous Kings, who have kept Holiness holily, and been exceedingly zealous for the Honour of the Lord God of Hosts, will always find what to answer; they may even dare to appeal to him for a Reward of their Integrity and Sincerity, and with humble Confidence say, with *Nehemiah*, Remember me, O my God, concerning this, and wipe not out my good Deeds, that I have done for the House of my God, and for the Offices thereof. Nehem. xiii. 14.

Ver. 12. *Yea, she is easily seen.* Rather, and she. &c. ἡ θεωρεῖται.

Ver. 13. *She preventeth them that desire her.*] There is a fine Elogium of Wisdom in this and the following Verses, not only to raise Mens Curiosity after it, but likewise their Desire of it; and, to encourage them the more in the pursuit of it, the Author shews how easy it is to be obtained, that tho' she is glorious and beautiful, yet she is not so coy and backward as to hide herself, or fly away from her Pursuers and Admirers; but rather desires to be known to them, and even makes the first Advances and Overtures of Familiarity and Acquaintance to such as are well disposed to her. What follows in the Context is a close Imitation of the Book of Proverbs, where Wisdom is represented as inviting Men to come to her Dwelling, as going into the most publick Places to call them to her, that such as listen to her, and watch at her Gates, are happy, and those that find her, find Life and Happiness; Expressions so like this Writer, that were there not stronger Arguments to the contrary, one would be almost tempted to pronounce that they came both from the same Pen.

Ibid. *In making herself first known unto them.* Rather, according to the Greek, who desire to be known first by her.

Ver. 15. *To think therefore upon her (Wisdom) is perfection of Wisdom.* Rather, Prudence, Πρᾶσις.

Ver. 17. *For the very true Beginning of her*

*is the Desire of Discipline.*] We have here, and in the Context, the several Degrees set down, by which a Person well disposed towards Wisdom, may rise by little and little to the Perfection of it: The first Step mentioned is the Desire of Discipline or Instruction, as the first Step to a Cure is, being sensible that we are out of order—And this Desire of Instruction in Virtue or Wisdom, in Religion or Science, proceeds from the good Opinion which a Man entertains of it, and the Love which he bears to it—And this Love is the Cause of his Perseverance and willing Obedience—And his Obedience will produce the Reward of Happiness—Which Happiness consists in Incorruption, i. e. in a State of Immortality, and a Crown of Glory, that fadeth not away. This Desire therefore of Instruction, by a regular Deduction of Particulars, and a kind of logical Inference and Conclusion, may be said to be the principal thing which conducteth Men to a Kingdom, *ad regnum perpetuum*, according to the Vulgate, as that which sets the Machine a going, may properly be reckoned the Cause of all the other Motions, and of what is effected in the Conclusion by them. In this and the three following Verses, the Learned will easily discern the Beauty of the Climax, or regular Gradation from one thing to another, like that of St. Paul, Rom. v. 3, 4. *Tribulation worketh Patience, and Patience Experience, and Experience Hope, and Hope maketh not ashamed.* See also 2 Pet. i. 5. not unlike to which is that of St. Austin, *Velle meum tenebat inimicus, ex voluntate perversa facta est libido, & dum servitur libidini, facta est consuetudo, & dum consuetudini non resistitur, facta est necessitas.* Confess. lib. viii. c. 5. But that of St. Chrysostom, with respect to Baptism, is still more beautiful, and hardly to be paralleled; “You are herein made not only free, but holy; not only holy, but just likewise; not barely just, but Children also; not Children only, but Heirs; not merely Heirs, but Brethren of Christ; not Brethren only, but Co-heirs; not Co-heirs only, but Members also; not Members only, but his Temple; not Temples only, but Organs of the Holy Spirit.” *Homil. ad Neophyt.* After which Instances, it may seem almost needless to mention that of Tully, *In urbe luxuries creatur, ex luxuria existat avaritia, ex avaritia erumpat audacia necesse est; inde omnia scelera & maleficia nascuntur.*

Ver. 21. *If your Delight be then in Thrones and Sceptres, O ye Kings of the People, honour Wisdom.*] What has been observed of the Usefulness of History by a learned Writer, is equally applicable to Wisdom here recommended; “That it is useful both to Small and Great, to Princes and Subjects; but more necessary to Princes and Great Men, than to all the World besides. For how can Truth approach them amidst the Crowd of Flatterers which surround them on all Sides, and are continually commending and admiring them, or, in other Words, corrupting and poisoning their Hearts and Understandings? How can Truth make her modest and feeble Voice to be heard amidst such Tumult and Confusion? How venture to lay before them the Duties and “Slaveries



“Slaveries of Royalty? How shew them  
 “wherein their true Glory consists, and repre-  
 “sent to them, that if they will look back to  
 “the Original of their Institution, they will  
 1. “clearly find they were made for the People,  
 “and not the People for them? How put them  
 “in mind of their Faults, instill into them a  
 “Dread of the just Judgment of Posterity,  
 “and disperse the thick Cloud which the vain  
 “Phantom of their Greatness has formed  
 “around them? How that a *Caligula*, a *Nero*,  
 “and a *Domitian*, who were praised to an ex-  
 “cess during their Lives, became the Horror  
 “and Execration of Mankind after their  
 “Death; whereas *Titus*, *Trajan*, *Antoninus*,  
 “and *Marcus Aurelius*, are still looked upon  
 “as the Delights of the World, for having  
 “made use of their Power only to do Good.”  
*Rollin*, Vol. III. p. 2.

Ver. 22. *And will not bide Mysteries from you.*] The *Vulgate* here renders *Sacramenta Dei*, without Authority from any of the more ancient Versions, or Countenance from the Original; the true meaning is, that he will reveal or discover the Arcana, or secret Things of Wisdom, as the Reason of her Name, see *Ecclus* vi. 22. her Original and Existence, her Nature and Properties, her Effects and Operations, even from the Beginning of the Creation; for so I would understand the Words in the Greek Text, *αὐτὴ δὲ χάρις ἡ σοφίας*, viz. that Wisdom was present at, concurred in, and is displayed by, the Works of the Creation, in a much better and loftier Sense than that of our Version. The Syriac Translation seems to carry it still higher, understanding these Words of Wisdom, eternally existing with, or in, God, before all Creation, *quod creaturas præcessit investigabo*: The author here endeavours to discover and set down the Origin of heavenly Wisdom, and indirectly confutes the Pretences and Boastings of the Heathen Sages, all whose Philosophy is but of human Invention, the Work of a *Socrates* or a *Pythagoras*: But Wisdom is not of so late a Date, is more ancient than any historical Monuments of the *Greeks*, has existed in all Ages, may be traced through the Times of the Patriarchs, and its Origin ultimately resolved into God himself. See *Calmet* in loc.

Ver. 23. *Nor will I go with consuming Envy.*] Some Latin Translations render, *Neque cum eo, qui invidia tabescit*, &c. [Which may seem to be confirmed by the Word *ἐνός*, namely, *ὁ τῆς καὶ φθόνου*, as our Translators took it, *such a Man*, as if they had read *ὅτι ὁ πῶς*, instead of *ὅτι ἐνός*. Though indeed *ἐνός* may as well be rendred it, i. e. Envy, which has nothing to do (*ὅτι καὶ φθόνου*. *Alex.*) with Wisdom.] So that the Meaning may either be, that he would shew no Envy or Narrowness of Spirit, in his Discoveries about Wisdom, but as he had learned diligently, he would likewise communicate liberally, ch. vii. 13. or, that he would hold no Commerce or Society, with a Person of that selfish and inhospitable Temper. For Envy does not only pine and grieve at the outward Prosperity of others, but is vexed at their inward Accomplishments, at any Attainments or happy Discoveries which they may make, or have communicated to

them by others: Whereas Charity, or a beneficent Temper, which is kindly disposed towards all, envies no Man's Merit; nor does it pride itself in the Singularity of its own Knowledge, nor conceal what may be useful to others; she is not afraid that others may equal, or even exceed her in Knowledge, but with Pleasure opens and communicates to them what she apprehends may be of public Benefit; and considers not from what Quarter a useful Discovery comes, only, that its Advantage may be made general, and others share in the Improvement. *St. Basil's* Observation, upon this Occasion, is very just and useful; *Adepts*, says he, or such as have made uncommon Discoveries in any Science, should be ready to impart their Knowledge without Envy; and such as want to be instructed, should offer themselves without any Shame: *Epist.* 12. And the Comment of *Messieurs Du Port-Royal* gives the true Reason for imparting the Treasures of Knowledge to others, *C'est pourquoy on les doit communiquer aux autres sans Envie, puis que plus on les repand sur eux, plus on en jouit, & qu'elle ne diminue point par la multitude de ceux qui la possèdent.*

Ver. 24. *The Multitude of the Wise is the Welfare of the World, and a wise King is the upholding of the People.*] The Greek reads *ὡς ἡ ἀνθρώπων*, and the *Vulgate*, *Multitudo sapientium sanitas est orbis terrarum*; and *Calmet's* Exposition is to the same effect, viz. *That wise Men are as it were the Physicians and Recoverers of the World, especially of the Wicked part of it; and that their Examples and Discourses are like powerful Medicines to the Sick.* This is the very Language and Comparison of *Philo*; *πᾶς ὁ κόσμος ὑμῶν ἐστὶν ὡς φάρμακον . . . καθάπερ ἰατρὸς ὁ νοσῶν*. De Sacrific. Abel & Cain. *Plato* bears Testimony to the Truth of the last Sentence, when he advises, *That Kings should be Philosophers, or Philosophers Kings.*—*Ille quidem princeps ingenii & doctrinæ Plato, tum denique fore beatas res publicas putavit, si aut docti & sapientes homines eas regere cœpissent, aut, qui regerent, omne suum studium in doctrina ac sapientia collocassent. Hanc conjunctionem videlicet protestatis & sapientie salutis censuit civitatibus.* *Cic.* *Epist.* 1. ad Quint. Fratr. And it was no less piously than excellently wished by *Justin Martyr*, that Kings and Rulers, together with their sovereign Power, might be possessed of Wisdom and a good Mind.

## CHAP. VII.

### THE ARGUMENT.

UNDER the borrowed Character of *SOLOMON*, the Author proceeds to shew the Original and powerful Effects of Wisdom; that though all Men agree in this, that all are born, and all must die, 'tis Wisdom that puts the Difference between Man and Man, according as the intermediate Time between the Cradle and the Grave is improved or neglected; that the wisest Man was at first as helpless as other Children, and attained to the Perfection of Understanding by a steady pursuit of Wisdom, and Prayers to God for it, and that it is attainable by all others observing the same Method. The Chapter concludes with a fine



fine Elogium of Wisdom, as essentially inherent in God, and derivative in Man, as a Ray from his Divinity. Calmet says the six first Chapters of this Book are as the Preface to the Work, which may be considered as an Abridgment or Paraphrase of the nine first Chapters of the Book of Proverbs. Pref. sur le livre de la Sagesse.

Ver. 1. I myself also am a mortal Man like unto all.] As nothing is so great an Enemy to Instruction and Improvement as Pride, the Author, intending to communicate the Secrets of Wisdom, and the Method of obtaining it, begins with shewing Man his true Original, what he is by Nature, and what by Grace, thereby to depreciate his Conceit and inflame his Gratitude: And to humble even Kings, and take away all Affectation of Divinity, a Notion which Flattery is too apt to insinuate, he assures them that they are equally the Children of Adam, sprung from the same first common Parent with Slaves and the meanest of their Subjects; and as liable to Corruption and Mortality as the very Beggars. Well therefore may Pliny cry out, *O dementiam hominum, à talibus initiis existimantium ad superbiam se genitos!*

Ibid. The Offspring of him that was first made of the Earth.] Eusebius calls Adam *πρωτογενής*, *Præp. Evang. lib. xi.* and to this St. Paul may be thought to allude, when he says, that the first Man is of the Earth, earthy, *1 Cor. xv. 47.* The Derivation of *homo*, *ab humo*, according to the Etymologists, seems natural and proper, and the very Name Adam denotes the same Original. The Greek Writers accordingly make use of the Term *πρωτογενής*, to denote the great Antiquity and unknown Original of their first and earliest Heroes. But though all Men thus resemble Adam in their Origination, yet may his Condition in this respect be considered as singular, that he was created perfect at once both in Soul and Body, quite different from the State here described of his Posterity, who arrive slowly, progressively, and with difficulty, to the Perfection of either. Philo has the same Observation upon Adam, whom he calls emphatically *ο πρωτογενής*, and says, that he far excelled all that came after him in the Excellencies of Soul and Body; *ἐκείνῳ ὁ πρωτογενὲς ἄνθρωπος ὁ πρωτογενής, ὁ πάντος ἔχοντος ἡμῶν δοχὴν γένεως, ἐκάρτερος αἰσῶς, ὁ πολὺν χρόνον καὶ σώμα γεννημένος μοι δοκεῖ, καὶ μακροῦ χρόνου ἐπέστα διενεχέναι, καὶ τὰς ἐν ἀμφοτέροις ἐπετελέσαι.* De Mundi Opificio.

Ver. 2. And was fashioned to be Flesh in the Time of ten Months.] The Alexandrian MS. and all the other Versions, make the Comma after *Flesh*, and join the rest to the next Sentence. As to the precise Time of ten Months mentioned here, the ancient Greek and Latin Writers express themselves in like manner. *Quid* speaking of the Year of Romulus, which consisted only of ten Months, says,

*Quod satis est utero matris dum prodeat infans.*  
*Hoc anno statuit temporis esse satis.*

And Virgil is no less express;

*Matri longa decem tulerunt fastidia menses.*

*Eclog. iv.*

Upon which Servius makes this Observation;

*Mares decimo nascuntur mense, femina nono.*

Plautus often mentions the like Time; he is particularly jocular in what follows:

*Nam me illa in alvo menses gestavit decem,*  
*At ego illam [Famem] in alvo gesto plus annos decem.* Plaut. in Sticho.

The like Time is mentioned by Terence, *Adelph. Act. iii. Sc. iv.* and by Censorinus, *De Die Natali, c. 12.* Philo calls *ἡ τεσσαρεσκαίδεκάς*, or forty Weeks, *ἡ ζωὸνικαίδεκάς ἐν ἡ ἀπλάττειται ἄνθρωπον ἐν τῷ φέσει ἐξασπείων.* De Mose, lib. ii. And Menander mentions the same Time as most usual, *γυνὴ καὶ δεκάμηνος.* Hippocrates reckons such as are born in the tenth Month, as most perfect and promising: *Lib. de Septimestri partu.* Theocritus accordingly mentions Hercules as born at this Age: *Idyll. 24.*

Ibid. Being compacted in Blood.] *Παγείς ἐν αἵματι.* St. Bernard expresses himself in the same manner, alluding perhaps to this very Passage; *Quid sum ego? Homo de humore liquido: fui enim in momento conceptionis de humano semine conceptus: deinde spuma illa coagulata, modicum crescendo, caro facta est.* Meditar. c. 2. *Παγείς* occurs in the like Sense, *Job x. 10.* in the most correct Editions of the LXX. And Pliny uses *coagulum* upon the like Occasion.

Ibid. And the Pleasure that came with Sleep.] The Modesty and Reservedness of this Writer are here much to be admired; 'tis a Resemblance of the great Decency in the Sacred Writings upon the like Occasion. *ἡ γὰρ* in the Original, rendered *Sleep* by our Translators, here means *concupitus*; the Syriac Version reads, *concupiscentia concubitus.* The like Expression occurs, *ch. iv. 6.* where Bastards are called, *τέκνα ἐξ ἀνόμων ὑπνών.* See Note on that Passage. And in this Sense, I think, we may understand that Expression of Terence, *Interdum propter dormias.* Eunuch! *Act. ii. Sc. iii.* We find *Sleep* understood in the like Sense frequently by the Hellenist Jews, and the Platonists; and in the following Line of Homer;

*Παύλων μὲν καὶ ἐστὶ καὶ ὕπνου καὶ φιλοπόνη.*

Ver. 3. And I also, when I was born, drew in the common Air, and fell upon the Earth.] It is the most general Opinion, that the Fœtus does not respire or breathe in its Mother's Womb, but as soon as it is born, it then first begins to breathe, and cannot live without it. Galen, among the Ancients, thought that it breathed before its Birth; but Aristotle, *lib. de Spir. c. 3.* is of a different Opinion, and is followed herein by the Moderns. This Writer likewise seems to favour the Negative. To point out the Infant's helpless State after its Birth, it is added, that he fell upon the Earth. The ancient Romans seem to intimate this, by their Custom of laying the new-born Infant immediately upon the bare Ground, and imploring the Help of the Goddess Ops, to assist and bring it forward. St. Austin *de Civit. Dei, lib. iv.* and Calmet in loc.

Ibid. And fell upon the Earth, which is of like Nature.] Coverdale renders, *I fell upon the Earth,*



*Earth, which is my Nature.* And the *Syriac*, *Omnium more hominum, super terram decidi.* So that probably *ὁμοιοπαθής* may be the true Reading; and I have the Satisfaction to find this Conjecture confirmed by *Junius*, who renders, in the *Nominative Case*, *iisdem perpeffionibus infestus.* The Word *ὁμοιοπαθής*, which our Translators have in this Place very justly rendred, occurs, *Act. xiv. 15.* *ἡμεῖς ὁμοιοπαθεῖς τοῦ αὐτοῦ ἀνθρώπου*, where they have as remarkably miscarried; the true Rending of it, according to *Erasmus*, is, *We also are of like Nature with you*; and not, *Men of like Passions with you*, as our Version there has it; which destroys the Beauty of the *Antithesis*. It is judiciously rendred in the ancient *Latin Version*, *Mortales sumus, similes vobis homines*, which, in the Judgment of a great Critic, is far preferable to the Rending of our Translators: *Bentley's Boyle's Lect. p. 179.* [If the Author had written *ὁμοιοπαθής*, he would not have placed it where it is; and particularly the Article *τῇ* going before it, shews that he wrote *ὁμοιοπαθής*.]

[*Ibid.* *Fell upon the Earth.* *κατέπεσον γῆν.* Instead of *κατέπεσαν* the Construction requires *καταπεσόν.*]

[*Ibid.* *And the first Voice which I uttered, was Crying, as all others do.*] Instead of the common Reading in all the Editions, *πρῶτον φωνῶν* *ὁμοίαν πάντων ἄνθρωπων*, I would read, *πρῶτον τι φωνῶν ὁμοίαν πάντων ἄνθρωπων*. *ἴσα* seems Tautology after *ὁμοίαν*. [It is *ἴσα* in the *Complut.* Edit. in *Bos's LXX.* Perhaps *ἴσα* is the true Reading. *ἴσα* cannot stand, because there will be no Construction.] We have here, and in the Context, a fine Picture of human Nature, and the State and Condition of it very naturally represented in its several Stages, viz. "That

"Man is a Creature turned naked into the wide World, and cast upon the bare Ground, without any Covering to shelter or defend him; that, unfurnished with what is fit and necessary for him, he is bound up and swaddled, and requires Help and Teaching even for the very feeding and supporting himself; that he is perfect in no other Instance of Nature's teaching, except that of Crying; this he brings into the World along with him, and a very fit Emblem it is of our Fortune and Condition; that Infirmities and Miseries make up his middle State, and Rotteness and Worms his latter End: And Histories of good Authority assure us, That some Nations welcome their Children into the World with this Salutation, *Child, thou art come into this World to suffer, take it patiently, and hold thy peace.*" See *Charon. de la Sagesse.* And therefore *Zoroaster's* laughing when he was born, instead of Crying, as all other Children do, is remarked by many Writers as a Prodigy. *Solin. Mirabil. lib. i.* In this just Representation of the Condition of human Nature, our Author imitates the true *Solomon*, who has drawn Man at full length in his true Colours and Proportions from the Cradle to the Grave. St. *Crisostom's* Observation upon this first Stage of Life is very apposite, viz. "That Nature seems, by the Cries of the Infant, to foretel his future

"Misery; and when God said to our first Parents before the Fall, *Encrease and multiply*, he intended it as a Blessing; but 'twas a Curse and a Punishment upon Eve and her Posterity, when he afterwards told her, *In Sorrow shalt thou bring forth Children.*" *De Utilit. Lect. Script.* St. *Augustin's* Account is still more melancholy; *Nascuntur homines homine generante, Deo creante, peccato inficiente, diabolo possidente.* But *Pliny's* Description of the Infant State is most natural, and comes nearest to this Writer: *Natura hominem tantum nudum, & in nuda humo, natali die abjicit, ad vagitus statim & ploratum; nullumque tot animalium aliud ad lacrymas, & has protinus vite principio—Ab hoc lucis rudimento (quoniam feras inter nos genitas) vincula excipiunt, & omnium membrorum nexus—Infeliciter natus jacet, manibus pedibusque devinctis, flens animal, ceteris imperaturum; & à suppliciis vitam auspicatur, unam tantum ob causam, quia natum est.* *Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. vii. in Proem.*

Ver. 4. *Καὶ ἐν φωνῇ.* *Syriac* omits *ἐν*, and translates it *carefully*. One can scarce help thinking, that either this should be some other Word, or was a Term for something used about Children. *F. Hardouin*, who thinks the *Greek Testament* was translated from the *Latin*, would think here that *cunis* was originally in the *Latin*, and that the *Greek* Translator had read *cunis* instead of it.

Ver. 6. *But all Men have one Entrance into Life, and the like going out.* The Meaning is very plain and obvious, That all are born, and all must die; not, that all depart by the same Means, or in the same Manner, as our Version seems to countenance: For though there is but one Passage into Life, there are perhaps a thousand Ways out of it, and almost every Accident sufficient, though different, to let in Death. The Word *ἐξόδῳ* in the Original, is the Term used by sacred and prophane Writers for Death, or a Departure out of this Life: See ch. iii. 2. *Eccles. xxxviii. 23.* 2 *Pet. i. 15.* The Connexion of the following Verse is intricate; nor is it easy to determine what *ἐκεῖθεν*, or *wherefore* refers to. I take the Sense to be, That as his Nature was the same with that of others, and Wisdom was not a natural Gift to him above others, therefore he prayed to God to bestow it on him.

Ver. 7. *I called upon God, and the Spirit of Wisdom came to me.* *Calmet* observes, that throughout this Book we are to understand Wisdom, or the Spirit of Wisdom, as synonymous to Religion, Piety, the Fear of God, &c. in a Sense far different from that in which Wisdom is taken in the Writings of the Heathen Philosophers, where Wisdom has no connexion with, or relation to Religion, nor aims at its Improvement, by enforcing the Practice of Virtue; its chief Design appears to be only to make Men more knowing, to brighten and improve their Natural parts, to raise and elevate the Genius, and to instill some dry useless Notions of an imperfect Morality; *Quelques connoissances steriles d'une morale fort imparfaite:* *Pres. sur le Liv. de la Sagesse.*

Ver. 8. *I preferred my before my Sceptres and Thrones, and esteemed Riches nothing in comparison*



parifon of ber.] The Author gives here, fays the Comment of *Messieurs Du Port Royal*, une excellent marque pour juger si on a veritablement l'esprit de Sageffe & l'esprit de Dieu, &c. "An excellent Rule to judge whether a Man has the true Spirit of Wisdom and Piety; for a true sincere Piety is that which esteems God above every thing, which desires nothing but him, which prefers his Favour before Thrones and Sceptres, and placing its whole Happiness and Crown of Rejoicing in him, is pleased, easy, and contented, under the Loss of all other Things besides." Such was that elevated Piety of St. Paul, which counted all things but Dung, for, or in comparison of, the Excellency of the Knowledge of Christ Jesus; Philip. iii. 8.

Ver. 9. Neither compared I unto her any Precious stone.] Αἰθὼν ἀτίμητον, ὅτι ὁ πᾶς χρυσὸς, κ. τ. λ. Perhaps the true Reading may be, αἰθὼν ἀτίμητον τοπαζίον, I did not compare unto her the invaluable Stone, the Topaz: See Job xxviii. 19. where the Topaz and Gold are joined together in the same Verse, as not comparable to Wisdom: Nor does there seem any Occasion for ὅτι, or πᾶς, the former probably is improper, and the latter unnecessary. [I have proposed above τοπαζίον, but if the Word is ever written τοπαζ (as Βασιφάζ in Job) it will be still nearer. A Passage in Prov. viii. 19. of the Version of Symmachus, suggests another Conjecture, αἰθὼν ἀτίμητον ὁ Ωπαζ χρυσός, &c. There it is, κρείσσον καρπὸς μου χρυσὸς Ωπαζ. In Cantic. ch. v. 11. we meet with χρυσὸν κεφαλή. But after various Attempts to settle this, I am entirely persuaded that the following is the true, and undoubted Reading, wherein there is little or no Variation in the Text, and what is, must arise from a Similitude of Sound or Letter, and necessarily be the Mistake of the Copyist. I would therefore read thus: ὅτι ὁ Παζ χρυσός, κ. τ. λ. See particularly Psal. xxi. 3. where what is called a Crown of pure Gold in our Version; and in the LXX, στεφανὸν ἐκ αὐθιγῶν, is, in the Hebrew, said to be a Crown of Paz. Which Bochart, both in his Phaleg. lib. ii. c. 27. and in his Canaan, lib. i. c. 46. shews, was the Island anciently called Taprobane. Of which Stephens gives the following Account: Naseuntur in ea berylli & hyacinthi, ut Ptol. refert, lib. vi. Item. Aurum & Argentum, & marmor testudini simile; præterea gemmæ & margaritæ præcipuæ bonitatis, Dict. Hist. Geograph. in voce. The Footsteps of this Word Paz remained in Ptolemy's Time, who mentions in that Island the River Phasis, and the Creek, or Bay, Pasis; and hence probably the Word Topaz, for a Jewel, or a particular Species of them, and τοπαζίον in the Greek. See Castelli Lexic. in voce.

Ibid. It is as a little Sand.] ὁ αἰμωροδύτης should be translated Sand of little Value: For that is frequently the Signification of ὀλίγος. So ὀλίγη ῥύμη, a Bride with a small Fortune, in the Epigram of Callimachus, Antholog. lib. iii. we meet with ὀλίγη ἀρένη in the Poets in this Sense.

Ver. 10. And chose to have her instead of Light.] Ἀντὶ φωτός. Our Version seems faulty here, for though ἀντὶ is often used in the Sense

it is taken by our Translators, it is probably improper in this Place: The Meaning here is, That I determined to have her for a Light or Guide; in which Sense ἀντὶ often occurs. The Vulgate accordingly reads, Proposui pro luce habere illam, and the Arabic, Elegi ut esset mihi pro luce, which is the Sense of Junius. Coverdale follows the Vulgate, and renders, I purposed to take her for my Light; to which agree the other ancient English Versions. Or the Meaning may be, that he chose her for the sake of her Light, gratia lucis. There may be also another Sense, that he chose her pro luce, rather than Light, because, as it immediately follows, The Light that cometh from Wisdom never goeth out, but after Light succeeds Darkness: See ver. 29, 30. In all these Senses ἀντὶ is used by good Writers, whose Authority will warrant our Interpretation. Any of which is preferable to that in our Version. This and the two preceding Verses seem taken from Job xxviii. 15, &c. and are a close Imitation of that ancient Writer. Or they may refer to Prov. viii. 10.—xi. 18, 19.

[Ibid. For the Light that cometh from her. Φέγος, Brightness.]

Ver. 11. All good Things together came to me with her, and innumerable Riches in her Hands.] i. e. through her Hands. So the Vulgate, per manus illius, which the ancient English Versions follow. I have before observed, that this Writer often personates Solomon, and this long Prosopopœia is spoken under that borrowed Character. This Verse refers to that Grant of Wisdom which is mentioned 1 Kings iii. where Solomon, upon his Advancement to the Throne, prays earnestly to God for the Direction and Assistance of Wisdom, without any mention made of Wealth, Honour, or Long-life; and God bestows upon him, for his disinterested Piety, the two former in great abundance, though unasked and even unexpected by him, together with Wisdom and Understanding to discern Judgment. The like Promise of additional good Things occurs in other Parts of Scripture, to such as seek God's Kingdom in the first place. And indeed throughout the whole History of the Old Testament, and particularly under the Mosaic Dispensation, Rewards and Promises are annexed to Piety, or true Wisdom, and almost all temporal Advantages distributed in proportion to the Degrees of it, as favourable Seasons, Plenty, Fruitfulness, Health, Peace, Deliverance from Dangers, and Victory over Enemies; which though very valuable Privileges, and such wherein the Prosperity and Welfare of any Nation chiefly consist, are yet very far exceeded by those greater Blessings, and more worthy of God's Magnificence to bestow, reserved for the Righteous in another State. On the other hand, Wickedness, especially when it becomes general, draws down all the Scourges of God's Anger, Famine, Plague, War, Destruction, Bondage; and is the true Cause of the Ruin of whole Kingdoms. After this Account it may seem needless to mention the Curse which it brings upon private Families, which are often observed to dwindle away insensibly; and their Prosperity, like Jonab's Gourd, withers through the



the Venom of this Worm which preys upon its Vitals.

[Ver. 12. *And I rejoiced in them all, or, above all things.* ἐν πάσιν, Alex. and Complut.]

Ibid. *Because Wisdom goeth before them.* Αὐτὰν ἡγήται σοφία, i. e. Wisdom not only brings them with her, but conducts and heads them, like their Leader and Commander. The Geneva Bible renders, *For Wisdom was the Author thereof*; but the Rendering of Vatablus is more exact and judicious, *Ut quorum caput sit sapientia*, that Wisdom was the Head or most valuable of all the Gifts which God gave him. The *Vulgate* reads, without any Authority, *Quoniam antecedebat me sapientia*, which seems not so proper or agreeable to this Place.

Ver. 13. This Verse seems to be very abrupt; probably it should be connected to the 12<sup>th</sup> in this manner, ἀγνοῶν ὅτι αὐτὴν γενέτιν εἶναι τῶν, ἀδύλας τε ἑμαυτοῖς, ἀφρόνως τε μελαδιδάμει, &c.

Ver. 14. *Which they that use become the Friends of God, being commended for the Gifts that come from Learning.* i. e. recommended to God, which is the better Rendering; and thus Coverdale's and the other ancient English Versions understand it, which read, *And are accepted with hym for the Gyfts of Wysdome.* Our Translators followed a corrupt Greek Copy in the first part of this Sentence, which read, ἐν οἱ χερισμένοι, and the *Vulgate* and Arabic seem to have followed the same; and so do the most ancient English Versions. But we need no other Argument to prove this a corrupt Reading, than the Badness of the Greek, for χερισμαί does not admit of such a Construction. The Alexandrian MS. preserves the true Reading, ἐν οἱ κλησάμενοι, and the Syriac renders accordingly, *qui possederint eam*, i. e. they that possess Wisdom enter into Friendship with God, as the Margin rightly has it; See ver. 27. of this Chapter, and ch. vi. 19. where the like Sentiment occurs. For Incorruption, as 'tis there called, or a Life led according to the Rules of Piety and Wisdom, *maketh us near to God*, and *to be allied unto Wisdom* is not only the way to obtain Immortality, ch. viii. 13. but is called, ver. 17. Immortality itself. But that Passage of St. Paul, *He that is joined unto the Lord is one Spirit*, 1 Cor. vi. 17. which can never enough be admired, points out the nearest Intimacy and Relation; such a happy and accomplished Christian is mystically one Spirit with God, by a spiritual and more noble Union than that of Flesh. Our Author probably refers in this Passage to Abraham, who had the singular Honour of so high a Title, for he was called, says St. James, for his Faith or Righteousness, *the Friend of God*, James ii. 2. and probably he should be so styled Gen. xviii. 17. where Philo's Reading is very observable, μὴ ἀπαλυνθῆναι ἰσὺ δυνάμει. which our Version wholly omits, and the LXX expresses not so fully. The like Observation may be made upon the ancient *Vulgate*, *Judith viii. 26.* where the Rendering is, *Pater noster Abraham per multas tribulationes probatus, Dei amicus effectus est*; of which there is no mention in the LXX, nor in our Translation of the Place:

It shews, however, the Sense of those Interpreters. And the like Appellation we find given to Abraham by Clemens Romanus, Clemens Alexandrinus, and other Writers. See Note on ver. 27.

Ver. 15. *God hath granted me to speak as I would.* Ex animi sententia, according to the *Vulgate*; but Coverdale's Rendering is, *God hath granted me to talke wysely.* Ut consulte loquar, says the Syriac; and Vatablus, *Sententiosè.* And so Calmet, *De parler d'une maniere sententieuse, & pleine de Sagesse*, which ἡ γνώμην will well admit of. [But it may be doubted if the Greek Phrase is ever used in this Sense; therefore it should be rendered, *as I could wish.*] Some Copies express this by way of Prayer, ἐμοὶ δὲ ὁ θεὸς εἰπῆν, which is the *Marginal Reading*, and of the Syriac, and of St. Gregory, 23 Mor. c. 17. but there is no reason for such an Alteration, the Sense of our Version, which is followed by Calmet and all the Commentators, exactly agreeing with the Character of Solomon, whose Fame for Wisdom was such, that People came from all Parts of the World to hear and be instructed by it: And we have the Prayer for Wisdom at length throughout the whole ninth Chapter, so that it may seem here superfluous.

Ibid. *And to conceive as is meet for the Things that are given me.* Or, more properly, to conceive, as is meet, of the Things that are given me, i. e. To have just and worthy Sentiments of the Gifts which I have received, *D'avoir des sentimens dignes des dons que j'ai reçus*, says Calmet. [To conceive suitably to the Things that are given me. The Construction is ἀξίως τῶν δεδομένων or λεγομένων. In the other Sense, to conceive, as is meet, of the Things, &c. it should have been περὶ τῶν δεδομένων, as vi. 15. τῷ ᾧ ἐθυμνήθην περὶ αὐτῆς.] Our Translators follow the Vatican Copy, which reads δεδομένων, which is the Sense likewise of the *Vulgate*, and of the ancient English Versions. The Alexandrian MS. prefers λεγομένων, which both the Syriac and Arabic Interpreters follow, and seems indeed the truer Reading. [Our Translators badly render in the Margin, or, are to be spoken of, which would be λεχθησομένων.]

[Ibid. *That leadeth unto Wisdom.* ἡ σοφίας ὁδηγός, i. e. the Guide of Wisdom, or, that guideth Wisdom, not, that leadeth unto Wisdom, which would have been εἰς ἡ σοφίαν ὁδηγός, see John xvi. 13. So ὁδηγός τυφλῶν, Rom. ii. 19. *A Guide of the blind*, not, *that leadeth unto the blind.*]

Ver. 16. *All Wisdom also, and Knowledge of Workmanship.* [Rather, Skill, and Knowledge of Workmanship.] Even Wisdom itself, which Men are so apt to value themselves upon, and to boast of as their own, as being the supposed Fruit of their own Understanding, acquired with much Industry and Pains, must yet be acknowledged to come from God, τῷ πατρὶ ᾧ φάται. The Heathens themselves ascribed the first Invention of the several Arts and Sciences to supernatural Assistance, and looked upon the Authors of them as so many Gods; as if it were out of the Power of unassisted Reason, or Man's bare Ingenuity, to make such useful Discoveries. But the Honour



nour which they ignorantly ascribed to some deified Benefactor, with justice belongs to the true God; for, as *Job* expresses it, 'Tis the Inspiration of the Almighty that giveth Men Understanding, ch. xxxii. 8. But what are we to understand by the Knowledge of Workmanship, in the following part of the Verse? The present Reading of the *Alexandrian*, and the other Copies, is ἐπιστήμην ἔργων, which seems to be a Mistake, for no such Word is to be met with; I think the true Reading is, ἐπιστήμην ἔργων, which is very properly expressed by, *The Knowledge of Workmanship*, in our Version. *Vatablus* renders with great Judgment, *operum scientia*. And the *Geneva Bible* expresses it accordingly, *The Knowledge of the Workes*, i. e. Works of Art. The Sense is, that the Attainment to a great Perfection in these is the Gift of God, and cannot be complete without his Inspiration and Assistance: For I am rather inclined to think, from the manner of Expression, that Wisdom and Knowledge are not to be taken here in their usual high Sense, and as they generally are in this Writer, and in the Book of *Proverbs*, but mean only extraordinary Skill or Accomplishment in Work. Thus *Exod.* xxxi. 3. (which I am persuaded this Passage refers to, and probably ch. viii. 6.) it is said, that God called *Bezaleel* for the Work of the Tabernacle, and filled him with Wisdom and Understanding, and Knowledge in all manner of Workmanship, where ἔργων, οὐσίας, σοφία, are all used by the LXX to express a great Perfection in manual Skill. And what follows in Ver. 6 of that Chapter is very observable, *In the Hearts of all that are wise hearted*, or ingenious, *I have put*, says God, *Wisdom*, that they may make all that I have commanded them; i. e. God, by an Inspiration from above upon this Occasion, endued the Minds of all such ingenious Persons as were employed with an extraordinary Skill, which they could never have attained to by their own Industry, at least not so soon, nor so perfectly as to go immediately and skilfully about the building of the Tabernacle in the Manner he designed it. See *Patrick* in loc.

Ver. 17. *To know how the World was made.* Tho' Philosophy, through the Improvements which it has received in every Age, may be able to explain the Operations of the Elements; how the Clouds are engendered, the Rain and Thunder produced, the Treasures of the Snow and Hail collected, and where is the Way in which Light dwelleth, may judge of the Force, Qualities, and Temperature of the Elements, and the sensible Effects which they have upon human Bodies, and understand the other Phænomena of Nature, which follow in this Chapter, and are enumerated more at large *Job* xxxviii. where God proposes the like Questions, and challenges *Job* to answer them; yet this important Truth of the Creation of the World can only be certainly known, and truly understood, by Communication from God, or Revelation in his Word: For neither can Reason, nor Philosophy, nor the best Account in profane History, which takes in only temporal Facts and

Events, give any Satisfaction about the Original of the World which we inhabit, whether it had a Beginning, how or when it was made, by whom or to what End it was created, how it is supported and governed, whether it is continually decaying, or to last to all Eternity: We learn nothing certain from thence, what we really are Ourselves, what is our Original, Nature, Design, and End. Whereas divine Wisdom, imparted by God, and contained in sacred History, teaches us in a few Words all these great Truths; That the World was not the Product of Chance, but the Work of God's Power; that it was made in Time; that he made it out of nothing, or rather called it into Being by his Almighty Fiat, according to, and in the manner related in, the Book of *Genesis*, so denominated from containing the true Account of its Creation; that his Providence continues it in being, and God is Almighty in that respect likewise; that Man, the Lord of the Creation, sprung from the Dust, and is resolvable into it at God's Pleasure; that his infinite Wisdom is no less displayed in the Beauty, Symmetry, and Contrivance of the World, than his Omnipotence in the Act of Creation. And in this latter Sense I find the *Vulgate* understands this Place, which renders *dispositionem orbis terrarum*, which seems rather to include the Nature and Constitution of the World, its Order and Economy, the Arrangement and Union of the several Parts, their wonderful Correspondence, Relation, Harmony, and mutual Dependence, for the Good of the Whole. But in either Sense, divine Wisdom is the best Instructor, it shews when this Beauty and Order first existed, who is the ὁ θεὸς καὶ πάντας ἡγετοῦν, ch. xiii. 3. and the Fountain of all Perfection. *Calmet* observes, that the Author here designed by his Elogium, to set forth the Superiority of divine Wisdom, and to advance it above the Theology or Philosophy of the Heathens, *d' elever la vraie sagesse au dessus de la philosophie des Gentils*. Comment. in loc.

Ver. 18. *The Beginning, Ending, and Midst of the Times, the Alterations of the Turnings of the Sun, &c.* [Turnings of the Sun, i. e. the Changes of the Tropics.] *Origen* understands by Times here, the most early, the future, and the present Times, *Hom.* 21. in *Luc.* *St. Ambrose* reads *rerum*, instead of *temporum*, and expounds the Place, of Things done in ancient Times, of Events to come to pass hereafter, and the Transactions of the present Age: *Lib.* ii. de *Abrab.* c. 7. *Grotius* understands it, of the several Seasons of the Year, their Beginning, Continuance, and Ending, and their successive and regular Returns, which is most agreeable to the Context. The Sense of the Whole seems to be, that *Solomon* knew the greatest Elongation or Distance of the Sun from the Earth, and its nearest Approach to it; the *Solstices*, *Solstitiorum vicissitudines*, says *Vatablus*, the *Equinoxes*, and all the Alterations which proceed from its Course and Motion through the *Ecliptic*; as the Change of the Seasons, the Vicissitude of Day and Night, the Succession of Time, and the Revolution of Years. As these Phænomena succeed one another in the



Account of this Writer, almost as regularly as they do in the Heavens, 'tis surprizing that the *Vulgate* here should translate *τροπῶν ἀλλαγῆς*, *Morum mutationes*, which has no manner of Connexion with the Subject. [Probably he read *τρόπων*, as in *Ald.* and *Complut.* and confounds the two Words.] Our *Translators* have rightly judged in applying it to the Sun, and by attending to the Sense of the Context, have avoided the Equivocalness of the *Greek*.

Ver. 19. *The Circuits of Years, and the Positions of Stars.* *Ἐνιαυτῶν κύκλος.* [*Ald.* *Arab.* *Vulg.* have *ἐνιαυτῶν*.] By *κύκλος* in the Plural Number I would rather understand the Cycles of Years, the Lunar and Solar Cycles, especially if these were known and used in this Writer's Time; and *ἀστέρων θέσεις* I would rather translate the *Places* of the Stars, *i. e.* the Longitude and Latitude of them, which the Word *Position* does not so strictly express.

*Ibid.* *The Violence of Winds.* *Πνευμάτων βίας.* *Junius* renders, *Spirituum vires*, by which he understands the Powers and Faculties of the human Soul: He thinks the mention of Winds and their Force very absurd in this Place, and supports his Conjecture from the very next Sentence, which contains the *Reasonings of Men.* *Origen* reads, *Spirituum violentias*, and understands the Passage, of the Power and Violence of Evil Spirits; which is a probable Interpretation enough, if there was any Foundation for the Tradition which he mentions of *Solomon's* writing several Books *De Exorcismis*: *Homil.* 21. in *Luc.* [If the Author had meant Winds, he would probably have written not *πνευμάτων*, but *ἀνέμων*, as in other Places. So *iv.* 4. *ὑπὸ βίας ἀνέμων.* *πνεύματα* in this Writer never signifies Winds; *πνεῦμα* in the Singular Number often does.]

Ver. 20. *The Natures of living Creatures, and the Furies of Wild Beasts.* *Calmet* renders, *l'instinct des bêtes, ou leur penchant*; the Temper, Inclination, or Instinct of Beasts. This is agreeable to what is recorded of *Solomon*, *1 Kings iv.* 33. that he spake of Beasts and of Fowl, and of creeping Things, and of Fishes. And the Account in the latter part of this Verse, *viz.* his great Skill in the Diversities of Plants, and the Virtues of Roots, answers to the former part of the Place referred to, *viz.* that he spake of Trees, from the Cedar-tree that is in Lebanon, even unto the Hyssop that springeth out of the Wall. It is obvious to observe, that this Writer very frequently assumes several Particulars in the Character of the real *Solomon*, with an artful Design to pass for the same Person, and to make his Pretences more plausible, and his Judgment more infallible.

Ver. 21. *And all such Things as are either secret or manifest, them I know.* *Ὅσα τε ἐστὶν ἐν πύλῃ καὶ ἐν φανὴ ἐγὼ γινώσκω,* which is the Reading in all the printed Copies, and followed by our *Translators*; but there seems to be a Mistake in all the Editions: For where is the great Wonder in *Solomon's* knowing Things that are manifest; or what Glory is there or Excellency in any Man to make such a Discovery? The true Reading undoubtedly is *ἀφανῶν*, which is confirmed by the *Alexandrian MS.* by *Eusebius*, *Prep. Evang.* lib. ii. c. 7. and *St. Ambrose*, *De*

*Abrab.* lib. ii. c. 7. The Comment also of *Messieurs Du Port Royal* takes it in this Sense, *J'ay appris tout ce qui estoit caché, & qui n'avoit point encore esté decouvert*; *i. e.* such Things as have not yet been discovered. The *Vulgate* very justly renders, *Quaecunque sunt absconsa aut improvisa didici*, which *Coverdale's Version* follows, *All such Thyngs as are secret and not looked for have I learned*; which is the Rendering likewise of the *Doway Bible.* *Γινώμαι*, seems also a better Reading than *ἐγνων*, as it agrees with *εἰδέναι*, which goes before, especially as it is connected with the *Conjunctive Particle τε*.

Ver. 22. *For Wisdom, which is the Worker of all Things, taught me.* *Wisdom* may be considered either as a divine Attribute, the infinite Wisdom of God, or as it is, in some measure, made known to, and participated by, a finite Creature, not as the natural Property of the Creature, but as a superadded Gift of God: It is capable therefore of very exalted Epithets, as it is the Wisdom of God, such as, *πάντων τεχνίτης, μονογενής, ἀκάλυπτος, παντοδύναμος, πανεπίσκοπος*, and all that follow in the 25th and 26th Verses. But Wisdom considered in Man as the Gift of God to him in proportion as he deserves it, will admit of inferior, yet proper, Epithets, as *ἀγὰ πάντων χωρὲν πνευμάτων, νοερόν, καθαρῶν, εἰς ψυχὰς ὁσίας μεταβαίνονσα φίλος Θεοῦ καὶ προφύτας καλὰ σκευάζει*, ver. 27. *It is a Treasure that never faileth*, ver. 14. *It may be communicated liberally to others*, ver. 13. *It maketh Men speak wisely, and conceive as is meet*, ver. 15. It is more to be desired, as being more profitable than any thing else, and teaches the Cardinal Virtues, and every thing useful to be known, ch. viii. 5, 6, 7, 8. All the other Epithets, as *νοερόν, ἅγιον, λεπίδον, τεχνόν, ἀμόλυντον, ἁφές, ἀπήμαντον, φιλάγαθον, &c.* will suit Wisdom, either as original and essential in God, or as it is communicated to, and may be considered as derivative in Man; for, as *Calmet* very judiciously observes, *Ce qui est dit dans ce livre touchant la Sagesse, s'entend tantôt de la Sagesse créée, & tantôt de la Sagesse créée & inspirée aux hommes*: This Distinction is very necessary for the right understanding this Chapter.

[*Ibid.* *For in her is an understanding Spirit.* *ἐν αὐτῇ αὐτῇ πνεῦμα νοερόν.* *Ald.* hath only *αὐτῇ*, which agrees well with ch. i. 6.]

Ver. 22, 23. The Author here, in his Enumeration of the several Excellencies and Perfections of Wisdom, seems to use different Words of the same Signification, to set forth his Description the more copiously, and for the stronger Conveyance of his own Sentiments: But perhaps upon a nicer Attention to the peculiar Force of the *Greek* Words, and to their Order and Situation, a separate consistent Sense may be given to each Epithet: Thus *ἅγιον*, and *ἀμόλυντον* commonly give the same Sense, but in strictness are different; as are also *διεσφεικόν* [*F. ἐνεργητικόν*,] and *ἀπήμαντον*. The Negative in either Case falls short in Sense of the positive Epithet. Our *Translators* indeed, who render *ἀπήμαντον*, *not subject to Hurt*, *i. e.* incapable of receiving Hurt, have explained away the true Meaning of the Word (see the Note on ch. i. 4. where the like Mistake in our *Version* is taken notice of.) It means rather, not disposed

or



or inclined to do Hurt, and would be better rendered harmless, *innocuus*, according to *Vatablus*, the same as ἀπῆμων. The Geneva Bible renders, *not hurtful*; and Coverdale's and the other ancient English Versions, following the Vulgate, *swete*; which yet falls short of δέσφεικτον, which means not only *Inoffensiveness*, but a *Readiness* to do positive Acts of Kindness. Βεβαιον and ἀσφαλές differ likewise in Degree; for here the Negative expresses more than the Positive, viz. such a Stedfastness as is not to be moved or shaken. Among the Positives, τεχνον and Καφές give commonly one Sense, but they may be understood differently; the first may be expounded *eloquent*, see ch. x. 21. the latter *clear*, or *manifest*.—The Difference between λεπτον, δειννν, and ὀξύ, will best be explained by a parallel Passage, Heb. iv. 12. Ζῶν ὃ ὁ λόγος ὁ Θεός, ὃς ἐρεγγής, ὃς πρῶτος ὤψερ πάσαν μάχαιραν, καὶ δεινννμὸν ἄχει μελεισμὸν ψυχῆς τε καὶ συνόματον, ἀρμών τε καὶ μυελῶν, καὶ κελεῖκος ἐνθυμήσεων καὶ ἐννοιῶν καρδίας. Λεπτόν, *subtil*, i. e. piercing into the Secrets of Men's Hearts, answers to the latter part of that Verse; δειννν answers to ἐρεγγής in the beginning, i. e. active, or operative, which is more expressive than *lively*; ὀξύ may as well signify *sharp*, and so indeed Coverdale's Version has it, and the Vulgate, and Junius; and then it answers to πρῶτος ὤψερ πάσαν μάχαιραν, in the middle; which Passage will equally explain the 24th Verse of this Chapter.—By μονοθεός, πολυμερές, may be understood, that Wisdom is in its Origin or Fountain simply one and the same in God, *la même*, says Calmet, *en substance* & *en nature*, but variously expressed, and infinitely diversified in his Works. The Thought is not very unlike that of St. Paul, *There are diversities of Gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are diversities of Administrations, but the same Lord; and there are diversities of Operations, but it is the same God, that worketh all in all*; 1 Cor. xii. 4, 5, 6. in which Sense it is further said of Wisdom, ver. 27. that, *being but one, she can do all things, and remaining in herself, she maketh all things new*. See Note on that Place.

Ver. 23. *Going through all understanding* (i. e. intellectual) *pure, and most subtil Spirits.* This may be understood in two Senses, according to the different Reading of the Greek; our Version follows the Vatican Edition, which reads, ἀπὸ πάντων χωρὼν πνευμάτων νοερῶν, καθαρῶν, λεπτότατων. According to that, the Sense is, that Wisdom, as a divine Attribute, not only penetrates into Things Corporeal, but Things Spiritual and Intellectual; is not only a Discerner of the Thoughts and Intentions of the Heart, but the several Orders and Degrees of Intellectual Beings, even the most pure and invisible Spirits, how knowing or subtil soever, are subject to it, and within its Influence.—The Vulgate reads in the Nominative Case, *intelligibilis, mundus, subtilis*, which Coverdale's Version and the Syriac follow, from a Copy, doubtless, which read, νοερῶν, καθαρῶν, λεπτότατον, still applying each particular Epithet to Wisdom itself, exclusive of the Consideration of other Spirits.

[The four Words, πνευμάτων, νοερῶν, καθαρῶν, λεπτότατων, are, no doubt, the Addition of a

later hand, and the Author wrote no more than διὰ πάντων χωρὼν, of which Words, and the Word δειννν, ver. 22. the following Verse is an Explication. The Author had already said (ver. 22.) that Wisdom had in her πνεῦμα νοερὸν, λεπτόν, and ἀμώλυτον: Why should he repeat these same Epithets, which add nothing to the Sense? Besides, what are we to understand by πνευμάτων νοερῶν? Are there any Spirits that are not νοερά?]

Ver. 24. *For Wisdom is more moving than any Motion; she passeth and goeth through all things by reason of her Pureness.* The Account of Camilla's Swiftmess, according to Virgil's beautiful Description of it, is surprizing and incredible:

*Assueta pedum cursu prævertere ventos.*

*Illa vel intactæ segetis per summa volaret*

*Gramina, nec teneras cursu læsisset aristas:*

*Vel mare per medium, fluctu suspensa tumentis,*

*Ferret iter, celeres nec tingeret æquore plantas.*

*Æneid. lib. vii.*

No bodily Motion can be conceived to exceed this in Quickness; but the Spirit of Wisdom being Incorporeal, and by reason of her Pureness, not meeting with any sensible Resistance or Impediment, far surpasses it; nay, she is quicker than Thought, because she pervades the Mind itself, is not only present to Mens Thoughts, but prevents and influences them: *She meeteth them*, as this Writer elegantly expresses it, in every Thought, ch. vi. 16. *Elle vient au devant d'eux dans tous les bonnes pensées qu'ils forment*; and powerfully acts upon the Will to put such good Thoughts and Resolutions into practice. And this Power she exerts in an Instant, and carries her View through all things at the same Time, which, perhaps, is Fulgentius's Meaning, when he translates this Place, *Attingit ubique propter suam munditiam*, De Persona Christi, lib. iii. In this Sense Wisdom may be said to be, *Permeator universitatis*; which short Sentence of Seneca is more expressive, than the many metaphysical Circumlocutions of the School-men.

Ver. 25. *She is the Breath of the Power of God.* [Ἀτμὴ καὶ Θεοῦ δυνάμεις, i. e. the Afflatus of the Almighty; where ἀτμὴ, even applied to eternal Wisdom itself, is not such a degrading or diminutive Term, as Capellus, in his Strictures upon this Book, has represented it; for ἀτμὴ may be considered as equivalent to πνεῦμα; and our Translators, we may observe, render accordingly ἀτμὴ by *Breath*. But it certainly stands clear of that Objection, if understood of infused or derivative Wisdom, communicated from God to his Saints and Prophets in such Degrees and Proportions as were necessary. Plato makes use of the same Image, and represents Wisdom as a Vapour, or Spark of Celestial Fire, communicated from Heaven to Men; Plato in Protag. The like Thought is to be met with in Philo, De Somniis.

Ibid. *A pure Influence flowing from the Glory of the Almighty.* [Ἀπόρροια δόξης, i. e. a pure Efflux or Emanation issuing from God's Glory; which is more agreeable to the Greek than Influence, which our Version uses. The Vulgate reads, *Emanatio quedam claritatis*, which the ancient English Versions follow: Or it may be rendered,



rendered, in fewer Words, a glorious Emanation of the Deity. Some of the primitive Writers express themselves in like manner concerning the λόγος, whom they style *πρόσωπον Θεοῦ*: We meet with the like Expression, *Ecclesi. v. 6.* which a learned Writer translates, *The Personating Shechinah of God*, Tenison on *Idol. p. 334.* And for the same Reason he is called *The Angel of his Face*, by *Pbilo* and the ancient Jews, because he truly reflected the Glory of his Person.

[*Ibid.* No defiled Thing can fall into her. *Eis autēn παραμυρία, i. e. fall into her unawares, covertly, or by the by; as παρασείδουσαν, Jude ver. 4. παρασείδουσαν, Galat. ii. 4.]*

Ver. 26. *She is the Brightness of the everlasting Light; i. e. Wisdom is an Effulgence or Ray streaming from the original Fountain of Light, the Resplendence of the eternal Glory, and the Reflexion of its Brightness.* St. James accordingly styles God, from whom all Wisdom and Illumination proceed, *Πατήρ ὁ φῶς*, ch. i. 17. 'Tis observable that the Word used by our Author for Brightness, is *ἀπαύλασμα*, the very same that is made use of in the Epistle to the Hebrews, ch. i. 3. which by *Estius* upon the Place is very properly rendered *deradiatio*: See also *Leigh's Critica Sacra in voce Ἀπαύλασμα*. This Similitude of a Ray from the Sun, or Light from Light, must be allowed to be a fine Illustration, and a proper Representation, of the infinite Wisdom of God, considered as a divine Attribute; and the same has been applied to illustrate the Consubstantiality of the λόγος. Thus *Justin Martyr* says, that he proceeds from the Father, *ὡς δὴ καὶ τὸ φῶς*, as Light from the Sun; and in another Place, *ὡς δὴ καὶ τὸ πῦρ ἀπὸ τοῦ πυρός*, as Fire from Fire; *Dial. cum Tryph.* And by the *Nicene Council* he is called more closely, *Light of Light*. But whether any such Notion is here meant, or the λόγος described by our Author, shall be considered under the next Words.

[*Ibid.* The unspotted Mirror of the Power of God, and the Image of his Goodness.] [*τῆς τῆς Θεοῦ ἐκτελέσεως, i. e. of the operative Power of God.*] *Lampidissimum divine virtutis speculum*, according to *Vatablus*; i. e. she is the true and unallied Glass, in which we may discern the Beauty of God's Works, which therefore reflects his Power in the strongest and best Light, and exhibits the Perfection of his Goodness. One cannot help observing, that from ver. 21. to the End of the Chapter, the Epithets thicken, and that the Character of Wisdom is expressed in a very sublime Style, a Magnificence and Grandeur of Language, and in Terms seemingly importing Divinity itself. Hence some have taken occasion to imagine, that something more and higher is contained herein than an Encomium of Wisdom considered in its highest Denomination, as a divine Attribute, and have applied therefore these Passages to the Person of the λόγος, or to the Holy Spirit. And indeed it must be confessed, that however originally intended, they may, by way of Accommodation, be so used and applied, and considered as expressive *Similes*, to illustrate the eternal Generation; nor is the Manner of Expression very unlike that of *Abd. i. 3.* which is

very full and explicit on that Occasion: And it must be further allowed, that these Passages have been so understood and explained by most of the Commentators, and even some of the Fathers, many of whom use Expressions concerning the λόγος very much resembling these, and endeavour to explain that Mystery by the very same Similitudes and Illustrations: See *Justin Martyr, Dial. cum Tryph. Epiphan. in Anomæo. Hæres. c. 3. & cont. Aëtium. Hæres. 76. Holstenii Dissert. 2. in loc. quæd. Concil. Nicæn. and Waterland's Serm. passim.* And some of the primitive Writers, to confirm their Point, have actually quoted and argued from these very Passages; see particularly *Fulgentius De Persona Christi, ad Trasimund. lib. ii. Pbilo*, who speaks the Sentiments of the ancient Jews, and is by some thought the Author of this Book, from its great Resemblance to many of his Notions, has some Expressions, in relation to the λόγος, very similar to these, *De Confus. Linguar.* and *De Monarchia*, which others, with more Probability, contend he borrowed from hence. But as this kind of Reasoning, drawn from Authorities, is precarious and inconclusive, and slender or suspicious Proofs are really disserviceable to a Cause; and as that great Mystery, of the eternal Generation and Coequality of the λόγος, is sufficiently established by canonical and undoubted Scripture, and wants not to be defended by any disputed Testimony, *non tali auxilio, nec defensoribus istis*; I rather incline to the following Sense, viz. That the Writer of this Book, who personates, and, as far as he can, imitates *Solomon*, observing in the *Book of Proverbs*, particularly ch. viii. how Wisdom is praised under the character of a Divine Female, or Celestial Beauty, pursues the same Figure or Image in a more copious and encomiastic Way, using indifferently Wisdom and the Spirit of Wisdom, as the same beautiful Object, which he loved, and desired to make his Spouse, &c. But though he speaks of her as an intelligent Person, and personal Acts are ascribed to her, yet this seems to be a figurative way of writing, taken, as I said, from *Solomon's Proverbs*. And if the well known Passages in the Chapter above cited be scarce allowed to be understood of the λόγος, (see *Bishop Patrick's* Argument to that Chapter, and the Writers in the *Trinitarian Controversy*) much less reason have we to assert these Passages of the *Book of Wisdom* to belong to the λόγος, or to the Holy Spirit, considered as *Persons in the Godhead*. For if this Encomium be supposed to come from any (*Hellenistic*) Jew, or even from the Pen of *Solomon*, such Titles and Attributes of the Divinity, if interpreted of the λόγος, or Holy Spirit, seem incompatible with those Times. I am therefore more inclined to understand this high Encomium, of a divine Attribute, the infinite Wisdom of God, communicated sometimes, according to the Exigence of the Occasion, to his Saints and Prophets in different Portions, as a Drop from his Fulness, ver. 27. and then there will be no occasion to suppose these Passages to be an Addition or Interpolation of some Christian Writer, who borrowed Ideas and Expressions from the *New Testament*, which



which seems to be the Sentiment of Grotius with respect to many Passages of this Book; but how far his Conjecture is right, and whether 'tis always safe to follow him, I shall not determine. I shall only subjoin Calmet's Remark upon this Assertion, and answer in his Words: *Grotius s'est imaginé que ces passages y avoient été ajoutez par quelque Chrétien depuis la mort du Sauveur; ce qui est contre toute sorte d'apparence, ces passages étant tellement liez avec la suite du discours, qu'on ne peut les en separer sans violence*: Pref. sur le livre de la Sagesse, i. e. "The Passages objected against are so interwoven with the rest of the Subject, and have such a necessary relation to the Context, that they cannot be separated without manifest Violence." And the same learned Writer there observes, that this Author often speaks of Wisdom, considered as an Attribute only, even in the most pompous and magnificent Terms, and applies to it that which in strictness only belongs to the Deity itself. In his Comment upon this Place he has this further Remark, which will justify my Sense of it: "That as it is very common in natural Cases, to assign to the Effect many Properties and Attributes of the Cause; so in Matters Spiritual, that Perfection is frequently attributed to Qualities proceeding from God, which strictly belongs only to the Holy Spirit which communicated them."

Ver. 27. *And remaining in herself, she maketh all Things new.* [*ἡ αὐτὴ ἐν αὐτῇ*. Probably it should be, *ἡ αὐτὴ καὶ αὐτῇ*, and remaining the same.] i. e. She is the Author of all Changes and spiritual Renovations, though herself remains unchangeable; *Toujours immuable en elle-même, elle renouvelle toutes choses*. St. Austin explains this Renovation, and shews from whence it proceeds; *De plenitudine ejus accipiunt animæ, ut beatæ sint, & participatione manentis in se Sapientiæ renovantur, ut Sapientes sint*: Confess. lib. vii. c. 9. The Scripture furnishes us with many Instances of her good Offices and Kindness to Men in this particular; all Graces are ministred to us by her, and she purifies the Soul, to make it fit to receive them; she enlightens Men's Understandings with the Knowledge of saving Truths, disposes and inclines their Wills to virtuous and holy Actions, and comforts and supports them in the Discharge of their Duty under the greatest Difficulties and Discouragements. And though her Communications are so various, and, with respect to all Ages and Nations, may be considered as infinite, yet her Nature continues unchangeable. What Plato says of God with a very remarkable Emphasis, is very applicable to her, *ἡ ἀθάνατος, ἡ ἀαυή, ἡ ἀαίμων, ἀκίνητος ἀειπλάνατος*. Plato in Phæd.

Ibid. *And in all Ages entering into holy Souls, she maketh them Friends of God, and Prophets.* [*Κατὰ ἡλικίαν*, which may be interpreted either of Ages or Nations; the Vulgate takes it in the latter Sense. This Observation is not only true of Abraham, see Note on ver. 14. and Moses, whom God favoured in an especial manner, and admitted to a more particular Intimacy, *Exod. xxxiii. 11*. Philo De Mose, lib. i. but of David, whom God took away from the

*Sheep-folds, that he might feed Jacob his People and Israel his Inheritance, Psal. lxxviii. 71, 72.* The like may be said of Joseph, and the other Instances of this Truth, mentioned by this Writer in the tenth and eleventh Chapters; from whose History it appears, that Divine Wisdom, without any respect of Persons, in every Age and Nation, makes choice of such as are well disposed, to confer her Favours and Blessings on, and sanctifies them, by her Inhabitation and Presence, for her own great Purposes. True Religion, indeed, seemed for some time as it were confined to *Judea*, and the Jews to have been only entrusted with Sacred Truths; but yet we sometimes find the Spirit of Wisdom discovering herself to other People, and enlightning them amidst their Ignorance and Darkness. It is more than probable, that God made uncommon Discoveries of himself to Job, and that, in proportion to the Greatness of his Sufferings, he was favoured with a greater degree of Light and larger Communications of divine Knowledge; See Bishop Sberlock, *Dissertat. 2*. The like may be observed of Balaam, who, according to Scripture, *heard the Words of God, and knew the Knowledge of the Most High*, Numb. xxiv. 16. which implies some Discovery of God's Will to him; and as a Prophet, he foresaw and foretold what should happen in the latter End; and particularly, has left a very remarkable Prophecy relating to the Messiah. We are sometimes surprized with uncommon Discoveries in the Writings of the Heathen Philosophers; and the several important Truths therein scattered, seemingly above the reach of mere unassisted Reason, are enough to convince us, that Divine Wisdom has communicated itself in all Ages, and conversed with her Favourites in every Generation. As to the Gift of Prophecy here mentioned, 'tis certain, that the Qualifications that did fit a Man for the Prophetical Spirit, which rendred him *babilem ad prophetandum*, were inward Piety, true Wisdom, Probity, and Virtue. The Rabbins universally agree in this, that the Spirit of Prophecy never rested but upon a wise and good Man; and no Instance, says Maimonides, *More Nevoc. par. 2*. can be mentioned of its ever dwelling in a vitious Person, unless he had first reformed himself; and among the preparatory Dispositions for obtaining it, he reckons the Perfection of virtuous Qualities or Manners, a Heart purified and free from sinful Affections and sensual Passions. Hence we find, that anciently many were trained up in the way of School-Discipline, and fitted by religious Nurture to become *Candidati Propetia*; see Smith's *Sel. Disc. of Prophecy*, c. 8, 9. And the several Schools of Education at *Naiotb*, *Jerusalem*, *Bethel*, *Jericho*, *Gilgal*, were only so many Colleges for disciplining and training up young Scholars in those preparatory Qualifications which might more dispose them for the Gift of Prophecy.

[Ver. 28. *For God loveth none but him that dwelleth with Wisdom.* *ὁ θεὸς οὐκ ἀγαπᾷ ἑνός, &c.* rather, *οὐδενός*, no Man, which is confirmed by the following *ἐννομήτα*, not *ἐννομήν*, as it ought to have been, if the Author had written *ἐννός*.]



Ver. 29. *For she is more beautiful than the Sun — being compared with Light, she is found before it.* This is true of Wisdom, considered as a Divine Attribute, in many Respects: 1st, Because the Sun, the Stars, and the whole System of inanimate Bodies, are not fit to be opposed in Value to the human Mind or Spirit; for the enlarged intellectual Powers, and improved Faculties of the Mind, can arrive at the Knowledge, and explain the Glories, of the Firmament; whereas the Sun, though a most glorious Body, is utterly insensible, and has no Consciousness of that Light which he gives to others: Which Prerogative of the Mind, *Tully* finely remarks; *Nec vero illa parva vis est rationis, quod eorum ipsorum, quæ ad spectu sentiuntur, nullum aliud animal pulchritudinem, venustatem, convenientiam partium sentit.* Cic. De offic. lib. i. 2dly, As Divine Wisdom formed and fashioned the glorious Body of the Sun, it is not only prior to it, or before it in point of Time, which is the Sense of the *Vulgate*, but it must be, in the order of Causes and Effects, more beautiful and excellent than any or all the Creatures. *Vatablus* therefore renders with great Judgment, *Luci comparata, potior deprehenditur.* 3dly, The Sun cannot make that which is deformed or ugly to be beautiful, and his Light is often hurtful and injurious to tender and diseased Eyes; his Beams are sometimes too bright to be borne, they not only dazzle and confound, but frequently hurt and weaken the Sense: But Wisdom never offends by its Excess; the brighter and more heavenly it is, the more she pleases; and where she finds any moral Defects or Imperfections, she removes or amends them. Is the Soul polluted and disfigured by Trespasses and Sin? divine Wisdom purifies it by the Infusion of her supernatural Grace. Do any wander in Darkness and Error? she guides and assists them by the Brightness of her saving Truths. Are any sensible of their sad Estate, and really desirous of a Cure? she giveth Medicine to heal their Sickness. So that what was said by *Tully* of Virtue, and has been so justly applauded, is equally applicable to the Spirit of Wisdom, *That could we behold all her Charms, the whole World would be infinitely in love with her.* Cic. Off. lib. i.

Ver. 30. *For after this cometh Night.* That Wisdom does thus exceed the Light, is manifest from this further Argument, because Night constantly succeeds the Day, and therefore the Light is as constantly interrupted by Darkness. But Divine Wisdom admits of no such Privations or Inequalities; it has no Mixture of Light and Darkness, of Good and Evil, but is always the same, Yesterday, To-day, and for ever.

*St. Austin* reasons in like manner upon the Transitoriness of worldly Things; *Omnis iste ordo pulcherrimus rerum valde bonarum, modis suis peractis transitorius est, mane quippe in eis factum est & vespera.* Confess. lib. xiii. c. 35. But

*St. Chrysostom* comes nearest this Writer, and makes the very same Thought applied to Grace; *Non sic mundus clarus est oriente sole, ut anima illustratur & splendidior fit, à Spiritu gratiam recipiens: Hanc nempe lucem, & volentibus nobis & nolentibus, non*

*subsequitur* (τὸ μὲν δὲ ἀγόμενον) οὐκ, which are the very Words of our Author) *illum vero radium tenebræ non norunt.* Homil. 21. ad Pop. Antioch.

*Ibid.* But Vice shall not prevail against Wisdom.] [*Σοφία δὲ ἐν ἀνθρώποις καλὰ.* Probably the true Reading of the Greek here is, σοφία δὲ ἐν ἀνθρώποις καλὰ, as x. 11. and elsewhere.] If we attend only to what passes ordinarily in Life, this Observation may perhaps seem not to be altogether just or well grounded, for human Wisdom, or that which God is pleased to communicate to Mankind, is subject to many Frailties: As the bewitching of Naughtiness will obscure Men's Reason, so the wandering of Concupiscence quite perverts and undermines it, ch. iv. 12. Such as have been admired in all other Instances for their Wisdom, have been hurried away by sinful Passions; and the finest Understanding has been found a weak Fence against a criminal Passion. *Solomon* himself is a lamentable Instance of this Truth, who fell shamefully, notwithstanding his singular Accomplishments; and his Wisdom served only to heighten his Transgression and Disgrace. We must understand this Writer therefore of Divine Wisdom, which Sin cannot approach, nor its Contagion fully, much less can the Power of it prevail over her. *Grotius* understands this Place of Adversity, and refers to *Matth. vi. 34.* where *κατα*, the Term here used, is taken in that Sense. According to this Acceptation the Opposition is no less just and beautiful, for as Prosperity is the Sunshine of Fortune, so Adversity may be considered as its Shade. In this View, the Meaning is, that however dark the Cloud may be, which hangs over a good Man, yet shall it not overwhelm him; though Misery be his Lot, as it is too often the Fate of Goodness, yet shall it not get the better of him: *We are troubled on every side,* says *St. Paul*, speaking of himself and other suffering Christians, *yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed;* 2 Cor. iv. 8, 9. And even in such a sad Catastrophe, when Vice is so triumphant and successful as to destroy a good and virtuous Man, yet if we take in the Consideration of another Life, the Righteous, however afflicted or tormented, will be found to have come off Conqueror.

## CHAP. VIII.

### THE ARGUMENT.

THE Praise of Wisdom is continued, which, upon a Comparison of the most desirable Things in life, is shewn to be preferable to them; and, from an Induction of several valuable and weighty Particulars, she appears to be the Procurer of such great Advantages, and ought therefore to be honoured and followed after by such as have the greatest Regard to their own Happiness. The Chapter concludes with the proper Dispositions to obtain Wisdom.

Ver. 1. *Wisdom reacheth from one End to another mightily, and sweetly doth she order all Things.* i. e. The Divine Wisdom is infinite and



and immense, extends itself throughout the whole World, and does every thing in it mightily, that is, effectually, in respect of the End, and sweetly, that is, without any Violence or Difficulty in the use of the Means. This is the Sense of the Arabic Version: *Porrigit autem sese, ab extremo terrarum orbe ad extremum usque integre*. St. Bernard expounds it in the same manner: *Attingit à sine usque ad finem, i. e. à summo caelo usque ad inferiores partes terræ: à maximo angelo usque ad minimum vermiculum, substantiali quâdam & ubique præsentî fortitudine, quæ utique universa potentissime movet, ordinat, & administrat suaviter, i. e. sine necessitate aut difficultate*: Bern. Lib. de Grat. & Lib. Arbitr. See also *Fulgentius de Persona Christi*, lib. ii. But by sweetly, we may further understand the Manner in which the Divine Wisdom works upon Men's Minds; for she begins the great Work of Salvation in Men's Hearts, by over-ruling them through her Motions and Impressions, inclining them to their Duty, and assisting them in the Performance of it; and at length, having happily perfected it, she conducts them to Glory and a blessed End of their Labours. But though she reaches from one End to the other of this important Event, and acts powerfully upon the Soul to bring it to pass; yet she does it sweetly, and without any Violence or Inconsistence with Men's free Agency; she encourages them by all the endearing Methods, and in the most engaging Manner, to their Duty; and by this amiable Mixture of Sweetness, tempers and softens the Yoke, which would otherwise be complained of as hard and rigorous.—Some have understood these Words of God's Fore-knowledge, that his Prescience reacheth to the End of the World, and by it he foresaw from all Eternity all future Events, even to the Consummation of all Things; so that when the whole Mystery of God's Dispensations shall be finished and unravelled, it will appear, that nothing is contained in them but what God had formerly foretold and declared by his Prophets. (See *Louth's Preface to his Comments*.) And to this Purpose he applies what *Isaiab* says of God's Fore-knowledge, ch. xlv. 10. that he declares the End from the Beginning; an Expression, it must be owned, not very unlike that of this Writer. I shall only observe further, that this Verse in some Copies is made the Conclusion of the former Chapter.

Ver. 3. *In that she is conversant with God, she magnifieth her Nobility.*] This is but indifferently expressed; it would be better rendered literally thus: "Herein she displays her high Birth, that she exists with God, and is intimately united to him." *Elle fait voir la gloire de son origine, en ce qu'elle est étroitement unie à Dieu, says Calmet.* Vatablus very properly renders, *Nobilitatem generis ejus hoc illustrat, quod convictu Dei utitur;* *συμβίβωσιν Θεῷ ἔχουσα*, which is imperfectly rendered in our Version, *conversant with God*; as that Phrase is now commonly understood, for it implies much more, viz. that Wisdom, as a Divine Attribute (for I would understand the Place of this principally) is intimately united with God, lives always in and with him, and is inseparable from him, as his

*Spouse and Partner*; and thus *συμβίσις* is used ver. 9. (see more in that Note.) Nor is it better expressed in the *Vulgate* by *contubernium*. The *Syriac Version* uses *confortium*; but those *Interpreters*, as if they were sensible of some Defect, and that they had not reached the Force of the Original, add immediately after, by way of Explanation, *quoniam Deus est pater ejus*. Philo, in his allegorical Way, explains the Nearness of this Relation between God and Wisdom; his Words are a close and excellent Comment upon this Place, ὅτι γὰρ τὸς τὸ πᾶν ἐφασάμενον δημιουργὸν ὁμῶς καὶ πατέρα εἶναι τῆς γενεῆς, μητέρα δὲ τῆς ποιότητος διατηρήσαν, ἢ σωτὴν ὁ Θεὸς ἑαυτῆς ὀφείσιν. Phil. De Ebriet. & alibi. In a lower Sense we may understand this Passage of human or derivative Wisdom, that this likewise shews her great Worth and singular Excellence, in that God himself vouchsafes to communicate himself to, and converse with, a truly wise Soul, not in Dreams by Night, as with *Joseph*; not by an audible Voice, as with *St. Paul*; but with the *still small Voice*, speaking to the Soul, in Breathing not to be uttered.

Ibid. *She Magnifies (her) Nobility.* To the Senses above given of this Passage, that of *Grotius* is worthy notice, viz. *Nobilitatem hominis decorat*, "Wisdom adorns high Birth." There is nothing to answer (*her*) in the Original.

Ver. 4. *She is privy to the Mysteries of God.*] The Marginal Reading is, *Teacher*, which agrees with the *Vulgate*, *Doctrinix enim est discipline Dei*, and with ΜΟΥΣΙΣ ΔΟΚΤΗΡΗΜΑΤΟΣ in the Greek; for ΜΟΥΣΙΣ is a technical Term, and, according to *Budeus*, signifies an Interpreter of sacred Mysteries: The Sense here is, that Divine Wisdom can best teach the Knowledge of God, reveal its Mysteries, and initiate Men into them, as knowing the deep Things of God, and being in his Bosom, cannot but be privy to them. And so the Syriac happily renders, *Ipsa est à secretis Dei, & à consiliis ejus.*

Ibid. *And a Lover of his Works.*] *Ageris*, with which agrees the *Marginal Reading*; and the *Vulgate* renders in like manner, *Electrix operum ejus*,—*Chooser of his Works*. Dr. Grabe and *Budeus* read *Ageris*. According to either Reading the Sense seems to be, that the Divine Wisdom designed, contrived, and appointed God's Works, as is declared more explicitly in the two following Verses. *Calmet* understands it in a more extensive Sense, of Wisdom's Superintendency and Direction of his Works, *Qui est la directrice de ses ouvrages*. The *Syriac* and *Arabic Versions* understand this Passage of *Wisdom* in the most exalted Sense; the former reads, *Gloria cunctorum operum ejus*, and the latter, *Sublimior dignitate cunctis operibus ejus*. [Perhaps *ὑπερέτις*, *ministra*, may be the true Reading. See ix. 9.]

Ver. 5. *What is richer than Wisdom, which worketh all things?*] *Sapientia omnium rerum artifice*, according to the *Arabic*; and the *Syriac* renders, *Quandoquidem ipsa fecit omnia*. [The Argument, seemingly, would have been more regular, had the Author written, *which possesseth all things*: For her working all Things does not seem to be so great a Proof of Riches, as of Power or Skill. See, however, ver. 18. where



where this is somewhat explained, *in the Works of her Hands are infinite Riches.*] But the Meaning probably here is, that Skill and Wisdom make Men successful and thriving in every Business and Calling, and are the most likely Means to procure Men Reputation and a good Fortune. *Riches and Honour are with Wisdom,* says the true Solomon, *Prov. viii. 18.* who could confirm this Truth from his own plentiful Experience of both, which God annexed to his Gift of Wisdom. But we must observe at the same time of Wisdom, that she teaches Men rather the Contempt, than an immoderate and eager Pursuit of Riches; to be content with a little, and to esteem spiritual Attainments, and the Improvements of the Soul, as their chiefest Good, their truest Riches.

Ver. 6. *And if Prudence work.*] *Εἰ δὲ φρόνησις ἐργάζετο*, i. e. If Skill and Industry produce the most admired Works of Art, who is so justly to be esteemed the Author of them, as Wisdom, the most accomplished, and I may add, universal Artist? and is therefore, with great Propriety, called, *πᾶσι τὰ τέχνην σοφία*, ch. vii. 22. for she presides over every Instance of Science, directs and perfects it. Instead of *ἐργάζετο*, which is the common Reading, and followed by our Translators, Dr. Grabe reads *ἐργάζομαι*, as more agreeable to what goes before and follows after, viz. *εἰ δὲ πᾶσι τὰ τέχνην σοφία*. Ver. 5. *εἰ δὲ δικαιοσύνη ἀγαπήται*. Ver. 7. *εἰ πολυπραγμοσύνη ποιεῖται*. Expressions all equivalent to *ἐργάζετο*. See *Prolegom. c. 4.* In the midst of these he thinks it comes in very properly, *And if Prudence is admired and loved*; the only Objection with him is, that *ἐργάζετο* is a poetical Word, which will indeed have but little weight, if what that learned Critic seems to insinuate be true, that the *Book of Wisdom* was originally wrote in Metre. 'Tis certain, he has placed it among the metrical Books, and in the *Alexandrian MS.* it preserves the Appearance of Verse, as well as the *Book of Psalms, Song of Solomon, Ecclesiastes, &c.* Calmet also is of opinion, that it was wrote in Metre; see his *Dictionary in voce Wisdom*. However the Learned may determine about this Nicety, still I am of Opinion, that *ἐργάζετο* is not only the true but the better Reading; for *φρόνησις* without it is too general, and may be applied to any thing else as well as Work, and for want of it the Beauty of the next Sentence is lost. The same Words very nearly occur together, ch. vii. 16. See Note on that Place; and in *Exod. xxxi.* where Works of different Sorts are mentioned, *ἐργάζετο* is the Term used often upon the Occasion. [Perhaps it should be *εἰ δὲ φρόνησις ἐλάσσων* (scil. ἢ ἐν) *ἐπιθυμῶν ἀγαπᾶται*, from the foregoing Verse, *τὴν αὐτὴν*, &c. But if Skill in Workmanship be a thing to be desired, who, &c. So vii. 16. *πᾶσι τὰ τέχνην σοφία καὶ ἐλάσσων ἐπιθυμῶν* which seems to confirm this Conjecture.] *φρόνησις* relates here to practical Knowledge, the mention of speculative follows ver. 8. *ὁλοκλήρως* *Who of all that are, is a more cunning Workman than she?*] *Τὴν αὐτὴν φρόνησιν μάλλον ἐν τέχνῃ*; the ancient *Vulgate* reads, *Quis horum, quæ sunt, magis quam illa est artifex?* which can neither relate to Persons nor Things, as dif-

ferent Interpreters have understood the Place; not to the former, as our *Version* takes it, for then the Reading should be, *Quis horum qui sunt, &c.* not to the latter, as *Coverdale's Version* and the *Geneva Bible* have it; for then it should be, *Esquid horum quæ sunt, &c.* or something to that effect, and in the *Greek*, *Τὴν φρόνησιν*, as in the Verse foregoing 'tis, *Τὴν σοφίαν πλουσιώτερον*. I think, therefore, the Sense of this Place has hitherto been mistaken, and that the true Rendering of it, as it stands connected with the Context, is, "If Wisdom is so good a Worker as to work all Things, who has a better Claim, or is more likely to be the Maker, φρόνησιν, of all things existing?" This Sense the very Placing and Structure of the *Greek* points out to us; 'tis likewise the Meaning of the *Vulgate* quoted above, and probably of *Junius*, who renders, *Quis eorum quæ in natura sunt, artifex potius est quam ipsa?* *Messieurs du Port Royal* understand it of Wisdom, as being the supreme Directress and Architect, by whom all Things were made, *Qui a plus de part qu'elle dans cet art, avec lequel toutes choses ont été faites?* See *Rom. iv. 17.*

Ver. 7. *If a Man love Righteousness, her Labours are Virtues.*] This is obscurely expressed: The Meaning is, that Wisdom produces the several following Virtues, or that they are her Work; for the very End and Scope of Wisdom is, to make Men just and virtuous, considerate and resigned; and that which does not propose this as its Object, may be looked upon as Curiosity, Folly, or Vanity. The Pursuit therefore of Wisdom, necessarily leads to the four *Cardinal Virtues*, as they are distinguished, which compose Righteousness, considered in its largest Sense; and the following Virtues, or Graces, are so many Branches of it: For Temperance teaches Men Moderation, and a restrained use of Pleasures and the good Things of the World; Fortitude, how to bear and behave under the Evils and Afflictions of it; Prudence is employed in finding out and making use of proper Ways and Means; and Justice, in a fair and impartial rendering to All their Dues. *Philo* has exactly the same Thought and Distinction, expressed only in his Allegorical way, upon *Gen. ii. 10.* *A River went out of Eden, and from thence it was parted, and became into four Heads:* Which he thus allegorizes, *Fluvius est virtus generalis, quatuor autem derivationes sunt totidem virtutes ex Edene, id est sapientiâ Dei, effluentes; nimirum, Prudentia, Temperantia, Fortitudo, Justitia. Prudentia circa agenda, terminos illis ponens; Fortitudo sustinendo; Temperantia eligendo; Justitia suum cuique tribuendo:* SS. *Legum Allegoriarum lib. i.* Which are the four Species here enumerated, arising from one common Fountain-head, viz. *Righteousness.*

[*Δικαιοσύνη* here signifies all moral Virtues in general: But in this same Verse, *δικαιοσύνη* is put for Justice, a Species — of what? of *δικαιοσύνη*. This is certainly very inaccurate. The Author might have avoided this, if instead of *δικαιοσύνη*, he had put *τὰς ἀρετὰς*. The End of the Verse might be better translated thus, "There is nothing more useful to Men in Life than these."]



Ver. 8. *If a Man desire much Experience.* *Poluxenian.* The *Vulgate* renders more justly, *Multitudinem scientia*, to which *Coverdale's* Version agrees, *If a Man desire much Knowledge.* The *Syrac* is to the same effect, *Si quis item cupiat admodum esse peritus*, which *Vatablus* also favours. The Word *Experience* seems here improper and disagreeable to what follows; for *Experience* cannot possibly relate to what is to come, nor foresee any future Events; but *Wisdom* can prognosticate what shall happen, can foresee the Change of Weather, and foretel Eclipses of the Sun and Moon, which are called here Signs and Wonders: For anciently such Discoveries were extremely rare, and the Ignorance of the People was so great, that they looked upon such *Phænomena* as Prodigies. *Plutarch* remarks, that "*Anaxagoras*, "and such as first discovered and explained "the Cause of them, durst not speak in public, for fear of being thought Atheists or "Magicians, but instructed their Disciples in "the Reason of them privately, and by Word "of Mouth, without committing their Observations to Writing." *In vit. Nicæ.*

[*Ibid.* *Εικάζειν*. In this Verse, and ch. ix. 16. The Verb *εικάζειν* is translated to *guess aright*, from what Authority it does not appear: For *εικάζειν* of itself no more signifies to *guess aright*, than to *guess wrong*. *Εικάζειν καλῶς* is to *guess aright*, as in the noted Verse of *Euripides*, *Μῆτις γ' ἀρίστη δὲ τις εικάζει καλῶς* and in *Thucydides*, concerning *Pericles*, *τῶν μετέπειτα ἀρίστος εἰκασίς*.]

Ver. 9. *I purposed to take her to me to live with me.* *Ερενα ταύτην ἀγαγέμεν πρὸς συμβίωσιν.* "I purposed to take her to be my Partner for "Life, to be my Spouse," as is expressed, ver. 2. for I understand *ἀγαγέμεν* in both Places to refer to the Marriage Ceremony of leading the Bride to the Bridegroom's House. What follows seems to confirm this Acceptation, for she was to be to him his Bosom-counsellor, *bona daturam consilia*, says *Vatablus*, one that would faithfully advise him in all Difficulties, comfort him tenderly in all Afflictions, and kindly divide his Cares and Grievs with him; which is the Description of a happy Marriage. The Reading of all the Copies is, *παράεισις φροντίδων*, possibly *παράεισις* may be the true Reading, agreeably to *μύσις*, *ἀρετὴς*, *σύμβουλος*, which go just before, *ἀδελφότης*.

Ver. 9. *A Counsellor of good Things.* *σύμβουλος ἀγαθῶν.* The opposite part of the Sentence, a Comfort, or an Encourager in Cares and Grievs, shews that *ἀγαθῶν* here means in Prosperity.

Ver. 11. *I shall be found of quick Conceit, and shall be admired in the sight of Great Men.* This was eminently true of the real *Solomon*, as appears by that distinguishing Judgment which he shewed in the Case of the two contending Harlots, when by a nice Decision he brought to light what Artifice and Dissimulation had concealed, and artfully found a Way to come at even the Bottom of the Heart, and to unravel its most secret Intentions; for by an Appearance of Severity only, without any Violence to the Parent or the Child, Nature herself at once declared, by the Motions and

Sentiments of either Tenderness or Indifference, which were then visible without Disguise, which was the Counterfeit, and which the real Mother; upon which the Text adds, *That all Israel heard of the Judgment which the King had judged; and they feared the King, for they saw that the Wisdom of God was in him, to do Judgment.* 1 Kings iii. 28.

Ver. 12. *If I talk much, they shall lay their Hands upon their Mouth.* 'Tis a proverbial Expression, and implies Silence: See the like, *Eccles. v. 12. Prov. xxx. 32.* The Poet well expresses it, *digito compesce labellum*. Accordingly *Harpocrates*, by the Ancients feigned to be the God of Silence, is pictured with his Finger on his Mouth, to recommend, by this expressive Gesture, either a well-timed Silence, or at least a discreet Government of the Tongue. See *Stephan. Diet. Histor. in voce.*

Ver. 15. *I shall be found good among the Multitude, and valiant in War.* We have here the two essential Qualities to constitute a complete Prince, Goodness in the Care and Management of his own People, and Valour to head them in any warlike Expedition against others. *Alexander the Great* is said to have studied much, and repeated often, that fine Maxim of *Homer*, which the Expression of this Writer very much resembles, and is worthy indeed of the true *Solomon*:

*Ἀμφοτέρων, βασιλεὺς τ' ἀγαθὸς, καλεῖται τ' αἰχμητής.* *Virgil* has happily expressed the same Thought in the following Line;

*Parcere subjectis, & debellare superbos:*

Where both those celebrated Poets agree with our Author, in making the Excellence of a King to consist in Goodness and Clemency to his own Subjects, and in martial Courage to reduce an insulting Enemy; in being amiable to the one, and terrible to the other. So that even according to the Notions of Paganism, a Prince is only so far great, as he is tender and careful of his Subjects; nor should he think of his Power but with a view to do Good, and, in Imitation of the Title of the Gods, to place the Character of *very Good*, before *very Great*, to be *optimus maximus*, like *Jupiter*, from whom he derives his Power. *Seneca* has an Observation to the same Purpose, *Proximum Diis locum tenet, qui se ex Deorum natura gerit; hoc affectare, hoc imitari decet, maximum ita haberi, ut optimus simul habeare*: *Senec. lib. i. De Clem. c. 19.* But upon the Comparison, a Prince ought to prefer the amiable Name of *Pater Patriæ*, or Father of his Country, to all the pompous Titles and Appellations which Victory and Triumph can heap upon him, and not so much to aim at his own Glory, or the Enlargement of his Dominions through Ambition, as to protect his Subjects, and labour to make them happy: For the Trophies of even a successful War are not so much to be coveted, as the Blessings of a settled Peace; nor the Conquest of foreign Nations, as the Love, Preservation, and Good order of his own People.

[Ver. 16. *After I am come into my House. Better thus, I will go into mine House, and will repose.*]



Ver. 18. *In the Works of her Hands are infinite Riches.*] ΠΛῆθος ἀνεκλιπής, i. e. Riches which are durable, and fade not away. *Vatablus* renders accordingly, *perennes divitias*, and the *Vulgate* is to the same Effect. *Calmet* understands it of Riches, *qui ne manquent jamais*. And that this is the true Rendering, appears from the like Expression upon the same Subject, ch. vii. 14. where Wisdom is called θησαυρὸς ἀνεκλιπής, which our Translators rightly there render, *A Treasure that never faileth*. The Expression, in our *Version*, seems rather to denote the *Quantity* than the *Quality* of the Riches, and so it is commonly understood. The Sense of the Passage is, that true Wisdom, which is from above, and makes us wise unto Salvation, will procure for us Riches which fade not away, together with that Glory, Satisfaction, and Pleasure, which Preferment, Honour, and Wealth, the Rewards of other Studies, are only faint Resemblances of. For such is the Excellency of Divine Knowledge, that it will not only forward our Admission into Heaven, but accompany us thither: St. *Jerom* therefore well advises, *Discamus in terris, quorum nobis scientia perseveret in celo*. Epist. ad Paulin.

[Ibid. *Great pleasure*. Τέρψις ἀγαθὴ, good or profitable delight, not hurtful, as most other delights commonly are. Τέρψις ἀγαθὴ is *Horace's Utile dulci*.]

Ver. 19. *For I was a witty Child, and had a good Spirit*] Παῖς ἤμην ὀφύης, ψυχῆς τε ἱλαχον ἀγαθῆς. Εὐφύα answers to *bona indoles*, and in *Junius's Version* is properly expressed by it, i. e. I was naturally well-disposed towards Wisdom, and of a good Capacity, had a Quickness of Parts, and Readiness of Apprehension, and a Soul more susceptible of Instruction than many others, and superior to them in its natural Talents and Endowments. That all Souls are not equal as to their Disposition, nor equally capable of, or inclined to Wisdom, is the Sentiment of most Writers, particularly St. *Austin* says, *Alii fatui, alii tardissimi ingenii, & ad intelligendum quodammodo plumbei, alii obli-viosi, alii acuti memoresque nascuntur, alii utroque munere præditi*: Aug. lib. iv. cont. Jul. c. 3. But I rather chuse to understand this of moral Dispositions, and of the Inclination of the Soul to Goodness. But *Philo's* Notion comes nearest our Author, "Who acknowledges two "Sorts or Species of Souls, placed in the Air; "that some always continue there, and others "descend into and inhabit Bodies; of the latter, some apply themselves to sublime and "useful Knowledge, which, even after the "death of the Body, they continue to pursue, "to purchase a Life incorruptible and eternal; "but others, overwhelmed by the Weight of "the Flesh, neglect the Care and Study of "Wisdom, are intent upon Riches and Vanity, "and attached wholly to Things sensible and "corporeal." *De Gigantibus*. Our Author mentions it as his Good Luck and Fortune to have a Soul well inclined, and of the better Sort, with the additional Happiness of its being joined to a Body pure and undefiled. I say *Good fortune*, for the learned Father above observes upon ἱλαχον, which the *Vulgate* ren-

ders *sortitus sum*, that "it intimates, that he "received his Good Spirit or Disposition as it "were by accident, by the free Donation and "undeserved Bounty of God's Goodness, to "exclude and guard against the least surmise "of any precedent Merit, *Ad auferendam suspi-cionem præcedentium meritorum sortis nomen accersit*." De Gen. ad Lit. lib. x. c. 18. How justly this Remark is grounded, and whether this Writer intended such a Sense, the Learned will determine.

[Ibid. *For I was a witty Child*.—But or now—] ἢ ἤμην.] This and the following Verse should be put in a Parenthesis.

Ver. 20. *Yea, rather being good, I came into a Body undefiled.*] This Sentence seems to favour the Opinion of a Pre-existence of Souls. It was a Notion of the *Pythagoreans* and *Platonists*, of the *Jewish Doctors* and *Rabbinical Writers*, and after them entertained by *Origen*, and some other *Christian Writers*, that all Souls were created by God at the Beginning of the World out of Nothing, and were reserved and deposited in some of the heavenly Regions; that, according to their good or ill Behaviour in the State and Region above, antecedent to their being incorporated with mortal and earthly Vehicles, they were afterwards, as infinite Wisdom saw Occasion, sent down into Bodies ready fitted for, and properly disposed to receive them, and were accordingly lodged here below, either in sickly or healthful, in vicious or well-inclined Bodies. This Notion, that Souls pre-existed and descended into suitable Bodies, was the Opinion of the *Pharisees* particularly, which they are thought to have borrowed from the *Platonists*, *Joseph. de Bell. Jud.* lib. ii. c. 12. *Philo*, who upon all Occasions speaks the Sentiments of the ancient *Jews*, favours this Notion in many Places; *De Confus. Linguarum*, *De Gigantibus*, *De Abraham*; but he is most express in the following Passage, Τῶτων ἢ ψυχῶν, αἱ μὲν κατὰσιν ἐνδεησόμενα σώμασι θνητοῖς, ὅσαι προσείοτα ἢ φιλοσώματοι—*Harum alie descendunt illigandæ corporibus mortalibus, quotquot viciniore sunt terræ, amantioreque corporum*. *De Somniis*. To this Notion that Question of our Saviour's Disciples is generally thought to allude, *John ix. 2. Did this Man sin, or his Parents, that he was born blind?* And some have interpreted to the same Sense ἀναλῦσαι, *Philip. i. 23.* and ὁ καιρὸς ἔμελλε ἀναλύσας, *2 Tim. iv. 6.* But ἀνάλυσαι, even though we should understand it in these and other Places where it occurs, in the Sense of *Return*, rather than *Departure*, does not countenance the Notion of a Pre-existence, as it is commonly understood. It is further objected against this Passage, that it is inconsistent with the Doctrine of Original Sin; for we cannot suppose the Body of any Descendant of *Adam* to be pure, untainted, or undefiled, as is here asserted, nor any Soul to enter into an earthly Vehicle that is entirely clean and perfect, and altogether free from any original Leaven: *Nemo mundus à peccato*, says St. *Austin*, *nec infans, cujus est unius diei vita super terram*. *Confess. lib. i. c. 7.* In the *Belgic Version*, the Translators, in their Preface prefixed to the *Apocrypha*, single out this Passage as exception-



able on this Account, see *Limborch. Theol. Christ.* lib. i. c. 3. To obviate this Objection, founded upon a Truth which we must all own, and do sensibly experience, as being equally by Nature Sinners, and Children of Wrath, *Calmet* observes, that this Writer is not to be understood as speaking of a Body absolutely pure and undefiled, and entirely free from any hereditary Infection, but of a Body less corrupt and less disposed to evil than many others, *Moins corrompu & moins porté au mal que beaucoup d'autres.* Comment. in loc. But the Justness of this Solution itself will perhaps be disputed; and it may probably be questioned, whether a Body less vicious, or less subject to human Corruptions, can, with any more Propriety, be said to be both pure and undefiled, than a Body can be said to be chaste that is less unclean, or sound and healthful that is less infirm and sickly. *Lyranus* and some other Commentators have attempted another Interpretation of the Place to the following Sense, "Encreasing more and more in Virtue and Goodness, I came to have a Body chaste and undefiled," which is founded upon the rendring of the *Vulgate*, *Et cum essem magis bonus veni ad corpus incoquinatum*; i. e. says *Tirinus*, *Cum magis magisque per virtutum exercitium crescerem in bonitate, eo deveni ut etiam corpus mihi esset bene temperatum, mundum, & castum*: Comment. in loc. And even *Messieurs du Port Royal* take it in the same Sense, *Devenant bon de plus en plus*. But neither does this Remedy seem quite to heal the Sore; for the true Rendring of the Greek, *μᾶλλον ὃ ἀγαθὸς ὢν*, is not *cum essem magis bonus*, but literally *magis vero*, or rather *imo vero cum essem bonus*; so that *magis* is transposed in the *Vulgate*, either designedly or by accident: Nor is *μᾶλλον ἀγαθὸς* the usual comparative way of Expression among the Greeks, but *ἀμείνων*, or *βελτίων*, as in the *Latin Tongue*, we do not usually say *magis bonus*, but *melior*, or *emendatior*: Nor does *ἤλθον εἰς σῶμα ἀμίαντον* signify, *I came at length to have a Body undefiled*, but *I entered into a Body at first undefiled*. Upon the whole, As the Expressions here seem to favour a Pre-existence, and this Writer labours as it were to establish that Notion, using an *ἐπανόρθωσις* or a rhetorical Correction of himself, as if he had said too little, in the Words *ψυχῆς ἔλαχον ἀγαθῆς*; As the *Syriac* and *Arabic Versions* both understand and render this Passage in a Sense rather favouring the Notion of a Pre-existence; the former very expressly, *Propter bonitatem meam veni in corpus purum*; and the latter, *Imo bonus eram, ideoque immaculatus ingressus sum in corpus*; and lastly, As the Solutions offered to evade the Objections urged against this Place, seem weak and unsatisfactory, I must ingenuously acknowledge, that it seems to me to favour of *Platonism*; nor is it improbable that this Writer, who was undoubtedly a Jew, received a Tincture in this and some other Instances to be met with in this Book, from the prevailing Notions among his Countrymen. This however is certain, that whether we understand this Verse of a Body absolutely and originally chaste and undefiled, free from all taint of

Original Sin; or of one subject to its Frailties, Lusts, and Corruptions, but subdued and freed from the Power and Dominion of them by Temperance, Prayer, and religious Exercises; in either respect we cannot well understand or apply this to the true *Solomon*, whose Purity more especially cannot be mentioned to his Honour.

[Ibid. *Being good.*] ἀγαθὸς ὢν. The Author speaks of the Soul here in the same Gender as if it were the whole Person, according to that of *Cicero* in *Somm. Scip. mens cujusque is est quisque*. Strictly speaking, he should have written ἀγαθὴ ὦσα (ἡ ψυχὴ) ἤλθεν εἰς σῶμα ἀμίαντον. The Difficulty of this Passage, which is thought to be insuperable as the Context stands at present, is removed by the Change of a single Letter, ἤλθεν εἰς σῶμα ἀμείαντος; or rather, *being good* (in my pre-existent State) *I came undefiled into a Body*. And that ἀμείαντος was formerly in some Copies is certain, because the *Arabic Version* has, *Immaculatus ingressus sum in Corpus*: ἀμείαντος probably was changed into ἀμίαντον, to make it agree with the *Neuter σῶμα*.]

Ver. 21. Nevertheless, when I perceived that I could not otherwise obtain her.] Γνὼς ὅτι οὐκ ἄλλως ἔσομαι ἐκγεγῆς, which the *Vulgate* renders, *Ut scivi quoniam aliter non possem esse continens, nisi Deus det, adii Dominum*;—And knowing that the Gift of Continency was from God, and that his Grace could alone preserve me chaste, I prayed unto him; which *Coverdale* follows in his Version, *When I perceived that I could not kepe myself chaste, &c.* The *Syriac* also takes the Words in the same Sense, *Sciens quod non possum me ipsum domare*; and *St. Austin*, *Confess.* lib. x. c. 31. It is surprizing that an Interpretation, which is by no means agreeable to the Context, and founded probably upon a Mistake, should be supported by so great Authorities; for it seems to have taken its Rise from a Misunderstanding of the Meaning of the Greek Word ἐκγεγῆς, which signifies both *continens* and *compos*; but the latter Sense, which is followed by our Translators, the *Arabic Version*, *Vatablus*, and the *Geneva Bible*, is far preferable, as will appear if we include the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Verses in a Parenthesis, as indeed they ought to be; and then the true Sense of this Passage will be clearer, and the Connexion more visible; for the Meaning will then plainly be, "I went about seeking Wisdom, to take her to me, and I, when I found that I could not otherwise obtain Wisdom, Me non aliter fore compotem illius, nisi Deus dederit, says *Junius*, I prayed unto the Lord for it." There is the same Mistake in the *Vulgate* and upon the very same Occasion, *Ecclus* vi. 27. where ἐκγεγῆς ἀνόμενος, in the *Vulgate*, *continens factus*, is much more justly rendred in our Version, *When thou hast got hold of her* (Wisdom) *let her not go*, in the Sense which the Context necessarily requires. *Vatablus* and *Junius* expound the Place in the same manner; the latter expressly renders, *Compos factus, eam ne dimittito*. See also *Ecclus* xv. 1. where there is the like Mistake in the *Vulgate*.

[Ibid. Except God gave her me.] Wisdom, which



which is here meant, and not the Gift of Continency (see the Note above) like other good and perfect Gifts, is from above, and cometh down from the Father of Lights, James i. 17. 'Tis a pretty Observation which Bishop *Sanderson* makes on these Words, and very applicable, "That those Perfections and Virtues which the Heathen Moralists call *Graces* or *Habits*, the Apostle by a far better Name calls *Gifts* or *Gifts*, to intimate to us how we came by them, and whom we ought to thank for them." *Serm. 3. ad Clerum.* And the same inspired Writer has a more particular Direction as to the very Point before us, *If any Man lack Wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all Men liberally, and it shall be given him, ch. i. 6.* The ingenious Mr. *Cowley* observes of *Virgil*, "That his first Wish was to be a good Philosopher, and that God, whom he seemed to understand better than most of the learned Heathens, dealt with him just as he did with *Solomon*; because he prayed for Wisdom in the first place, he added all Things else which were subordinate-ly to be desired." See *Martyn's Georgicks*, lib. iii. p. 198.

*Ibid.* I prayed unto the Lord and besought him.] To apply to God for the Gift of Wisdom, who has the sole disposal of it, was not only an Instance of it, but a sure and infallible way of obtaining it. *Philo* has a fine Observation upon God's disposal of his Gifts and Graces, *Αἱ τὴ χάριτι αὐτοῦ πᾶσι ἀέννατοι, ἡ πᾶσι δ' ἀναιρέται, ἀλλὰ μόνοις ἰκέταις.* The Efficacy of Prayer was what the Heathens themselves greatly depended upon in most of their great Undertakings. It has been observed by *Critics*, that *Homer* hardly ever makes his Heroes succeed, unless they have first offered a Prayer to Heaven; whether they engage in War, go upon an Embassy, undertake a Voyage, or whatever they enterprize, they almost always supplicate some God; and whenever we find this omitted, we may expect some Adversity to befall them in the course of the Story. We must likewise mention it to their Honour, that they prayed to, and thanked the Gods for the Advantages of Riches, Honour, and Health; but I cannot find that the Heathens ever acknowledged God for the Author and Giver of Wisdom, or indeed of any Virtue. Thus *Cotta* in *Tully*, *Num. quis, quod vir bonus esset, gratias diis egit unquam? Jovemque Optimum Maximum appellant, non quod nos Justos, Temperatos, Sapientes efficiat, sed quod salvos, incolumes, opulentos, copiosos. Neque Herculi quisquam decimas vovit unquam, si sapiens factus esset: De Natura Deor. lib. iii.* How much finer is this Writer's Description of Wisdom than that of a conceited Stoick; and how much more deservedly is he to be admired for referring Wisdom so justly to its true Original, and acquainting us with its divine Extraction? Herein our Author agrees with the Scripture Account of the Original of Wisdom, which assures us, that it is he who giveth to all Men liberally, and upbraideth not, and commandeth the Light to shine out of Darkness, that must, in this Case more particularly, shine in our Hearts, to give the Light of the

Knowledge of the Glory of God. I shall shut up this Chapter with an apposite and fine Reflexion of *Messieurs du Port Royal* in their Comment upon this Place; "Happy are those that have this Knowledge, that Wisdom and all Perfection come from God, which may be called the Knowledge of the truly humble—they know all things, because they are persuaded and sensible that they know nothing; they can do all things, because they are convinced that of themselves they can do nothing. We ought therefore to put up often to God that excellent Prayer of *St. Austin's*, not very unlike the Beginning of this, *Da mihi, Domine, gratiam tuam, quâ potens est omnis infirmus qui sibi per illam conscius sit infirmitatis suæ.*"

## CHAP. IX.

## The ARGUMENT.

THE Author's Prayer for Wisdom is set down, wherein is shewn particularly, how necessary the Gift of Wisdom is to enable Kings and Rulers to discharge their high Office with Sufficiency and Credit. The Prayer itself is so like that of the real *Solomon*, 1 Kings iii. 9. which he made to God in the Beginning of his Reign, that some from hence have been induced to ascribe this Book to him. *Calmet* says this Prayer is continued from the Beginning of this Chapter to the End of the Book, and is of opinion, that the Book itself was never finished, or at least that the Conclusion of it is lost; for the Author does not conclude his Prayer, as 'tis natural to suppose he should have done according to his first Design: *Preface sur la Livre de la Sagesse.*

Ver. 1. O God of my Fathers.] It is very observable that *Solomon*, or rather this Writer under that borrowed Character, begins his Prayer with great Humility, and a religious Spirit of Meekness. He beseeches God to hear him, not for his own Merit sake, but for the Worthiness of the ancient Patriarchs, for *Abraham* and *David* his Father's sake. He builds all his Hopes upon the pure Goodness of God, as knowing that Humility is an Essential in Prayer, and the most likely Means of Success. *Ibid.* Lord of Mercy, who hast made all Things with thy Word.] *Κύριε ὁ ἐλέος σου.* All the Editions which retain this Pronoun, which may as well be omitted, have the same corrupt Reading, the true one probably, instead of *σου*, may be *Κύριε ὁ ἐλέος, σὺ ὁ ποιήσας, κ. τ. λ.* [This Reading *σὺ ὁ ποιήσας* is confirmed by *Acts* iv. 24. *Δέσποτα, σὺ ὁ Θεὸς ὁ ποιήσας τὸ ἔργον:* And then in the next Verse must be read *κατασκευάσας*, with the best Copies (for *κατεσκευάσας*) which further confirms this Conjecture.] *Coverdale* seems to have followed a Copy which read so, O Lord of Mercyes, thou that hast made all Thynges with thy Word, i. e. who spakest all things into Being, and by thy almighty Fiat they are and were created. Or, who madest all things by thy Word, thine eternal λόγος, that same Word, who was in the Beginning with thee, and without whom was not any thing made that was made, *John* i. 3. In this



this latter Sense Calmet understands it, *Le Seigneur a créé l'Univers par son Verbe, par son Fils*; and so do many of the *Fathers*.

[Ibid. *Ἐν ὁσιότητι καὶ δικαιοσύνῃ*. According to Equity and Righteousness in our Version. Rather, in Holiness and Righteousness. So Luke i. 75. *Ἐν ὁσιότητι καὶ δικαιοσύνῃ*, and Ephes. iv. 24. in both which Places it is rightly rendered, in Holiness and Righteousness. *Ὁσιότης* here relates to Things sacred; *δικαιοσύνη* to Things civil, or Justice between Man and Man. The Notion of Equity in our Language is different from that of *ὁσιότης* in Greek.]

Ver. 4. Give me Wisdom, that sitteth by thy Throne.] i. e. The Assessor of thy Throne, which may mean more than being present with God, viz. assisting in his Counsels, and presiding over them. Sitting here may be considered as a technical forensick Term, and not only to imply a Right of Judicature, in which Sense it is used in many Places of Scripture, *Prov. xx. 8. Isai. xvi. 5.* but even Dominion and Sovereignty, according to St. Jerome, *Comm. ad Ephes.* by which supreme Dignity of Place, Wisdom is distinguished from Ministering Spirits; for when Angels, Principalities, and Powers, are described as attending about the Throne of God, they are generally represented as standing, or falling down before it, *2 Chron. xviii. 18. Isai. vi. 2. Rev. iv. 10.* In this high Sense some primitive Writers have explained this Passage, as implying a joint Sovereignty of the λόγος with God: See ver. 9, 10. of this Chapter, where the same exalted Character is continued, which seems a very close Imitation of *Prov. viii.* especially ver. 27, *ἡνίκα ἠτοίμαζε τὸ θρόνον, συμπάρεμλυν αὐτῷ*. But for the Reasons before given (see Note on ch. vii. 26.) I think the Meaning rather to be, that Wisdom, as a Divine Attribute, is always present with God, as his Joint-Counsellor, his Assistant, if I may be allowed the Expression, and the Partner of his Throne or Tribunal; that she always exists in the Eternal Mind, is privy to its Sovereign Decrees, and influences all its Deliberations and Actions; that Wisdom therefore is not only the Ornament, but the Support and Basis of God's Throne, in as high, exalted, and proper a manner, as Righteousness and Equity are by the Psalmist said to be the Habitation of his Seat, *Psal. lxxxix. 15. Philo* describes Justice in the same manner, *τὴν ἀρετὴν δίκην καὶ πάντων ἡγεμόνα*. Philo, *De Justitia.*—& *De Joseph.* And the Heathens made her equally an Assessor on Jupiter's Throne, *δίκη σωτὴρ Ζηνός*, *Sophocl. in Œdip.* But *Plutarch* expresses himself concerning her in a manner which most resembles this Writer: "Justice, according to his Description, does not only sit like a Queen, at the Right-hand of Jupiter, when he is upon his Throne; but she is in his Bosom, and one with himself."

[Ver. 5. *Ἐλάσων ἐν σωέσει νεώτερος καὶ νόμιον*. This is not rightly translated too young for the Understanding, &c. It means, deficient in the Understanding of Judgment and Laws.]

Ver. 6. For though a Man be never so perfect among the Children of Men, yet if thy Wisdom be not with him, he shall be nothing regarded.] This Observation according to the Comment

of *Messieurs du Port Royal*, holds true, applied to Rulers in the Church, as well as those in the State; "For though a Man have all Knowledge, and be so consummate in Wisdom as to discourse even with the Tongue of Angels, though he have the Gift of Prophecy, and understand all Mysteries, though he could work Miracles, even to the removing Mountains, and though he give all his Goods to feed the Poor, yet if he is devoid of the only true Wisdom, that Wisdom which proceedeth from God, and should be employed in his Service, he may appear great indeed in the eyes of Men, but, according to St. Paul, he is nothing, or will be accounted as nothing, in the sight of God." *1 Cor. xiii. 2.*

Ver. 7. Thou hast chosen me to be a King of thy People.] *Melchior Canus* and *Sixtus Senensis* lay great Stress upon this Passage, to prove Solomon the Writer of this Book; but their way of Reasoning will prove too much, for if a bare Assertion, the mere assuming the Person of another, shall be thought sufficient to establish this Point, then the Apostolical Canons may, for the same Reason, be pronounced Canonical, for in the last of them we meet with these Words, *πράξεις ἡμῶν τῶν Ἀποστόλων*. And yet notwithstanding this Assertion, and though the Title itself seemingly bespeaks them to be the Authors, they are now generally decryed and disclaimed, even by some of the Romanists themselves: See *Rainald's Cens. Libr. Apocr. Præl. 15.* It is most probable this Passage of our Author is spoken *μιμητικῶς*, i. e. by a feigned Representation of a Person, to take away any Odium from the Speaker, and to give the greater Weight to what is delivered. Upon this Occasion, no Character was so proper to be assumed as that of Solomon, who himself was a King, and eminent above all others for his Understanding and Wisdom; because Instruction offered and inculcated under so great a Name, would be more regarded and attended to by Persons of the same high Rank and Authority. Such a rhetorical Artifice we often meet with in Books of Oratory: Thus *Tully* sometimes argues under the Person of *Cato the Elder*, *Omnem sermonem tribuimus Catoni Seni, quo majorem auctoritatem habeat oratio.* But what comes nearest the Point is, that *Isocrates* inscribes a whole Oration, *Nicocles*, and speaks in the Person of that King, as if He really was the Author, to give the greater Sanction, and procure more Reverence, to the Duties enjoined in it: And yet Nobody, from that Name or Title, supposes it to belong to *Nicocles*, or that it was any thing else but an ingenious Fiction of *Isocrates*. The Ancients, says *Calmet*, do often call their Works by the Names of the Persons they introduce as speaking: Thus *Plato* has given to his Dialogues the Names of *Socrates*, *Timæus*, *Protagoras*, &c. And *Cicero*, in the same way, gives to one of his Pieces the Title of *Brutus*, and to another that of *Hortensius*. *Xenophon* styles the History in which he has drawn the Model of a complete Prince, *Cyrus*, as being the principal Person or Character in it: But none will pretend that these were wrote by



"the Persons whose Names they bear, for 'tis agreed on all hands, that *Plato, Cicero, Xenophon*, were the true Authors who composed those Pieces under feigned Names:" *Dissert. sur l'auteur du livre de la Sagesse*. And in another Place the same learned Writer gives the Reason for this Artifice and Invention; "It may be considered as a *Prosopopœia*, as a sort of Device wherein a Person, to give more Weight to what is delivered, speaks in the Name, and assumes the Person, of some other more ancient. The Scripture has some Instances of this Sort, as that artificial Fiction of the Widow of *Tekoah*, 2 *Sam.* xiv. to incline *David* to fetch home *Abshalom*; that of the Prophet, 1 *Kings* xx. 35. to rebuke *Abab*; and that of *Nathan*, reproving *David* by that significant and fine Parable of the *Ew-lamb*, 2 *Sam.* xii. And thus the Prophets sometimes introduce God, *Moses, Abraham, &c.* speaking, to make their Discourses more lively and more affecting." *Pref. sur le livre de la Sagesse*.

Ver. 8. *A Resemblance of the holy Tabernacle, which thou hast prepared from the Beginning.* i. e. Upon the Model, says *Calmet*, of the Tabernacle, which *Moses*, by God's Direction, erected for the People in the Wilderness; and the Temple was a true Resemblance of it in all respects; only what was small, and, as it were, in miniature in the one, was inconceivably grand and magnificent in the other; but the Disposition in both was nearly the same, and framed according to the Pattern which God at first exhibited in the Mount, *Exod.* xxv. 40. The *Arabic Version* understands it in the same Sense, *Simile Tabernaculo sancto, cujus delineamentum ab initio præmissi*. But *Grotius*, and other Writers, understand these Words in a higher Sense, viz. that the Temple was a Resemblance of Heaven itself, prepared by God from the Beginning for the Righteous. And indeed the *Jews* seem to have had the same Notion, for they fancied three Heavens, and the third or highest Heaven to be the Habitation of God, and of the blessed Angels; and to this Distinction they imagined the *Atrium, Sanctuarium, and Sanctum Sanctorum*, answered in the Temple and Tabernacle: The Encampment of the Twelve Tribes about the Tabernacle, they fancied likewise to be a Representation of the Angels and heavenly Host about the Throne of God: *Philo* has the same Sentiment in several Places, and *Josephus*, lib. iii. c. 7. No wonder therefore that this Writer, from the great Analogy and Agreement which the *Jews* supposed betwixt them, should call the Temple, in which was the *Sanctum Sanctorum*, the Resemblance or Image of Heaven itself, prepared by God from Everlasting. This is the Language of an inspired Pen, even the Writer to the *Hebrews*, who speaking, ch. viii. 5. of the Tabernacle, calls it the Exemplar and Pattern of heavenly Things; and ch. ix. 24. he calls the holy Places made with Hands, the Figures of the true, or celestial ones. *St. Chrysostom*, speaking of the Temple, calls it, The Great and Typical Fabrick, the Image of the whole World, both sensible and intellectual; and he justifies his Notion from these Canonical Passages: *Hemil. de*

*Nativ.* And as the Comparison in all these Places is made to heavenly Things, so *St. John* in the *Revelations* describes the heavenly Sanctuary, by Representations taken from the *Jewish Temple*, particularly the Throne of God, with his ministering Spirits, is represented like that over the Ark, where the *Shecinah*, or Divine Glory, sat encompassed with the *Cherubims*. See *Spencer de Leg. Hebr.* tom. i. p. 215. It may not be amiss to observe upon the Greek Reading of this Passage, viz. *μίμημα οὐλῶνς ἁγίας ἢν προηλοίμασας ἀπ' ἀρχῆς*, that however the Passage itself be understood, whether of the heavenly or earthly Tabernacle, ἀπ' ἀρχῆς seems unnecessary after *προηλοίμασας*. I would therefore carry these Words forwards to the Beginning of the next Verse, and read ἀπ' ἀρχῆς ἢ μετὰ σὲ ἡ σοφία, κ. τ. λ. [The present Construction of the Greek is right, inasmuch as the Author's Intent was to tell us, that the Holy Tabernacle was not only prepared, but prepared too from the Beginning: However, to make the Sense clearer, it seems necessary to separate the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Verses only by a Comma.]

Ver. 11. Καὶ φυλάξει με ἐν τῇ δεξιᾷ αὐτῆς. Perhaps the true Reading may rather be, ἐν τῇ δεξιᾷ αὐτῆς, by her Right-hand. As ch. v. 16. τῇ δεξιᾷ σκεπάσει αὐτὸς. xix. 8. οἱ ἐν τῇ σκεπαζόμενοι χερεῖ. However, the present Reading may receive some Countenance from *Eccles.* xiv. 27.

Ver. 13. For what Man is he that can know the Counsel of God? or who can think what the Will of the Lord is? From this Passage some confidently affirm *St. Paul* borrowed the 34<sup>th</sup> Verse of the eleventh Chapter to the *Romans*, and therefore they would infer this Book to be Canonical. But this is a groundless Pretence: For, 1<sup>st</sup>, we do not perceive in any part of the *New Testament*, this, or any other Ecclesiastical Book, cited or referred to as Scripture. 2<sup>dly</sup>, It does not follow by any necessary Consequence, that such Sentences in Scripture as are like and parallel to some others in Apocryphal or Ecclesiastical Writings, should be really taken from thence; nothing being more common, than for different Authors to hit upon and agree in the same moral Maxims, without having read or ever seen one another's Writings. 3<sup>dly</sup>, Some of those very Sentences which are said to be taken out of the Book of *Wisdom* or *Ecclesiasticus*, occur in some part of those Books which are confessedly Canonical; and particularly this Passage of *St. Paul* is in the same Terms, or to the same Effect, *Isai.* xl. 13, 14. where the Words are, Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his Counsellor hath taught him? With whom took he Counsel, and who instructed him and taught him in the Path of Judgment? That *St. Paul* had this Place of the Prophet in view is the Opinion of many learned Men: *Tertull.* cont. *Marc.* lib. v. *Basil de Sp. Sanct.* cap. 5. *Dupin's Hist. Can.* 4<sup>thly</sup>, Supposing *St. Paul* does actually refer to this Passage in the Book of *Wisdom*, does not the same *St. Paul* confessedly quote the *Heathen Poets*, and some ancient Apocryphal Book for the Story of *Jannes and Jambres*, 2 *Tim.* iii. 8. And does not our Saviour himself, in the Opinion of some learned Men, (see *Bp. Sherlock, Dissert.* 1.) quote another such Apocryphal Book, under the



the Title of *The Wisdom of God*, and appeal to it as containing ancient Prophecies, *Luke xi. 49.* Did *Apocryphal* Writings receive any higher Sanction or Authority from hence, or ever any one imagine the Canon of Scripture imperfect for the want of them? One may easily see the Design of the *Romanists*, in endeavouring to bring the *Apocryphal* Books into the Canon; they hope by their Authority to establish some favourite Notions of their Church, which yet, if examined and compared with the Original, upon which they are pretended to be grounded, will be often found to have no other Foundation than in a wrong Version, as may be proved more particularly from the Books of *Maccabees*.

Ver. 15. *For the corruptible Body presseth down the Soul, and the earthly Tabernacle weigheth down the Mind that museth upon many Things.* Γεωδὲς σκῆνῃ. This Expression is manifestly borrowed from the *Platonists*. Thus *Clemens Alexandrinus*, Τὸ σῶμα, γῆινόν φησιν ὁ Πλάτων σκῆνῃ, *Strom. 5.* We meet with the like Expression, *2 Pet. i. 14.* where Death is called ἡ ἀποθνήσκουσα καὶ σκηνώματι. But the Description of the Body is most remarkably exaggerated by *St. Paul*, *2 Cor. v. 1.* ἡ ἀσκήτως ἡμῶν οἰκία καὶ σκῆνῃ. *Philo*, *Hippocrates*, and other *Greek* Writers, in like manner, use τὸ σκῆνῃ for a human Body; and *Lucretius*, in Imitation of the *Greeks*, uses *Vas* in the same Sense, *lib. iii. v. 441.* We may hence therefore very properly render ἀσκήτως ἐν ἡμῖν, *John i. 14.* he dwelt in a human Body amongst us. See *Pearce in Longin. p. 102.* This powerful Pressure of the Body is so apparant, that it is acknowledged by all the wiser Heathens: Hence the *Platonists* frequently impute the Diminutions of the Powers of the Soul to its Conjunction with the Body. And in the ancient *Academical* Philosophy it was much disputed, whether that Corporeal and Animal Life, which was always drawing down the Soul into terrene and material Things, was not more properly to be styled Death than Life: See *Smith's Sel. Desc. p. 447.* There is a Thought not unlike this in *Philo*, which he seems to have taken from *Plato in Cratyl. c. 2.* καὶ τὸ σῶμα τινὲς φασὶν αὐτὸ [σῶμα] εἶναι τὴν ψυχῆς, οὗς τεταραμμένους ἐν τῷ νῦν παρόντι. *S. Leg. Allegor. lib. i.* The *Pythagoreans* looked upon the Body as no better than the Prison of the Soul, καὶ ψυχῆς δεσμωτήριον, as *Philo* expressly calls it, *De Migrat. Abrah.* And to this agrees that of *Scipio*, *Imo vero, inquit, ii vivunt qui è corporum vinculis, tanquam è carcere, evolaverunt; vestra vero quæ dicitur vita, mors est: Somn. Scip. c. 3.* *Xenophon* introduces *Cyrus* speaking after the same manner to his Children just before his death; "I could never think that the Soul while in a mortal Body lives, and when departed out of it, dies, or that its Consciousness is lost, when it is discharged out of an unconscious Habitation; but that it then truly exists, when it is freed from all Corporeal Alliance." In the same contemptible manner the Saints and Martyrs speak of the Flesh, calling it the Chain and Burden of the Spirit: Hence we find them praying and longing, with *St. Paul*, to be dissolved and set at Liberty from it, as soon as God

pleased: *Theophyl. in Luc. ii. Arnob. adv. Gent. lib. ii. Ambrose De Bon. Mortis.* "This State of Human Imperfection is finely represented, says *St. Austin*, by that Woman which had a Spirit of Infirmity eighteen Years, *Luke xiii. 11.* and was bowed together, and could in no wise lift up herself, who was immediately made straight and loosed from her Infirmity, by the powerful Spirit of our Saviour working on her, whose Cure is a Figure or Emblem of Man's Recovery from the Bondage of Sin through the Power of Grace. 'Tis for this Reason, and because Mens Thoughts are apt to wander and grovel upon the Earth, through the Infirmity of the Flesh, that the Priest calls upon us, in the Celebration of the Holy Mysteries, to lift up our Hearts, *Sursum Corda.*" *Aug. De vera Relig.—De bono Perseverant.* So likewise *Antonin. lib. iii. Horace* exactly expresses our Author in what follows:

*Corpus onustum*

*Hesternis vitiis animum quoque prægravat unda,  
Atque affigit humo divina particulam auræ.*

*SAT. lib. ii.*

*Virgil* too has some fine Thoughts upon this Occasion; he shews how the *Vigor Animæ* is impeded by the Body in the following Lines,

*noxia corpora tardant,*

*Terrenique hebetant artus, moribundaque membra.  
Hinc metuunt cupiuntque, dolent gaudentque, neque auras*

*Respiciunt, clausæ tenebris & carcere cæco.*

And even after Death, he imagines some *Sordes*, contracted from its Union with the Body, still to adhere to it, and therefore supposes it to undergo a sort of Purgation in another State:

*Quin & supremo cum lumine vita reliquit,  
Non tamen omne malum miseris, nec funditus omnes  
Corporeæ excedunt pestes; penitusque necesse est  
Multa diu concreta modis inolescere miris.*

*Ergo exercentur pænis.*

*ÆN. vi.*

[*Ibid. Beilæ v. 5.* This Verb is here used transitively, which, I believe, is not common.]

Ver. 16. *Hardly do we guess aright at Things that are upon Earth . . . But the Things that are in Heaven, who hath searched out?* This Writer argues very justly here from our Ignorance of Natural Causes, which we every Day see and experience, to our imperfect Views and Conjectures of things spiritual and invisible; for since the most illuminated Understanding in this World sees only in part, and cannot have a perfect or adequate Idea of Things that shall be revealed more fully hereafter, Reason should confine itself within its own Province, and not attempt the Knowledge or Explanation of such Arcana as are confessedly out of its Reach. *If I have told you earthly Things*, says our blessed Saviour, *and ye believed them not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly Things?* *John iii. 12.* It is a very just Observation therefore of *Lord Bacon's*, "That he laboured in vain, who shall endeavour to draw down heavenly Mysteries to human Reason; it rather becomes us, says that great Philosopher, to bring our Reason to the adorable Throne of divine Truth." The Heathens have prettily couched this Moral in that excellent Fable of the Golden Chain, with which neither Gods nor Men



Men were able to draw *Jupiter* down to the Earth, but he could with ease draw them up to Heaven. If this Observation, even of an Apocryphal Writer, was but well weighed, the great advocates for the All-sufficiency of Reason, would surely be more modest and humble, nor would the Credibility of Mysteries be so obstinately disputed.

[Ver. 17. Βαλὴν δὲ οὐ τίς ἔγνω, εἰμὴ σὺ ἰδοὺς, &c. I think the Particle *δὲ* is wanting to the Sense and the Greek, τίς δὲ ἔγνω, εἰ μὴ, &c. And who could have known thy Counsel, if thou hadst not given, &c. So ch. xi. 25. Πῶς ᾗ ἔμεινεν δὲ τι, εἰ μὴ σὺ ἠθέλησας; And how could any thing have endured, if it had not been thy Will? Where the Construction is the same.]

Ver. 18. For so the Ways of them which lived on the Earth were reformed, and Men were taught the Things that are pleasing unto thee.] *Τὰ δὲ πρῶτα οὗ.* Would not this be more corrected if we read, *τὰ δὲ πρῶτα σοῦ*? The Sense is sufficiently clear, viz. that through the Help and Instruction of Wisdom, Mankind, from the Beginning of the World, have been informed in their Duty, and attained to the Knowledge of the Divine Will and Pleasure, by the careful Observance of which they were preserved both from Sin and Punishment. The *Vulgate* very properly restrains this to Good Men, which otherwise might seem too general. This appears from the ancient *Patriarchs*, who lived before and after the Flood, and through Wisdom kept themselves free from the general Corruption, and escaped those Evils which others suffered; many of whom, as Instances of this Truth, are mentioned in the next Chapter, which in some Editions begins with this Verse: The ancient Versions differ very much in the Rendering of it, some understand it of the future, some of the present; but it seems best to refer these Words to the Times past, from the very early Instances which immediately follow.

## CHAP. X.

### THE ARGUMENT.

**T**HE great Advantages of Wisdom are enumerated from the earliest Account of Time; that such as would not be conducted by it have been miserable, exemplified in Cain and his Descendants; and such as have followed its Guidance have remarkably prospered, from Adam to Moses inclusively.

Ver. 1. She preserved the first-formed Father of the World that was created alone.] *Μόνον ἀνδρώα.* Does this mean, that Adam alone was created by a true and proper Creation, and that all others, as being descended from him, were formed out of him, as from a pre-existing Principle? or does it mean, that Adam was created when nothing else existed? This cannot be the Sense, as the Works of the former Days, and even the Serpent amongst the rest, were confessedly before him: Or are we to understand this of the Creation of Adam, before the Existence of Eve, or any of the human Species? But is not as much implied in his being called here *ᾠονόπλας*, and *πατὴρ ἡρώων*? Or is it usual to express one and

the same Thing by three synonymous Terms? I am inclined to conjecture, that the true Reading here is, *μόνον τεθέντα*, and not *μόνον κτισθέντα*, as all the Copies have it, which Mistake might easily happen from the Likeness and Affinity of the Sound: i. e. Wisdom preserved Adam free from all Harm and Danger, when he was placed alone and by himself in Paradise; see Gen. ii. 8. where the LXX read, *ἐφύλαξεν δὲ Θεὸς Παράδεισον, ᾧ ἐθέτο ἐκεῖ ὁ ἀνθρώπων*. Nor am I quite singular in this Interpretation; *Tirinus* expounds the Passage in the same manner, *Quamdiu solus fuit, nec à consorte sollicitatus ad malum*. See Comment in loc. [Alone, i. e. single.]

Ibid. And brought him out of his Fall.] 'Twas Wisdom which preserved Adam in Paradise when alone, and after his Fall, by particular Grace vouchsafed to him, produced in him Humiliation and Repentance proportionate to his great Transgression: He was sensible upon his Expulsion from Paradise, that all that sad Train of Evils and Miseries which he saw entering into the World, and now are natural and hereditary to the whole Species, were so many Punishments brought into it, and imposed upon his Posterity, purely on his own Account; he considered the growing Wickedness of the World as introduced and occasioned by him; he considered the Mortality of his Descendants, their frequent, and often violent Deaths, as the Consequence of his Sin. These Reflexions arising from his Ingratitude to God, and his affectionate Concern for his unhappy Race, sunk so deep into the Mind of the first-formed Father of the World, that, during the nine hundred and thirty Years which he lived upon Earth after his Fall, he continued under such a lively Sense of his Sin, and God's just Displeasure, that he became an humble and remarkable Penitent. This Penitence, or Recovery of our first Parents from their Fall, which seems here referred to, has, by some of the *Fathers*, been represented as the Effect of the Grace of the *Second Adam*, to whom the Glory of being the Deliverer of the first was justly due, and been maintained by the Church in the most early Times as a catholic Truth. *Irenæus*, who lived at the End of the Second Century, reckons it accordingly (*lib. i. c. 31.*) among the Heresies of *Tatian*, that he held, that Adam and Eve were not saved; "For, says that Father, as *Jesus Christ* had undertaken to redeem Man from the Power and Dominion of Sin, it is but reasonable to give him the Glory of the Delivery of our First Parents from it; for he would not have been so entirely victorious over the Devil, if he had left them under the Hands of that apostate Spirit, who, by his Subtilty, had taken them out of God's Hands." *Iren. lib. iii. c. 34. St. Aug. epist. 99. ad Evod. Tertull. lib. ii. cont. Marcion. Epiphan. Hæres. 46.* This was the Sense of Antiquity concerning Adam's Fall, and his happy Recovery from it. *Milton* has finely represented Adam's tender Concern for his unhappy Posterity in the following Lines:

All that I eat or drink, or shall beget,  
Is propagated Curse. O Voice once heard  
Delightfully, Encrease and Multiply,

Now



Now Death to bear! for what can I encrease  
Or multiply, but Curses on my Head?  
Who, of all Ages to succeed, but feeling  
The Evil on him brought by me, will curse  
My Head: Ill fare our Ancestor impure,  
For this we may thank Adam.

Book x.

Which concludes with Adam's seeking Peace and Forgiveness of God, whom he had offended, by Supplication and Repentance:

So spake our Father penitent, nor Eve  
Felt less Remorse: They forthwith to the Place  
Repairing where he judg'd them, prostrate fell  
Before him reverent, and both confess'd  
Humbly their Faults, and Pardon begg'd, with Tears  
Watering the Ground, and with their Sighs the Air  
Frequenting, sent from Hearts contrite, in Sign  
Of Sorrow unfeign'd, and Humiliation meek.

'Tis observable that Moses, in the Book of Genesis, where he mentions Adam's Fall, says nothing of his Repentance, which, though it be not expressly asserted in the Text, yet neither can any thing certain or conclusive to the contrary be inferred from Moses's Silence: This Author has supplied what is there wanting, and acquainted us with the Opinion of those of his Time, with respect to this very important Enquiry. "The Church of God hath always believed that Adam repented and laid hold on the Mercy of a second Covenant, and was received again into Divine Favour, though there be no express mention of this in his History. Thus we do not read of any Precept or Law given by God to Adam after his Fall, but we find the Practice of sacrificing in his Family. And it is scarce to be imagined, that he invented that right of his own Head; he was taught it therefore by the Command and Institution of God. And it is highly reasonable to think, that at the same time, when God gave a second Law and Institution, he encouraged him also to the Obedience of it, by a promise of Acceptance and Restitution to his former Favour. Upon this Hope doubtless, he renewed his Allegiance to his Creator, and devoted himself to the Worship and Service of God, and taught his Sons, Cain and Abel, to do so likewise." Bishop Bull's Sermon. vol. i. p. 340, 341.

Ver. 2. And gave him Power to rule all Things.] Before his Fall God gave to Adam the Dominion over the Creation, Gen. i. 28. and it is not improbable, that upon his Transgression God deprived him of it by way of Punishment, at least for a time, or in part, and upon his sincere Repentance, restored him to his full Sovereignty and Power. This seems to be the Sentiment of this Writer, who, after the mention of Adam's Recovery from the sad Consequences of his Fall, says, that God gave him Power to rule all Things, which cannot relate to the original Grant, which was previous to his Misfortune. Perhaps, instead of the present Reading, ἔδωκεν τε αὐτῷ ἰσχυρὸν καὶ ἐξουσίαν ἀπάντων, the true one may be, ἀνέδωκεν τε αὐτῷ ἰσχυρὸν καὶ ἐξουσίαν ἀπάντων or thus, ἔδωκεν τε αὐτῷ ἰσχυρὸν καὶ ἐξουσίαν αὐτῶν πάντων, i. e. She restored to him the Power of ruling all Things, or, She gave him the Power again to rule all Things. And such

a fresh Donation of Power seems necessary, for, as Calmet judiciously observes, *Avant son péché, toutes choses lui étoient soumises; il exerçoit sur elles un empire libre, aisé, agreable, volontaire, tant de sa part, que de la leur: mais depuis sa chute, il ne conserva qu'avec peine le reste de domaine que Dieu lui avoit laissé; i. e. "Before the Fall, Adam's Government of the Creatures was free, easy, and agreeable, and their Submission voluntary and willing; but after the Fall, he with difficulty maintained his Sovereignty, and the State of his Affairs being altered, called for the same or a greater Power."* Comment. in loc.

Ver. 3. When the Unrighteous went away from her in his Anger.] i. e. Cain, who had no Regard either to Wisdom, Piety, or even Humanity: He is eminently called the Unrighteous here, because he committed the first Act of Violence in the World, as the Scripture calls him, for the same Reason, *The Offspring of the Wicked one, who was a Murderer from the Beginning*, ἐκ τῆς γενέσεως ὁ φόνος, 1 John iii. 12. And his Brother is there denominated, *Righteous Abel*, from his extraordinary and exemplary Goodness, Matth. xxiii. 35.

Ibid. He perished also in the Fury wherewith he murdered his Brother. For whose Cause the Earth being drowned with the Flood.] The Scripture makes no mention of the Perishing, or Death, of Cain; on the contrary, we read, that God prolonged his Life in a miserable Estate, as an Example of his Vengeance, and to continue Cain's Punishment: And for this Reason he gave a strict Charge, that no one should for this Fact destroy him, threatening to take Vengeance sevenfold upon any that should kill him, Gen. iv. 15. God is said also to have set a Mark upon Cain, i. e. to have given him a Sign or Token to assure him, that none should take away his Life. See Shuckford's Connex. vol. i. p. 8. How therefore are we to understand this Writer, when he says here, that Cain perished also in the Fury wherewith he murdered his Brother? Did Cain then perish at the same Time, and by the sudden and violent Effects of the same Fury and Passion? Or shall we imagine him to allude to a traditional Story among the Rabbins, that "Lamech being blind, took his Son Tubal Cain to hunt with him in the Woods, where Cain used to lurk up and down in the Thickets, afraid of the Commerce and Society of Men; that the Lad mistook him for some Beast stirring in the Bushes, and that Lamech, by the Direction of Tubal Cain, with a Dart, or Arrow, killed him." I cannot persuade myself to think that our Author refers to this uncertain Tradition, which has no Countenance from any good History, and is generally exploded as an idle and unsupported Conceit. Nor can the Meaning be, that Cain perished in the Deluge, which happened, as is generally agreed, about Ann. Mun. 1656. see Usber's Annals; long before which Time Cain was dead. Much less Reason is there to assert, that the Deluge happened purely upon his Account, or was occasioned by his single Transgression, as the Sense seems to be of our present Version. I think therefore that our Translators have quite



mistaken the Sense of this Place, which is not to be understood of *Cain* solely or exclusively, which seems manifest from the following Reasons: 1st, *Ἀδὺς* is improperly joined with *συναπώλετο*, except we suppose that more Persons perished. 2dly, *Ἀδελφονόμοι θυμοί*, expressed in the *Plural Number*, relates not to *Cain's* Fury, which is mentioned immediately before, but to Persons of the like bloody Temper and Disposition. 3dly, The *Arabic Version* expressly understands it of such Persons, which renders, *Periit unā cum animabus fratricidis*. 4thly, *Coverdale's Version*, following the ancient *Vulgate*, renders, *The Brotherhood perished thorough the Wrath of Murmur*: Which means a Number of Persons, probably a whole Fraternity or Kindred, that perished on that account. It remains then to enquire next, what wicked and unhappy Persons are here meant in particular. This Difficulty *Origen*, who incidentally mentions this Passage, helps us to explain, who understands it of the Descendants of *Cain*: For in the antediluvian World there was not only a general Neglect of Virtue, and Pursuit of Wickedness, but there was one reigning Crime, which *Moses* takes notice of in particular, viz. that the Earth was filled with Violence. This Expression, and the severe Law made against Murder soon after the Flood, makes it probable, that the Men of this first World, especially the Descendants of *Cain*, had, in Imitation of him, and by the evil Influence of his Example, taken great and unwarrantable Liberties in usurping upon, and destroying the Lives of one another: These seem to be the Persons whom *this Writer*, for their unnatural and bloody Temper, styles *Ἀδελφονόμοι θυμοί*, for whose sake, and upon account of whose Violence and Blood-shedding, the Deluge really happened. Hence then I am induced to offer a Conjecture, that the true Reading of the next Verse is not, *δι' αὐτόν*, but *δι' αὐτούς*, and most probably the Copy which *Origen* made use of read so, for he expressly renders, *Hanc ob causam diluvium fit, ut deleatur Cain semen*, That God's Purpose in bringing the Deluge, was to extinguish the Posterity of *Cain*; *Orig. in Evang. Job.* See also *St. Basil. Orat. 6.* *St. Aug. De Civit. Dei, lib. xv. c. 24.* And the Comment of *Messieurs du Port Royal*, which understands it, *De Cain, & des autres mechans qui l'avoient imité*. This is further confirmed from the Testimony of the Son of *Sirach*, *Eccles. xl. 10.* who, enumerating the several Instruments of God's Vengeance against the Wicked, as the Sword, Famine, &c. immediately adds, *καὶ δι' αὐτοὺς ἐξήρθε ὁ κατακλυσμὸς*, that for their Sakes came the Deluge, i. e. for the Wickedness of such ungodly and bloody-minded Men as went in the Ways of *Cain*, as *St. Jude* expresses it. For the single Fact of *Cain*, though very shocking, was not a sufficient Cause alone of bringing the universal Deluge, nor of Consequence enough to involve the whole Earth in it: But when the Earth was filled with Violence, thro' the wicked Manners and Attempts of *Cain's* Descendants, then, or on that account, God destroyed the Earth with a Flood. We may lastly add the Authority of the *Arabic Version*,

to establish this Conjecture, which reads, as I before observed, *Periit unā cum animabus fratricidis*, and then adds, *ob id obrutam diluvio terram, &c.* and *Vatablus*, I observe, renders in like manner. Such being then the Fate of *Cain's* Descendants, *Cain* himself may with Propriety enough be said to have perished with them, inasmuch as his whole Race thereby became extinct. The Words therefore *Ἀδὺς συναπώλετο* are not to be understood of *Cain* personally, as our *Version* takes them, but as consequentially suffering in the Destruction of his Posterity. From this general Calamity of the Flood, we may make this useful Reflexion, that it is no Security to ungodly Persons that there are great Numbers of them, they ought rather for that Cause to be so much the more apprehensive of speedy and dreadful Judgments. For, because of the greatness of their Number, because *all Flesh*, as the Scripture expresses it, *had corrupted themselves*, the Inhabitants of the old World were so much the nearer Destruction, and it involved them for that Reason. [*Ἀδίκος* and *δικαίος* are often used by this Author, and always express no more than one single Person: So that *συναπώλετο* is, undoubtedly, to be referred to *Ἀδελφονόμοι θυμοί*. But how this last Word can signify *animabus*, or *Persons*, I do not well apprehend; and am inclined to think that the Author wrote *Ἀδελφονόμοι θυμικοί*. *Periit unā cum iracundis fratricidis*: He perished together with the passionate Murderers of their Brethren, i. e. with the Men of that Age, whose predominant Vice was that of *Anger* and *Rage* (arising from *ὑπερηφάνια*, *Pride*) and the Consequence of it, *Violence* and *Murder*.]

Ver. 4. *Wisdom again preserved it.* i. e. By preserving *Noah* and his Family, by whom, and their Posterity in successive Ages, the Earth was replenished by degrees, and the several Parts of the World at length inhabited: We may also, with *Messieurs du Port Royal*, consider this Preservation mystically, for the Ark was a Figure and Type of the Church, as *Noah* and his Family were of the Members of it; whose Preservation in the Flood prefigured also our Redemption by the Laver of Regeneration or Baptism, as *St. Peter* explains it, *1 Pet. iii. 21.* So that the Power of one and the same Element, may be considered as the End or Destruction of Vice, and as the Original and Fountain of Virtue.

*Ibid.* And directed the Course of the Righteous in a piece of Wood of small Value.] *Per contemptibile lignum*, according to the *Vulgate*; see Note on ch. xiv. 6. Our Author intends here no Reflexion on the Structure or Usefulness of the Ark, which was the Design of infinite Wisdom, and the Work of a whole Century, and so conveniently contrived, as to contain *Noah*, (whose very Name, according to *Philo*, signifies Righteous) and his Family, and all living Creatures, according to the appointed Number of them; he speaks only as to Appearance, and as it was then judged; for while it was building it appeared so contemptible, that *Noah* and his Sons were laughed at for their Design, as being seemingly unable to endure such a Conflux of Waters. And, indeed,



indeed, that such a piece of Wood should ride safely when all the high Hills were covered, and not be overfet by Winds or Waves, or the many violent Shocks it must necessarily meet with; that it should not be dashed to pieces against Rocks which were invisible, nor sink under so prodigious a Weight as it contained, displays most illustriously the Power and Providence of God, who chuses to effect his Purposes oftentimes by Means the most unpromising and unlikely. Nor is the Wisdom of God less to be admired in the Contrivance of the Ark, which may truly be said to be a World within itself, than his infinite Power in directing it; for it has been demonstrated mathematically, that there was sufficient Room in it to contain all the Things, animate and inanimate, which it was designed for; and that the Measure and Capacity of the Ark, which some Scepticks have made use of as an Argument against the Scripture, ought rather to be esteemed a most rational Confirmation of the Truth of it, and of the Wisdom that designed it: See *Bishop Wilkins's Essay on a Real Character*. Nor is *Aratus* to be understood as designing to cast any Reflexion upon the Ark, or its Structure, when he calls it in what follows *ὀλίγον ξύλον*, a Term as diminutive as that used by our Author,

*ὀλίγον ξύλον* ἢ *ὀλίγον ξύλον*, αἷς ἐξυκλ. *Phænom.* p. 32. Ed. Oxon.

Ver. 5. *Moreover the Nations in their wicked Conspiracy being confounded.*] Our Version here is faulty, the true Rendering seems to be, "When the Nations around conspired or joined together in Wickedness;" *Lorsque les Nations conspirèrent ensemble pour s'abandonner au mal*, says *Calmet*, and with him agree *Messieurs du Port Royal*; and the *Vulgate* renders accordingly, *In consensu nequitie cum se nationes contulissent*; i. e. when they were overrun with Idolatry: For neither the Creation of the World, nor the universal Deluge, nor the Confusion of Languages, could preserve the Belief of one supreme God only; but the new World was as universally overrun with Polytheism and Idolatry, as the old World was with Violence, and the very Dispersion of Mankind probably contributed to it. Then, when all the Nations around were sunk into Idolatry, God called *Abraham* from *Chaldea*, whom the Context shews to be here meant. This I take to be a truer Sense of the Place, than with some to interpret it of the Conspiracy to build the Tower of *Babel*. The learned *Usher*, it must be confessed, seems to understand it in this latter Sense, for in his Account of that bold and presumptuous Design, he refers to this very Place, which is somewhat surprising; for this cannot be reconciled even with his own Chronology, for the building this Tower was *A. M.* 1757, and *Abraham* was not born till *A. M.* 2008. *Calmet* therefore mentions this, in his *Preface*, as an Objection against our Author, *Il semble croire qu'Abraham étoit au tems de la construction de la tour de Babel*: But this Anachronism is removed by the Sense which I have given of this Passage.

*Ibid.* *She found out the Righteous, and preserved him blameless unto God.*] Some have asserted, that *Abraham* not only lived blameless in the midst of idolatrous Nations, but that even in his Father's House, where he spent the first part of his Life, he preserved himself free from the idolatrous Worship which infected all the rest of the Family: See *Sherlock on Div. Provid.* p. 293. But others, with more Probability, say, that he was at first engaged in this wrong way of Worship, and, like other *Chaldeans*, adored the Sun: *Phil. De Abrah. Clem. Recogn.* lib. i. *Cyril. cont. Jul.* lib. iii. *Suidas voce Ἀβραμ*; but that by God's giving him a better Understanding he renounced it: And on this account he is said to have suffered a severe Persecution from the *Chaldeans*, who threw him into a fiery Furnace, from which God miraculously rescued him: *Hieron. Tradit. Hebr. in Genes.* And indeed the Text of the ancient *Vulgate*, *Nebem. ix. 7.* seems to confirm this Tradition, which reads, *Eduxisti eum de igne Chaldeorum*; and the *Jews* generally assert the same. However this be, which probably is a Mistake from confounding the Word *Ur*, which signifies both Fire, and the City, from which God called *Abraham*, it is certain that *Abraham*, from the time of his Call, *A. M.* 2083, (see *Usher's Annals*) became the great Restorer and Reviver both of Natural and Revealed Religion to a corrupt World; and we cannot have a stronger Proof of his extraordinary Piety and Virtue, than that God thought him the fittest Person to reveal himself to, and to begin a new Reformation of the World by. It is very likely *Abraham* demonstrated to his Father the Vanity of Idols, since he engaged him to forsake the City where he was settled; see *Calmet's Dict. in voce ABRAM*. And by his own Sons, and his Nephew *Lot*, he spread the true Religion far and wide, and their very numerous Descendants carried the Knowledge of it still farther. After all this Care, we cannot think that *Abraham* relapsed, but that God preferred him blameless ever after. We are not therefore to understand this Passage, as if *Abraham* was always free from Idolatry, for that *Terah* and all his Children were infected with, by living among the *Chaldeans* and Sorcerers, which are synonymous Terms in the Book of *Daniel*: See *Usher's Annals*, tom. i. p. 7. But the Meaning here is, that when God removed him from the infection of *Chaldea*, and vouchsafed to him the Knowledge of the true Religion, through his Assistance he continued pure, and was not any more polluted.

*Ibid.* *And kept him strong against his tender Compassion towards his Son.*] The Rendering literally is, *She kept him strong in his Bowels towards his Son*, as the Marginal Reading is; i. e. she gave him Strength to vanquish the Tenderness which he had for his Son; [But *in* may here signify against, as well as in, *Luke xlii. 52.* *ἦν ἐν τῷ θυμῷ, ὡς ἐν τῷ θυμῷ*, and kept him firm against his Tenderness towards his Son.] for *Abraham* was so entirely devoted to God, that he was dead to all the moving Calls of Nature and Instinct. Nor is such an Instance of Obedience to be wondered at in him, whose



whose Faith was so strong, that he was verily persuaded that God was able to raise Isaac from the Dead again after the Sacrifice, to make good his Promise to him of a numerous Progeny. "What a Number of Virtues meet," says St. Ambrose, in this single Action! the "Piety of the Patriarch appears, in his Readiness to offer up his Son at God's Command; his Courage is displayed, in resisting the Sentiments of Nature on so trying an Occasion; his Justice, in returning to God that which he had received from his Liberality; and his Faith, in believing that God could restore him from the Dead, and bring him from the Deep of the Earth again." *Ambros. De Offic. lib. i. c. 2.*

Ver. 6, 7. *When the Ungodly perished, she delivered the Righteous Man, who fled from the Fire which fell down upon the five Cities; of whose Wickedness, even to this Day, the Waste Land that smoketh is a Testimony, and Plants bearing Fruit that never come to Ripeness.* Καρποφορούσα Φυτὰ ἀτελέσιν ὄψεσιν. Philo describes the Destruction of the Cities where Lot dwelt in the same Terms, ἡ φλόξ, κ. τ. λ. *Vim vitalem in summam sterilitatem convertit flamma, ita ut nihil superesset, unde vel fructus vel herba germinaret, in hodiernum usque malo durante;* where the learned Editor, referring to this Place, very judiciously conjectures, that the true Reading of it is, ἀτελέσιν ὄψεσιν, Mangey's Philo, *De Abrah.* vol. ii. Grotius thinks it probable, that by *Plants bearing Fruit that never come to Ripeness*, may be meant Fruits in Appearance only: And in this Sense the Author seems to allude to the Apples of Sodom in particular, which are said to have been beautiful in Appearance to the Eye, but within were full of Rottenness. *Messieurs du Port Royal* understand it in like manner of Trees, *Qui portent des fruits bastards semblables aux autres en apparence, mais qui se reduissent en cendre lors qu'on les ouvre:* Comment. in loc. And this Tertullian confirms, *Sodomam & Gomorram igneus imber exussit, olet adhuc incendio terra, & si qua illic arborum poma, oculis tenus, ceterum contactu cinerescunt:* And thus Solinus describes them; *Pomum quod gignitur, habeat licet speciem maturitatis, mandi tamen non potest, nam fuliginem intrinsecus favillaceam, ambitus tantum extimæ cutis cohibet, quæ vel levi pressa tactu, fumum exhalat, & satiscit in vagum pulverem:* Solin. Polyhistor. c. 37. But Josephus's Account comes nearest our Author, who, speaking of this once happy Region, says, Φασι δὲ δι' αἰτέθειαν οὐκ ὁρίων καεργυνοῖς καὶ ἀφλέγειν, κ. τ. λ. *Fertur eam ob incolarum impietatem fulminibus conflagrasse. Adhuc ignis à Deo immissi reliquias, & oppidorum quinque isthic videre licet umbram: Insuper & fructus, specie quidem & colore edulibus similes sunt, manibus autem decerpti, in favillam & cinerem resolvuntur.* Lib. vi. de Bello Jud. c. 8. Nothing was more known or celebrated among Authors, sacred and profane, than this Fire which fell down upon Pentapolis, or the five Cities of Sodom. *Diodorus Siculus, lib. xix. Strabo, lib. xvi. and Philo, speak of it as burning in their Times: And some have thought St. Jude alludes to the Continuance of this Fire, ver. 7.*

and that he calls it *ῥῶς αἰώνιον*, because it continued burning: See *Tacit. Hist. lib. v. Chrysost. Hom. xix. ad pop. Antioch. Maccab. lib. iii.* But I shall not be so disingenuous, as to omit what Mr. Maundrel, who was upon that Spot, says, viz. "That he never saw or heard of any such Fruit hereabouts; nor was there any Tree to be seen, from whence one might expect such a Fruit; and adds, that he believes its very Being, as well as its Beauty, is a Fiction:" *Journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem, p. 85.* The Vulgate renders *Incerto tempore fructus habentes arbores*, intimating, that the Fruit growing here was, on this account, unlike all other Fruit, which has a certain and fixed Season of being ripe, but this never came to Perfection: See *Tirin. in loc.* We find that Homer had a Notion of this great Truth, that God sometimes exerts his Judgments upon guilty Cities, by sending a real Fire from Heaven upon them in a signal and terrible Manner. See *Iliad. lib. xxi.* And the Fate of these Cities suggests a very useful Reflexion, That though the Patience of God bears with the Crimes and Impenitence of Mankind, even for several Ages, yet, when his Justice shews itself at last, it is so destructive and inexorable, that nothing can withstand or avert it. From this Destruction of Sodom we may likewise further see the Truth of our Author's Observation, that the Punishment is usually proportioned and adapted to the Nature of the Crime, for these wretched Cities, burning with unnatural Lust, and impure Fires, are, by a correspondent Vengeance, overthrown and consumed by Fire.

*Ibid. And a standing Pillar of Salt.* The Vulgate renders, *figmentum salis*, others call it *cumulus*, and some *columna salis*; the last is most agreeable to the Greek, *στήλη αἰώης*. [It should be thus: *And a Pillar of Salt* fixt as a Monument, &c. or, and a fixt Pillar of Salt, a Monument of an unbelieving Soul, or Person. For *ἵσχυως*, when a thing is spoken of, hath a Passive Signification, *stare factus, fixus*: Which the Vulgate shewed he understood, in making use of the Word *figmentum* from *figo*. Our Version puts in *is*, which is not understood or wanted in the Original, when rightly read and pointed, viz. *καὶ ἀτελέσιν ὄψεσιν καρποφορούσα φυτὰ, καὶ ἀπισίας ἵσχυς, &c.*] Sulpitius Severus says, *Reflexit oculos, statimque in molem conversa traditur.* It has been thought by some Authors probable, that the Statue retained her own Form; so St. Cyprian seems to have imagined,

*Stetit ipsa sepulcrum,*

*Ipsaque imago sibi, formam sine corpore servans.*

This Pillar was subsisting in the time of Josephus, who says, that it was then standing, and that he himself saw it, *ἰσόρηκα δὲ αὐτὴν, ἐπὶ δὲ νῦν ἀγμῶν, Antiq. lib. i. c. 11.* Later Writers attest the same of their Times; Benjamin the Jew, who lived in the twelfth Century, mentions it in his *Itinerary*; and some more modern Authors speak of it as yet existing, *Suo quasi sale condita*, as Bishop Fell jocularly speaks of it. *Adricomius* quotes three Authors that were Eye-witnesses of it, and he particularly tells us its Situation, that it stands between

*Engaddi*



*Engaddi and the Dead Sea; Theatrum terræ sanctæ*, p. 55. Mr. Maundrell, on the other side, gives so little Credit to the Reality of this Pillar, that, though he wanted not Curiosity, yet he wanted Faith to induce him to go see this Monument of *Lot's* metamorphosed Wife; *Journey from Aleppo*, p. 85. Various have been the Conjectures of learned Men about the Reality of this Pillar of Salt. Some, with much Subtilty, understand a Pillar of Salt to signify only an everlasting Pillar, of what Matter soever made, in the same Sense as they interpret the Covenant of Salt, *Num.* xviii. 19. Others have fancied that this History, like that of *Nabal*, *1 Sam.* xxv. 37. is to be understood comparatively, that *Lot's* Wife was as a Pillar of Salt; as *Niobe*, according to the Fable, which most probably took its Rise from this History, is said to have been turned, through Grief, into a sort of Stone: But there is more Reason to understand this literally. But it will then perhaps be asked, how it happened that this Woman was not destroyed with Fire and consumed to nothing, as the *Sodomites* were, but was converted by the powerful Wrath of God into this Pillar of Salt, a perpetual Spectacle for all Beholders. To this Enquiry I shall return an Answer in the Words of a polite Writer, who explains this Accident in the following manner; "That as Thunder, or rather Lightning, stiffens all Animals it strikes in an Instant, and leaves them dead in the same Posture in which it found them alive, this unhappy Woman's Body being prepared by Heat, and penetrated and encrusted with Salt, which fell down from Heaven in great Quantities upon this devoted Region, might long subsist as a Statue of Salt, in the very Posture in which this Judgment from Heaven found her. Nor is there much Difficulty in conceiving how Salt should continue so long undissolved in the open Air, since it is well known to Naturalists, that Rocks of Salt are as lasting as any other Rocks:" *Revelation examined*, vol. ii. p. 229. *Pliny* mentions a mineral kind of Salt, which never melts, and serves for building as well as Stone, *lib.* xxxi. c. 7. The Reason which *Tertullian* assigns for the Durableness of this Pillar, *Quod perpetuis temporibus reparatur, & si quis advena formam mutilaverit, vulnera ex sese complet*, is so surprizing and incredible, that it can be considered in no other light, than as a Fable or Legend, handed down by an imperfect Tradition, upon no better Foundation than another Story relating to this Woman, which for Decency sake I forbear to mention.

*Ibid.* A Monument of an unbelieving Soul.] It would be better rendered, A Monument of the unbelieving Soul. And so *Coverdale's* and the ancient *English Versions* render, A Token of Remembrance of the unfaithful Soule. [Then τὸ must have been in the Greek. The, emphatical, cannot possibly be expressed without the Article, either here or p. 13. or indeed any where.] The Transgression of *Lot's* Wife is greatly aggravated by the following Particulars: 1. She was delivered, with her Husband and Daughters, out of *Sodom*, and

brought forth by the Angel's own Hands. 2. She was warned that she should not look back, nor abide in all the Plain, lest she perished. 3. There was a City very near to them appointed, which she might easily have reached and been in Safety. 4. She had her Husband and Children with her, whom she ought to have accompanied; but she neglects these, and not believing the Angels, that *Sodom* would be so soon destroyed, would indulge a criminal Curiosity of looking back; her Punishment therefore for these Reasons was just. Many useful Reflexions, for the Conduct of others, have been raised from the signal Misfortune of this Woman. Our Saviour, we may observe, to guard his Disciples against any Hardness of Heart, bids them to remember *Lot's* Wife, *Luke* xvii. 32. lest they also should perish through Unbelief. *St. Austin* says, "That God chose this publick Punishment for the Sake of others, to proclaim to them to beware, by her Example, not to look back to a wicked *Sodom*, i. e. not to return to their old Vices, from which they have been called away by some gracious Means that God hath afforded them; *Quo pertinet quod prohibiti sunt qui liberabantur ab angelis retro respicere, nisi quia non est animo redeundum ad veterem vitam, qua per gratiam regenerati exuimur?*" *De Civit. Dei*, *lib.* xvi. c. 30. The like useful Inference *St. Cyprian* draws from this Accident, *Epist.* xi. But *St. Clement* most fully expresses the Sense of this and the former Verse, and how we should improve by the History of their Misfortunes: "By Hospitality and Godliness was *Lot* saved out of *Sodom*, when all the Country round about was destroyed by Fire and Brimstone; the Lord thereby making it manifest, that he will not forsake those that trust in him, but will bring the Disobedient to Punishment and Correction: For his Wife, who went out with him, being of a distrustful Mind, and not continuing in the same Obedience, was, for that Reason, set forth for an Example, being turned into a Pillar of Salt unto this Day; that so all Men may know, that those that are double-minded and distrustful of the Power of God are prepared for Condemnation." *Clement. epist.* i. c. 11. See also *Cyr. Catechet. Mystag.* i.

Ver. 8. So that in the Things wherein they offended, they could not so much as be bid.] This Reflexion refers not to *Lot's* Wife only, but regards equally the *Sodomites*, *Cain*, and his Descendants, and the several faulty Instances before mentioned; all of whom, through their Ignorance of, or Disregard for, true Wisdom, fell into very grievous Transgressions, and are recorded as so many standing Monuments of the just Judgment of God against such abominable Practices, the Shame whereof they inherit even at this Day. *Calmet* applies this even to *Lot* himself, who slighting the Direction of the Angels, who ordered him to escape to the Mountains, retired into a Cave, was overtaken with Drunkenness, and committed Incest with his Daughters; Crimes which arose from his Neglect of true Wisdom, and are a lasting



lasting Reproach upon this, otherwise, righteous Man.

Ver. 10. *When the Righteous fled from his Brother's Wrath, she guided him in right Paths.* i. e. When Jacob fled from the Wrath of Esau into Mesopotamia, he was delivered from great Dangers through Wisdom that attended upon him, according to God's Promise to him, *Behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all Places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this Land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of:* Gen. xxviii. 15. Herein Jacob is an Image of all the Faithful, whom God separates from the rest of Mankind, protects with his favourable Kindness, and conducts, as his Chosen, in the right way to Happiness; which the Wicked, through a fatal Mistake and irregular wandering out of the true Path, cannot arrive at.

Ibid. *Shewed him the Kingdom of God.* i. e. When he beheld in his Dream a Ladder, the Foot whereof stood upon the Earth, and the Top reached to Heaven, and the Angels of God were ascending and descending upon it; at the Sight whereof, awaking from his Sleep, and being amazed at the Glory of the Vision, he could not contain himself from crying out, *How dreadful is this Place! for the Lord is here, though I knew it not: This is none other but the House of God, and this is the Gate of Heaven:* Gen. xxviii. 12. 17. [Perhaps it was βασιλειον (for βασιλείαν) the Palace: Because in Gen. xxviii. 17. it is οἶκος Θεῷ. Prov. xviii. 19. τεθεμελιωμένον βασιλειον. This mystical Ladder, according to the Sense of the Fathers, represents to us the Care which the Divine Providence in all Ages takes of the Righteous, that God is present with them in the Time of their Affliction, and in the Place of their Exile and Pilgrimage; and that in their sad and solitary Condition, in a State of Desertion as to all outward Appearance, they shall not want the Assistance and Comfort of the holy Angels, who are God's Ministering Spirits, to attend and succour the Saints in all their Difficulties and Necessities whatsoever.

Ibid. *And gave him Knowledge of Holy Things.* This contains something more than the former Sentence, for Wisdom taught Jacob moreover Things relating to the Service of God. It is probable that in this Vision he received from God himself, who then appeared to him, Gen. xxviii. 13. Instruction of this nature, by his erecting a Pillar instantly, that very Stone upon which he had rested his Weariness, and poured Oil upon the Top of it, to consecrate it as a Monument of God's great Mercy to him: By his dedicating the Place to God's Service under the Name of Bethel, or God's House, by his vowing a Vow, the first probably of that nature, and promising to restore to God the Tenth of all that he should give him.

Ibid. *Made him rich in his Travels, and multiplied (the Fruit of) his Labours.* Dr. Grabe thinks that διπόησεν, which is the Reading in all the Editions, should be ὑπόβησεν, because the former signifies only to grow rich, but the latter to make rich, which is the Sense of the

Author in this Place; and thus διπορίσκειν is used in Lucian, *Quomodo Hist. scribenda sit*, tom. ii. p. 395. edit. Basil. though all the Lexicographers omit this Sense. *Grab. Proleg.* tom. ult. cap. 4. Καὶ ἐπλήθυνε τὰς πόνας αὐτοῦ. The literal Rendering of the Place is, That Wisdom multiplied his Labours, and made him rich by them: And so Junius understands it, *Locupletavit eum in ærumnis, quum multiplicaret labores ejus.* All the Commentators and ancient Versions take it in another Sense, That she prospered the Fruits of his Labours; which is apparently the Sense of our Translators. This Blessing Jacob happily experienced, as a Reward of his hard and continual Labour; for though Laban defrauded him of his Wages ten times, when he had served him twenty Years faithfully in his House, and through constant and painful Watching was consumed by the Drought in the Day, and by the Frost in the Night, yet God suffered him not to be sent away thus empty, but gave him Success and Riches equal to his Labours: For 'twas he that gave that extraordinary Blessing to the Artifice of laying the Rods before the Cattle, and, as the Learned think, (see Bishop Patrick in loc.) directed him by an Angel to that Invention, and promised to give Success to it, Gen. xxxi. 10, 11, 12. intending to transfer unto Jacob a good Share of the Wealth of Laban; which was accordingly effected by this Contrivance, and Laban's Injustice hereby punished, and his Policy over-ruled. And to this agrees the Arabic Version of this Place, *Sinus ejus implevit opibus eorum qui insultaverant ipsi.* [He read κόλπης instead of κόπης (which the Alexandrian MS. retains) and joined the two Verses together, mistaking πλεονεξία for opes.] In this Sense one cannot help observing the Propriety of the Word ἐπλήθυνε, which seems to intimate the Manner of Jacob's coming by his Riches, viz. that it was by the Multiplying, or surprizing Fruitfulness of the Cattle.

Ver. 11. *In the Covetousness of such as oppressed him, she stood by him, and made him rich.*

Ἐν πλεονεξίᾳ καὶ ἀχρόνῳ αὐτὸν παρέστη. Calmet says the true Reading of the Greek is, αὐτὸς παρέστη, and explains it accordingly, *Elle l'assista contre l'avarice de ceux qui vouloient user de violence, ou qui avoient l'avantage.* [This Alteration is not at all necessary. The Construction is, ἀνθρώπων or τινῶν καὶ ἀχρόνῳ αὐτὸν ἐν πλεονεξίᾳ, παρέστη, &c. When some out of Covetousness oppressed him, she stood by him. Καὶ ἀχρόνῳ has an Accusative Case after it in several Places of this Author.] In the Book of Genesis we meet with the several Ways and Stratagems by which Laban, who had a greater Regard to his own Interest than to Justice, endeavoured to surprize Jacob, and hinder him from receiving the Fruits of his Labours: For when Laban, to his surprize, found the Contract very advantageous to Jacob, and had the Mortification to see the Cattle bring forth their Young directly against his Interest, he dissolved his own Agreement, and made a new one with Jacob. Coverdale therefore very properly renders, *In the Disceatfulness of such as defrauded him, she stood by him*, which is more agreeable



to what Jacob himself says, Gen. xxxi. 17. *Your Father hath deceived me, and changed my Wages ten times, but God suffered him not to hurt me.* For it was impossible but Jacob must have been greatly injured by a Man of that profound Subtilty, had not the extraordinary Interposition of God wonderfully prevented it, and disappointed the Deceiver, which the Patriarch very gratefully acknowledges.

Ver. 12. *She defended him from his Enemies, and kept him safe from those that lay in wait.*]

i. e. Either by turning away the Wrath of his Brother Esau, which, through his prudent Conduct and humble Submission, was at length mollified and changed into Love and Tenderness; or by God's threatening Laban, in a Dream, from attempting any thing against Jacob, or seizing upon any of his Possessions, when he pursued after him. In Gen. xxxii. we read, that the Angels of God met Jacob in his Journey, to encourage and comfort him, no doubt, with the Assurance that God was with him; and that he called the Name of the Place *Mahanaim*, i. e. *two Hosts or Camps*: For it is probably supposed, that the Angels might appear to him as distinguished into two Armies, the better to defend him against his Enemies on all Sides. See *Wells's Geography of the Old Testament*, vol. i. p. 361.

Ibid. *And in a sore Conflict gave him the Victory, that he might know that Godliness is stronger than all.*] [This is a wrong Translation, it should be, *and appointed (or adjudged to) him a strong Conflict: that he might know that Piety is more powerful than any thing.* I wonder how our Translators construed the former Part of this Sentence.] It relates to that Conflict or Wrestling which Jacob had with the Angel, over whom he was at last victorious; nor would he quit his Hold till he had obtained a Blessing. The Struggling of an Angel with a Man may seem *impar congressus*, and the Victory of the latter is still more surprizing: But many worthy Ends were implied in this Combat, and several useful Reflections may be drawn from it. 1. Jacob having such Power with God, as to be able to prevail over one of his Ministers, was hence reminded not to fear his Brother Esau, nor any Attempt that he should make against him. 2. God enabled Jacob to prevail over the Angel whom he contended with, to shew the great Power that those Saints have, who put their whole Trust and Confidence in him. 3. We further from hence learn, that when God suffers his Saints to be exposed to great Trials and severe Temptations, 'tis with a Design to teach them, by an Experience of their own Weakness and his Might, that 'tis He alone that makes them victorious: and that he whom they have preferred to the World, is greater than the World, and more powerful than all Things and Persons in it. The fine Observation contained in the Conclusion of the Verse, viz. *That Godliness is stronger than all*, though true in an eminent Degree of Jacob, as has been shewn, and is indeed implied in his Victory, need not be confined to his single Person; there are many other signal Instances in the *Old Testament* to confirm this Truth: 'Twas by God-

liness that Jonathan, with his Armour-bearer alone, put a whole Garrison to flight; that David, unarmed, overthrew Goliath, and prevailed against the Artifices and Violence of Saul; that Jehosaphat, without drawing a Sword, triumphed over three confederate Nations; that Hezekiah saved Jerusalem, and the Kingdom of Judah, against an hundred four-score and five thousand Assyrians that came against it: 'Twas Piety that determined constantly the Fate of the Jewish People, and according to their Observance of this, was the public Happiness and Condition of that State. And the same Observation will hold with respect to any other Nation or People, who will be always found to be successful, or otherwise, according as they regard God, and encourage and promote a true Sense of Piety. So that the Advice of the Psalmist is, at all times, best to be followed, and will be found, upon Trial, to be even the truest Policy, *Some put their Trust in Chariots, and some in Horses; but we will remember the Name of the Lord our God.* Psal. xx. 7. This Power of Piety, or Truth, as 'tis called, is finely displayed by the Apocryphal Esdras, in that Contest before Darius, 1 Esdras iii. iv. where, after the Arguments used in favour of Wine, Women, and Kings, at length Truth beareth away the Victory, as being stronger than all things; for Truth endureth, and is always strong, it liveth and conquereth for evermore; neither in her Judgment is any Unrighteousness, she is the Strength, Kingdom, Power, and Majesty, of all Ages. And all the People shouted, and said, Great is Truth, and mighty above all Things.

Ver. 13. *When the Righteous was sold, she forsook him not.*] [When a righteous Man was sold: The Article is wanting. See on ver. 7.] Joseph is another remarkable Instance of God's Protection and Care of his afflicted Servants. Joseph was sent to his Brethren upon a friendly Message, and his coming was even beneficial to them; but the Recompence he met with was Treachery and Violence; it was unnatural to sell their Brother, but it was an Aggravation of their Cruelty, to sell him, an innocent and tender Youth, to rough Barbarians, and by them to be carried away into such a Country as Egypt. Ephraim Syrus is very pathetic upon this Occasion; he makes the unhappy Joseph to stop at his Mother Rachel's Monument, as he was going with the Merchants into Egypt; his Complaint there, and the deep and melting Impression it made, even upon his Ishmaelite Masters, is very moving and affecting: De Laud. Jos. Nor is his Eloquence and Invention less to be admired upon the other Parts of Joseph's sad History. The Affliction of Joseph is a common Allusion in Scripture, and the Standard as it were to try others Afflictions by. It is recorded of him, that he was but seventeen Years old when his Troubles first began; and though the Patriarchs that were before him underwent their respective Trials and Calamities, yet the Holy Spirit mentions none of their Afflictions with the same Emphasis as that of Joseph, as if they were to be the Badge and Characteristic by which he was to be distinguished from the rest: But through the



the Favour of Providence, and its secret but wonderful Economy; his very Afflictions were made the Means of his Advancement. This so remarkable an Instance of the Guidance of divine Providence, another *Father* applies to the Afflicted and Unfortunate, for their Comfort and Encouragement: "*Joseph*, a single Person, sold a Bondsman into Egypt, there destitute, imprisoned, enslaved; at length went forth a Multitude from thence, even to the Number of six hundred thousand Souls; which grew up to be a great and very powerful People." *Greg. Nazian. Orat. 32.*

*Ibid.* But delivered him from Sin.] This relates to *Joseph* withstanding the Sollicitations of his Mistress, *Potiphar's* Wife, who, through a criminal Love, would have tempted him to Adultery; but by a strict Regard to Chastity, and a religious Adherence to his Duty, he was deaf to her Entreaties, and proof against her amorous Violence. The Reflexion of *Rollin* upon this part of *Joseph's* Character is so fine, and the Advice therein given of such Consequence to young and unguarded Minds, that I cannot better illustrate this Place, or more please well-disposed Readers, than by transcribing it: "We find in his (*Joseph's*) Conduct an excellent Model of what we should do when we are tempted. *Joseph* defends himself at first by the Remembrance of God and his Duty; *How*, says he to that bold and shameless Woman, can I commit such an Action, who have God for my Witness and my Judge? 'Tis in his Sight that you and I shall both become criminal: It is he who commands me to disobey you upon this Occasion. *How* can I escape his View, or corrupt his Justice, or be covered from his Indignation? *How* then can I do this great Wickedness and sin against God? But when the Temptation became so strong, that he had Cause to fear his Weakness might yield to it, he prudently betakes himself to Flight, rather than parly any longer, or continue in such a State of Danger and Temptation, as might at length incline him to offend against God." *Method of studying Belles Lettres*, vol. iii. p. 141.

*Ibid.* She went down with him into the Pit.] *Joseph's* noble Resistance provoked his impudent Mistress, who wrongfully accused him to her Husband, and was the Occasion of his being cast into the Prison; over whom God was, under this unhappy Circumstance, more abundantly watchful. For the Scripture seems to be particularly careful to make us take notice, how God protected this his Servant, by informing us, that the Lord was with *Joseph*; or, according to the *Chaldee* Paraphrase of the Place, that the Word of the Lord was with him, *Gen. xxxix. 21.* This Expression, that the Lord was with *Joseph* in the Prison, seems to intimate, that when *Joseph* was thrown into it, and seemingly forsaken of all, God descended with him into the obscure Dungeon; and the Expression of our Author, that *Wisdom* went down with him into the Pit, and left him not in Bonds, is to the same purpose, viz. That the Eternal Wisdom became in a manner Prisoner with him; i. e. according to the same polite Writer, "She softened the Tedioufness of his

Nights, which were spent in Watching and Suffering; she was a Light in that Darkness where the Rays of the Sun could not penetrate; she took away from the Solitude of his Confinement, which neither Reading nor Business could amuse or suspend the disagreeable Sense of; and she diffused a Calmness and Serenity over his Mind, which arose from an invisible and inexhaustible Spring. In this his miserable Confinement she was nearest to *Joseph*, as she is to every Man in Adversity that has Faith: Nor is it said, when *Joseph* was made a Partner in the Throne of *Pbaraob*, that *Wisdom* ascended with him thither, as it is said, that she descended with him into Prison, and assisted him in his Bonds." Vol. iii. p. 139. *St. Ambrose* has the like Reflexion upon the same Occasion; *Non turbantur innocentes cum falsis criminibus impetuntur; & oppressa innocentia detruduntur in carcerem; visitat Deus & in carcere suos, & ibi est plus auxilii, ubi est plus periculi.* *De Joseph. c. 5.*

Ver. 14. And left him not in Bonds, till she brought him the Sceptre of the Kingdom.] This is nowhere mentioned in the Books of *Moses*, 'tis there only said, that *Joseph* was made Governor over all the Land of Egypt: *Philo* says indeed, speaking of *Joseph*, that *Pbaraob* made him his Viceroy, or to speak more truly, says he, King; *μακρον δ, ε, & η τ' αληθες ειπεν, βασιλεα.* But we are not to understand our Author, as if he meant by the Sceptre of the Kingdom, a truly Royal Power, a Sovereignty strictly so called, *Un regne, un empire absolu*, says *Calmet*; but only, that he was the Second Person in the Kingdom, and had a most extensive Power and Authority. Some make him to be a Partner in the Throne with *Pbaraob*, and think he was invested with this Power when *Pbaraob* took off his Ring, which was the Royal Seal, from his Hand, and put it upon *Joseph's*, and they cried before him, Bow the Knee. But notwithstanding these Ceremonies, and the supreme Honours paid him therein, *Joseph* was still a Subject; he was indeed his Prime or Chief Minister, Governor over all the Country; but as his Power came from *Pbaraob*, so was it subject to him. *Grotius* says it was usual with the *Hebrews*, to give the Name of King to such as were raised to some very extraordinary Honour, and invested with great Authority; and refers to ver. 16. of this Chapter, which he understands in the like Sense: *Comment. in loc.* And thus Governors of Provinces, and Persons of chief Note and Authority in Countries of small Extent, are called in Scripture, see *Judg. i. 7.* where the threescore and ten Kings, mentioned to have had their Thumbs and their Great Toes cut off by *Adonibezek*, are not to be understood as real Kings and Princes, but as so many Rulers of Cities or small Territories, called indeed Kings, as having a Resemblance of Kingly Power, by their Jurisdiction in such Places. Many such petty Kings were in *Canaan* in *Josua's* Time, who were very numerous; *Tous les Seigneurs qui gouvernoient une ville*, says *Calmet in loc. s'appelloient du nom de Rois*: Till at length the greater overcame, and as it were devoured, the rest. The like may



may be said of the thirty and two Kings which went up with *Ben-hadad* the King of Syria to besiege *Samaria*, 1 Kings xx. 1. *Isaiah* xix. 2. And some of the Ancients have given this Name even to *Abraham*, *Moses*, and *Israel*; see *Justin*, lib. xxxvi. c. 2. and *Nicol. Damascen.* apud *Joseph. Antiq.* lib. i. c. 7. and *Calmet in loc.* This seems confirmed likewise by the new Name which *Pharaoh* gave him; which he conferred, not only because he was a Foreigner, and intended to honour him, but to denote him to be his Subject, though Ruler of every body else: See *Pat. in loc.* A Name, which, according to St. *Jerom* and the vulgar Latin, signified, The Saviour of the World; see *Gregory's Notes*, p. 65. probably in allusion to the Services done by him in the time of the Famine. But perhaps this Name may mystically include something higher; for some learned Men have remarked, that there are few Saints of the *Old Testament*, in whom God has been pleased to express so many Circumstances of Resemblance with his Son, as in *Joseph*: See the Particulars of the Agreement, and the Parallel drawn by *Rollin*, Vol. III. on the *Belles Lettres*, p. 155. This is doing the great Honour to *Joseph*, and strictly giving him perpetual Glory.

*Ibid.* And gave him perpetual Glory.] By the Term perpetual, we may understand, that *Joseph's* Glory did not die with him, but was preserved and handed down to Posterity, by some publick Monument in his Favour, or by some Symbol representing him. Dr. *Spencer* contends, that the Ark and Cherubims were honourable Hieroglyphicks of *Joseph*; both of which had a symbolical Reference to him, and preserved his Memory; *Aequum est opinari, Deum Cherubim & Arcam, prae aliis omnibus instituisse, eo quod Josephi piissimi & charissimi monumentum extarent. Nam Arca non tantum nomine, sed & figura cum Josephi Arca, & Cherubim cum bove, Josephi nomine & insigni, maxime conveniebant—ut utraque ejus vitam & mortem ab oblivione in eternum vindicarent.* Tom. ii. de Orig. Arcæ & Cherub. p. 878, 9. But the learned *Vossius* has made it appear, with more Probability, from the Testimonies of *Ruffin* and *Suidas*, and other Authorities and Arguments, that the Memory of *Joseph* was preserved under the Egyptian *Apis*: For he observes, first, that 'tis highly probable so extraordinary a Person, so great a Prophet and Statesman, and so publick a Benefactor, as *Joseph* was, would have his Memory consecrated to Posterity: That the Egyptians were most likely to do this, by some symbolical Representation of the Kindness; and that no Symbol was more proper for this than the Egyptian *Apis*, because the Famine was prefigured by the lean Kine, and the Time of Plenty by the fat, the Ox being a known Symbol of Fruitfulness and Plenty, which *Joseph* was in a very great degree the happy Occasion of. 'Tis evident likewise from *Pharaoh's* rewarding *Joseph*, that the Egyptians were desirous of shewing their Gratitude; and 'tis no less certain, that it was the common Practice among them, to perpetuate the Memory of Benefactors by some Symbols,

which though at first designed only for Civil Use, were afterwards abused into Idolatry and Superstition. And lastly, the very Names, *Apis* and *Serapis*, give great Light and Probability to the Conjecture: For *Vossius* conceives *Apis* to be the sacred Name of *Joseph* among the Egyptians, and answers to the Hebrew *Ab*, i. e. Father, and such indeed he was to *Pharaoh* and his People, and *Joseph* expressly calls himself so, Gen. xlv. 8. The Scripture likewise informs us, that, by the Order of *Pharaoh*, they cried before him, *Abrech*, which is a compound Word, and means, according to the Rabbins, both King and Father. *Serapis*, it is well known, had a *Busbel* on his Head, another very significant Symbol of *Joseph*; and the very Name of *Serapis*, is probably derived from *Σορ*, which signifies a Bull, and *Apis*. So that we seem here to have the sacred Story of *Joseph* visibly traced through all the Egyptian Darkness and Superstition. *Vossius De Idololat.* lib. i. *Sulpic. Sever.* lib. ii. c. 21. in notis. *Gregory's Observations*, p. 65. *Reeves's Apology*, vol. ii. p. 39.

[*Ibid.* Power against those who oppressed him. Greek ἐξουσίαν τοῖς ἐπιβουλεύουσιν αὐτῷ, Power over those who oppress him: viz. *Poliphar*, and his Wife, and others who had used him ill. *Τυραννίδα* for *τυραννισάμενος*, as ch. v. 1. *ἀδελφῶν* for *ἀδελφῶν*.]

Ver. 15. She delivered the righteous People and blameless Seed from the Nation that oppressed them.] It has been an Objection against this Writer, that he represents the Hebrews, when they were in Egypt under the Bondage of *Pharaoh*, as a just and irreproachable People; which is not agreeable to what *Ezekiel* says of them, and some others of the Prophets, who accuse them as given to Idolatry, in that Place, and at that Time, *Ezek.* xx. 8. xxiii. 3. Others think that, as a Jew, he speaks of them in general, according to the Notion which they had conceived of themselves; for they were full of spiritual Presumption, looked upon all other Nations with the utmost Contempt, as imagining themselves to be the only Righteous and Accepted, and thought every thing their Due, and that as God had shewn particular Honour and Kindness to the Jews, in chusing them to be his People, he would never reject them. In this latter Sense the profoundly learned Dr. *Jackson* understands this Place; for he observes of our Author, "That though he was a Man of an excellent contemplative Spirit, as full as the Moon in points of high Speculation of God's general Providence in governing the World; yet when he comes to discuss the different Manner of God's dealing with the Righteous (which in his Language are the Seed of *Abraham*) and the wicked Heathen, he betrays himself, in some measure, to be infected with a Disease common unto his Countrymen the Jews." The radical Disease which was common to the whole Jewish Nation at that Time, and to this Author in particular, he says, was this, "That because they were the Seed of *Abraham*, they were the only righteous and blameless Seed. And however the Lord God of their Fathers did

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" often



“often chastise and correct them, yet all his  
 “Corrections were filial; ch. xi. 10.—xii. 22.  
 “That he would not, or could not, at any  
 “time plague them, as he had done the un-  
 “righteous Heathen, or punish them with  
 “the like Blindness of Mind, or Hardness of  
 “Heart, as he had done the Egyptians. But  
 “St. Paul has given a Receipt or Medicine  
 “for curing this Disease in his Countrymen  
 “then living, and for preventing the like in  
 “After-ages, whether in Jew or Gentile, Rom.  
 “ix. 18. *Therefore hath he Mercy on whom  
 “he will have Mercy, and whom he will he  
 “hardneth.* The Extract of which Aphorism  
 “is this, that the Lord was not so tied by  
 “Oath or Promise unto Abraham, but that  
 “he might and would harden the Hearts, and  
 “blind the Eyes of his Seed, after the same  
 “manner he had done Pharaoh’s and the  
 “Egyptians, if at any time they should become  
 “as obstinate as Pharaoh and his People had  
 “been.—To harden the Seed of Abraham,  
 “upon the like Pride of heart, Obstinacy,  
 “and Contempt of God’s Forewarnings, could  
 “be no Prejudice to God’s Oath to Abraham,  
 “no Impeachment of his promised Loving-  
 “kindness to David, but rather a Proof to  
 “all the World, that the God of Abraham  
 “was no Respecter of Persons: But as they,  
 “who in every Nation fear him and love  
 “Righteousness, shall be accepted of him; so  
 “all those of any Nation, that despise him,  
 “and work Unrighteousness, shall be rejected  
 “by him:” *Tom. iii. p. 206, 7.* And the  
 History of the Jewish People justifies this Ob-  
 servation; for as they grew still more corrupt,  
 wicked, and idolatrous in the Promised Land,  
 than they had been in Egypt, notwithstanding  
 the many Instructions, Invitations, Re-  
 proofs, and Miracles of their Prophets and  
 holy Guides to reclaim them, God was at last  
 obliged to send them captive to Ninive and  
 Babylon; and at length, when neither Correc-  
 tions nor Benefits, nor even the Coming of  
 their own Messiah, could overcome their Ob-  
 stinacy, God was pleased to reject his once  
 Beloved, and to call and adopt the Gentiles  
 that were afar off. But perhaps we may ex-  
 plain this Passage of our Author, which hath  
 been excepted against for the Reasons before  
 given, in a good consistent Sense, without sup-  
 posing any Prejudice or Partiality to his Coun-  
 trymen, as the latter Objection does, or that  
 the Author maintains any false Fact in the In-  
 stance before us, as is the Sense of the former:  
 For, 1. This Writer may probably call the  
 Jews a righteous, or, as the Margin has it, a  
 holy People, λαὸν ἁγίον, upon account of their  
 external Holiness, as being a peculiar People,  
 a chosen Generation, a holy Nation, separated  
 more immediately to God’s Service, and called  
 with a holy Calling. 2. The Jews may be  
 here, not improperly, called, a blameless Seed,  
 σπέρμα ἀμώμωτον, upon account of the imputa-  
 tive Righteousness of the Patriarchs, Abraham,  
 Isaac, and Jacob, their Forefathers: The Root  
 therefore being holy, the Branches may be con-  
 sidered so in like manner. 3. Though the  
 Jews cannot indeed properly be said to be a  
 righteous and blameless Seed, with respect to

God, who permitted their Disgrace and Pu-  
 nishment in Egypt, upon the Account of their  
 Wickedness; yet with respect to Pharaoh and  
 the Egyptians, they may be said to be right-  
 eous and blameless, just and irreproachable;  
*Qui n’avoient jamais offensé les Egyptiens*, as  
 having never injured or offended them, though  
 greatly oppressed by them: This is Calmet’s  
 Exposition; see *Pref. sur la Livre de la Sagesse*,  
 & *Comment. in loc.*

Ver. 16. *She entred into the Soul of the Ser-  
 vant of the Lord, and withstood dreadful Kings in  
 Wonders and Signs.] i. e.* She entred into the  
 Soul of Moses, here called *the Servant of the  
 Lord*, by way of Eminence, as he is in many  
 Places of Scripture. It is observable, that this  
 Writer speaks of *dreadful Kings* in the *Plural  
 Number*, though he only appeared before Pha-  
 raoh; nor is there any reason to imagine more  
 Kings than one in Egypt, except we should,  
 with *De Muis*, include some neighbouring  
 Kings, then captive or tributary to Pharaoh:  
*Comment. in Psal. cv.* But this Author, as I  
 have before observed, (see Note on Ver. 14.)  
 gives the Names of Kings to Great Men and  
 Nobles. We have an Instance of the like plural  
 Expression, and upon the same Occasion, *Psal.*  
*cv. 30. Their Land brought forth Frogs, yea,  
 even in their Kings Chambers.* *Ἐν τοῖς ταμίαις τῶν  
 βασιλέων αὐτῶν*, LXX. Coverdale’s Translation  
 refers it to Pharaoh only, *She stode by him in  
 Wonders and Tokens agaynst the horrible Kyng.*  
 The Sense of the whole Verse is, that Wisdom  
 entred into the Soul of Moses, and spake by  
 his Mouth, and made him even a God unto  
 Pharaoh, before whom, his Royal Issue, and  
 his Nobles, he wrought so many surprizing  
 Miracles, as might have convinced them, that  
 God was the Sovereign Ruler, not only over  
 all the Kingdoms of the Earth, but even over  
 the Elements and universal Nature.

Ver. 17. *Rendred to the Righteous a Re-  
 ward of their Labours.]* God gave the Isra-  
 elites, at their Departure, the Goods of the  
 Egyptians, as the Reward of their Labour  
 among them, and as their just Due for their  
 past Services. Many of the Ancient Fathers,  
 as *Irenæus*, *Tertullian*, *Epiphanius*, &c. under-  
 stand the Case in this Light, and look upon  
 the spoiling of the Egyptians, as a piece of  
 Justice only due to themselves: For un-  
 doubtedly the Israelites ought, both in Equity  
 and strict Right, to have had some Wages or  
 Recompence for the Labours and Hardships  
 they underwent in their Service; to which  
 they seem more entitled, considering the great  
 Benefits the Egyptians received from them in  
 general, and from Joseph in particular. Saint  
 Austin therefore well observes, speaking of the  
 Egyptians, *Homines peregrinos labore gratuito  
 injustè & vehementer affligerant; digni ergo  
 erant & Hebræi quibus talia juberentur, &  
 Egyptii, qui talia paterentur*: Lib. xxii. cont.  
 Faust. We may add further in Vindication  
 of this Fact, that it was done by the Appoint-  
 ment and Command of God himself, who thus  
 punished the Egyptians for their Injustice and  
 Cruelty to the Israelites. And though it is  
 contrary to the Law of Nature, as well as posi-  
 tive Law, to take away the just Goods of an-  
 other,



other, because no Man has a Right for that Purpose, yet the Case is quite altered, when such an Action is done by the Command of God, who has an unquestionable Right in, and Power over, all Persons and Things, as the Maker, and Giver, and Lord of all. There could be therefore no Injustice in this Particular, as God had an undoubted Right to transfer the Property of the Egyptians to the Hebrews. Nor does Scripture any where condemn or disapprove this Fact; 'tis rather a Confirmation of Scripture, for thus the Promise to Abraham was fulfilled, *That Nation whom they shall serve will I judge, and afterward shall they come out with great Substance*; Gen. xv. 14.—I shall not enter any further into this Argument; such as desire to see it discussed more at large, may consult *Shuckford, Connec. Sac. & Prof. Hist.* vol. ii. p. 495. *Waterland's Scripture Vindicated*, Par. ii. p. 10. *Grotius De Jure Belli & Pacis*, and other Writers, who justify this Fact by a great Number of good Reasons.

*Ibid.* Guided them in a marvellous Way, and was unto them for a Cover by Day.] This refers to the divine Protection exhibited to the Israelites in their journeying through the Wilderness, when God led them by a Pillar, which stood still when they were to rest, and moved forward when and which way they were to march. This Pillar appeared as a Cloud in the Day, and served for a Covering over them to defend them from the scorching Heat of the Sun; which the Writer of *Ecclesiasticus* expresses very strongly, when he calls it, σκέπη ὑπὸ καύσωνος, ἢ σκέπη ὑπὸ μεσημβρίας, c. xxxiv. 16. It was a Cloud erected towards Heaven, like a Pillar upwards, but downwards flat and broad, spread over the Body of the People, as afterwards more eminently over the Tabernacle; and, though but one Pillar, had two different Appearances and Uses; of a Cloud by Day, to defend them from the Heat, which in those Parts was very excessive; and of a Fire by Night, to direct and illuminate them. *Coverdale's* and the *Geneva Bibles* express the first very properly, *On the Day-time she was a Shadowe unto them*. This Darkneſs of the Cloud had also another Use, viz. that it blinded and confounded their Enemies, that they might not come near to assault them. Mr. *Toland's* Account for one and the same Thing, giving both Light and Darkneſs to different Parties, is very odd and singular, to say no worse of it; "He supposes a Fire was made by order of the Hebrew General, for a Blind to the Enemy, that they might be suspect to be where indeed they were not." See his *Hodegus*, and Note on ch. xix. 7.

*Ibid.* And a Light of Stars in the Night-season.] The Greek reads, εἰς φλόγα ἀστέρων ἢ νύκτα, according to *Grabe's* and some other Editions; but ἀστρον, which the *Vatican Copy* preserves, seems more proper and expressive; for ἀστρον signifies a Constellation, or a great Collection of Stars together, according to *Didymus*, ἀστὴρ ἢ ἀστρον ἀσφάδερς, ὅτι ὁ μὲν ἀστὴρ, ἐν τῇ ἐστί τὸ ἢ ἀστρον ἐκ πολλῶν συνέστηκεν ἀστέρων, ζώδιον δὲ, ὃ καὶ ἀστροθέτημα καλεῖται. In *Notis ad Il. Δ.* 775. Many of which Constellations, by their joint

and united Light, might imitate a Torch, or a Flame, as the *Margin* renders. But could the Light of common Stars, scattered here and there confusedly, assist the Israelites, travelling in a vast and pathless Wilderness? or would to feeble a Light serve for their Direction, and be sufficient for all their Purposes? *Calmet* compares to this Light the ἀστὴρ, or the Star which appeared at our Saviour's Birth, *Matt.* ii. 9. "Which, says he, was a Light that moved in the Air before the Magi, something like the Pillar of the Cloud in the Wilderness, which either stopt, or went forward, in such a Manner, as was necessary for the Conduct of the Wise-men to the proper Place." This he takes to be an inflamed Meteor in the Middle Region of the Air, with miraculous and extraordinary Circumstances attending it. As our *Version*, following the *Greek*, seems to make the real Light of the Stars to be the Guide of the Israelites in the Night-season; ἀστέρων, taken in this Sense, may be sufficient for their Direction. But the *Syriac* and *Arabic Versions* understand this Pillar in a different Sense, that it was as a Light of Stars in the Night-season; the former reads, *vice splendoris syderii*; and the latter more fully, *noctū verò, vice fulgoris stellarum, splendor*. We may therefore understand this Place, either of a Number of Constellations placed together, shining with a natural but very extraordinary Light; or of a Collection of Meteors with a preternatural Light; or, lastly, comparatively, that this Light imitated that of the brightest Stars, in the Sense of the *Oriental Versions*. [Perhaps the Moon may be comprehended in the Word ἀστέρων or ἀστρον. See xvii. 5. where it certainly may.] In the Scripture, this Appearance is described in much stronger Terms; for the Pillar, which appeared in the Day like a Cloud, is there mentioned to be like a Light, or Pillar of Fire: And thus the *Psalmist*, *In the Day-time he led them with a Cloud, and all the Night through with a Light of Fire*; *Psal.* lxxviii. 14. And to this the *Prophet* alludes, when he says, *The Lord will create upon every Dwelling-place on Mount Zion, and upon her Assemblies, a Cloud and Smoke by Day, and the shining of flaming Fire by Night*; *Isai.* iv. 5. *Salvian* rightly describes this Pillar, with its different Appearances, when he calls it, *Mobilem columnam, nubilam die, igneam nocte, congruas colorum diversitates pro temporum diversitate sumentem: scilicet ut & diei lucem lutea obscuritate distingueret, & caliginem noctis flammeo splendore claritatis radiaret*. *De Gubern. Dei*, lib. i. It seems, after all, best, without aiming at explaining the Nature of this Appearance, to say, that the glorious *Schechinah* itself, in this Pillar, gave Light and Comfort to God's own Peculium: For the Regent of this Cloudy Pillar was he that forms the Light and creates Darkneſs; and as there was the hiding of his Power, so his Brightness there was as the Light; *Habak.* iii. 4. where the Reading of the LXX is too particular not to be taken notice of, καὶ ἐθελο ἀγάνησθαι καὶ λαλῆσαι ἐκ τοῦ αἵματος αὐτοῦ; for it intimates the Principle upon which the Great Goel, or Deliverer, proceeded to exert this his Might under these different Appearances, viz. his strong and powerful



powerful Love towards his People. See Note on ch. xix. 7. *Messieurs du Port Royal*, besides the literal, gives us a very useful allegorical Sense of this Pillar, viz. "That, as the Cloud by its overshadowing sheltered the *Hebrews* from the Extremity of Heat, so the Assistance of the Holy Spirit defends us against the Burnings and Flames of Concupiscence; and as that Light of Fire guided them in a marvellous Way in the very Darkness of the Night, so the Holy Spirit illuminates Men's Minds with its heavenly Light, under their sad State of spiritual Darkness; and with its holy Fire cheers and comforts the Saints in their greatest Afflictions." *Comment. in loc.* And, indeed, according to the mystical Sense of the *Fathers*, the whole People of *Israel*, and that which befel them, were Types or Figures of *Christ* and his *Church*, as the Apostle himself makes them, 1 *Cor.* x. their Bondage in *Egypt* was a Type of the Slavery of Sin, and their Deliverance from thence, of our Redemption from *Satan*. The Desert through which they passed, and the Difficulties they encountered in it, were a lively Figure of the Miseries of this Life; as *Moses* their Leader was of *Christ*; *Canaan*, of *Heaven*; the *Red Sea*, of *Baptism*; and *Manna*, of his *Heavenly Doctrine*, which came down from *Heaven*, and nourishes unto eternal Life.

Ver. 19, 20. And cast them up out of the bottom of the Deep, therefore the Righteous spoiled the Ungodly.] The Expression here is ambiguous, and the Interpreters are accordingly divided about the true Sense of it; the far greater part of them understand it, either of the *Israelites* happy Escape from the *Egyptian* Bondage, or from the Dangers of the *Red Sea*. This seems to be the Sense of all the old *English Translations*, of the *Oriental Versions*, and of the *Vulgate*, which metaphorically renders, & *ab altitudine inferorum eduxit illos*, as if their Escape from thence was like a Return from the Grave. *Calmet* renders very expressly, *elle a retiré les siens du fond des abysses*; and among the sacred Critics, *Grotius* and *Badwell* are of the same Opinion. But there is another, and I think, with submission, a better Sense, and more agreeable to the Context, which applies these Words to the *Egyptians*, which is favoured by the Comment of *Messieurs du Port Royal*, which renders, *qui les a rejettez morts du fond des abysses*; i. e. that after they were drowned, they were cast by the Tide, or by God's Appointment, from the Bottom of the Sea to the Shore, where the *Israelites* were encamped; by which means they possessed themselves of their Spoils. And to this agrees, in great Measure, the Account which *Josephus* gives, "That the Winds and the Waves forced their Arms ashore just at the Place where the *Hebrews* had pitched their Tents: which *Moses* understood to be another Providence, in furnishing the People with Arms in this manner that they so much wanted, which were gathered together and distributed among the *Hebrews*:" *Antiq.* lib. ii. c. 16. That the first Sense, which applies these Words to the *Israelites* Escape from the Dangers of the *Red Sea*, cannot be the true one, seems

manifest from the Context and the following Reasons: 1. That the spoiling of the *Egyptians*, by the borrowing of their valuable Goods, is mentioned just before, ver. 17. 2. That the mention of it follows very improperly, after the Relation of the drowning of their Enemies; for can any thing be more absurd than *this Reason*, that, because they were happily escaped from the *Red Sea*, therefore they spoiled the *Egyptians* before they came to it? *Διὰ τὴν*, therefore *ἢ* 20. cannot relate to this first spoiling of the *Egyptians*. 3. At their Departure from *Egypt*, when they went out, laden with the Goods of their Oppressors, there was no Hymn composed on that Occasion, nor do we find any recorded in their History. But in the Sense which I contend for, all is right and easy; for after the Account of the *Egyptians* being drowned, and that they were cast up from the Bottom of the Sea to the Side where the *Israelites* were, it follows very naturally, that the dead Bodies coming by this means into their power, they therefore spoiled them, *Διὰ τὴν ἐκάλυψαν ἀσκήϊς*, i. e. stripped them, and took their Arms from them, which they most wanted. And what confirms this is, that a Hymn was actually composed and sung upon this signal Overthrow of their Enemies: See Note following. 4. *Ἀνέβηγον* is not to be taken in the Sense of leaping, as *Grotius* seems to understand it, making it synonymous to *ἐκάλυψαν*, and *ἐξώκευσε*, but is a Metaphor, taken from Water issuing from its Source or Fountain; or rather, from the Bubbles rising in boiling Water. Our Translation therefore is too flat, when it barely renders *cast them up*; for the Bodies rising in the Act of Drowning, are here, by a beautiful and expressive Allusion, compared to Bubbles rising in boiling Water: And the true Sense is, that he made the Bodies of the *Egyptians* rise up like Bubbles from the Bottom of the Sea. In the Sense of our Version the Reading should be, *ἔβηγον*. See 2 *Maccab.* i. 12.

Ver. 21. For Wisdom opened the Mouth of the Dumb, and made the Tongues of them that cannot speak eloquent.] The ancient *English Versions* read in the Present Tense, *Wysdome openeth the Mouthe of the Domme, maketh the Tonges of the Babes to speake*; which is the Rendering of *Coverdale's* and the *Geneva Bible*, and may be considered as a judicious *Epiphonema*, or useful Reflexion wherewith the Author concludes the Chapter, to shew the great Power of God, that he who removeth away the Speech of the Trusty, and taketh away the Understanding of the Aged, who leadeth Counsellors away spoiled, and maketh the Judges Fools; *Job.* xii. 17, 20. can with equal Ease make the Dumb eloquent, and the Mouth of Babes and Sucklings to chant forth *Hosanna* and Praise. But I think this Verse relates rather to the foregoing, and concerns the same Persons: The Sense, according to the Original, and the *Oriental Versions*, seems to be, that the *Israelites*, who before were silent through Fear of the *Egyptians*, and were not, by the many former Miracles wrought in their Favour, induced to bless and praise God for them, upon a sight of the



the sudden and universal Destruction of their Enemies, from a Sense of the Danger which themselves had escaped, and out of Gratitude for the unexpected Spoils which they were possessed of, sang unto the Lord, upon the happy Occasion, that Hymn of Thanksgiving, or Eucharistical Ode, which has been so justly celebrated by all Antiquity, which Archbishop *Usher* styles, *Omnium, quorum uspiam memoria extat, primum & antiquissimum*; I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously; the Horse and his Rider hath he thrown into the Sea: Which was seconded by *Miriam* the Prophetess, and all the Israelitish Women, with Timbrels and with Dances, *Exod. xv. 1.* And, according to *Grotius*, the Children joined in and compleated the Harmony. *Comment. in loc.*

## C H A P. XI.

## The ARGUMENT.

THE Account of what Wisdom did for the Israelites after their Departure out of Egypt is continued. God's different Dispensations towards the Egyptians and the Israelites in the Wilderness are recited, and a Parallel or Comparison drawn between the Plagues with which God smote the former, and the great Mercies which he vouchsafed to the latter, even in the same Instances. That the Egyptians were deprived of Water, by the River and all their Springs being turned into Blood, by which Plague great Numbers died through Thirst; but the Israelites were supplied with the same Element at the same Time that they were afflicted, and afterwards, in a more extraordinary and miraculous Manner, from the Rock, which flowed like a Stream or River, and even followed them from Place to Place in their Travels through the Wilderness.

Ver. 3. They stood against their Enemies, and were avenged of their Adversaries.] Such as the *Amalekites*, who fell upon those of the *Israelites*, who through Weakness or Fatigue could not keep up with the rest of the Army, *Deut. xxv. 18.* and endeavoured to oppose their Passage, and hinder their Settlement in *Canaan*; the King of *Arad*, who attacked the *Israelites* as they passed that way, and took some of them Prisoners, without any Provocation, *Numb. xxi. 1.* Or the King of *Basan*, and *Sibon* King of the *Amorites*, who were likewise the Aggressors, and opposed their March: For in this Sense we are to understand the Place, that the *Israelites* did not act offensively till they were assaulted; and thus the *Arabic Version* takes it, *Bellum contra se gerentibus restiterunt*, and ἀνέστησαν is so used in the best *Greek Writers*.

Ver. 4. When they were thirsty they called upon thee.] This happened twice in the Wilderness, at *Rephidim* they first murmured for Water, *Exod. xvii. 1.* and then at *Kadesh*, *Numb. xx.* But though this miraculous Supply of Water seems mentioned twice in this Verse, there is no necessity to suppose, that both these Times are referred to. There is the like Repetition, *Psal. lxxviii. 16.* which seems, according to the Rendring of the *LXX*, to relate to the same Miracle. See also *Psal. cxiv. 8.* One

may often observe in this Book, and the like may be said of *Ecclesiasticus* and the Book of *Proverbs*, that the same Sense is frequently expressed in two Periods or Members of the same Verse, with no other Difference, but a Variation of the Phrase. This Observation will be found not without its Use; but there are two others in this Chapter, which it may be proper to mention, as being more material, and even necessary, for the right understanding this Book, and may indeed be considered as the very Keys of it, at least of the remaining part. We have the first in the next Verse, That by what Things the Egyptians were punished, by the same the Israelites, in their Need, were benefited; which Parallel is almost constantly pursued, and strongly drawn, by way of Contrast or Opposition, to acquaint us, as it were in one View, with the joint History of those People; and God's respective Dealing with each of them: The second is in ver. 16. viz. Where-withal a Man sinneth, by the same also shall he be punished; which Aphorism, well weighed and attended to, will be of great Service for unravelling and explaining the ten Plagues in particular, and the Reason why God chose to afflict that People with them, rather than with any other.

*Ibid.* And Water was given them out of the flinty Rock.] 'Tis not without good Reason that Water is said to be given to the *Israelites* from the Rock. That this Miracle is mysterious; is evident from the Circumstances related of it; for if there had been no other Design but the relieving their Necessity, that might have been supplied by Rain from Heaven; or if only a visible Effect of the divine Power was intended to have been displayed, that had been as easily discovered, in causing new Springs to rise from the Earth; but *Israel* was not supplied with Water from the Clouds or the Valleys, but from the Rock. Hence therefore learned Men have drawn a Parallel between the Rock and *Christ*: 1. Because a Rock is the ordinary Title of God in Scripture, and in a special Manner it resembles *Christ*; *Psal. cxviii. 22.* 1 *Pet. ii. 7, 8.* 2. It was the Son of God, the Angel of his Presence, the Conductor of his People, that then spake to *Moses*, and stood upon the Rock, to signify the Relation it had to himself, *Exod. xvii. 6.* 3. The Apostle himself so explains it, They drank of that Spiritual Rock which followed them, and that Rock was *Christ*, 1 *Cor. x. 4.* See *Bates's Harmony*, p. 458.

Ver. 6. For instead of a Fountain of a perpetual running River.] Ἀντὶ μὲν ὧν ἐς αἰῶνα ῥέει. Πηγὴ πλάμης is not a very usual Expression, and seems to relate, if it be the true Reading here, to the Source or Fountain-head of the Nile, the River here intended: For thus much must be allowed, that the Ancients enquired after nothing more than the Fountains of the Nile; see *Stephan. Diēt. Histor. Geograph. in voce NILUS.* And *Strabo* and other *Greek Writers* constantly use the Word πηγή in speaking of them, and even whole Treatises have been wrote concerning them: And when any Streams are corrupted, 'tis natural to ascribe the Fault to the Corruption of the Fountains whence they flow, though perhaps the Accident



proceeds from some other Cause. There may also be, possibly, an Allusion in this Expression to the Fountain and River in the Wilderness; for the Place where the Water issued from the Rock in *Horeb*, was, in the strictest Sense, *πηγή ποταμῶς*; and indeed the Stream flowing thence is expressly called by the LXX *πηγὴ ὕδατος*, Psal. cxiv. 8. See also *Joseph. Antiq.* lib. iii. c. i. And the Stream that followed (as *St. Paul* words it) the *Israelites* in the Desert wherever they went (or as some conjecture the Fact, they followed the River which way soever God directed its Course, whereby he ordered their Journeys as he pleased) was to them *αἰνῶς ποταμῶς*. In allusion, I say, to this Stream in the Wilderness, *πηγή αἰνῶς* may here perhaps be ascribed to the Nile. The *Arabic Version* applies *αἰνῶς* to *πηγῆς*, and renders, *Pro fonte fluminis abunde manante*; i. e. instead of a clear and perpetual running Spring, they were troubled with a River foul with Blood. But as all the other Versions join this Epithet to *ποταμῶς*, and as the Opposition lies not between what the River was in its natural State, and after it was turned into Blood, but between the *Egyptians* being deprived of Water, and the *Israelites* supplied with it, in the same miraculous Manner, and, which is of great Moment in the present Enquiry, by the very self-same Instrument; I am more inclined to think, that the true Reading of this Passage is, *οὐκ ἔστιν ἡν πηγὴς αἰνῶς ποταμῶς*, see *Exod.* vii. 20. where the Text says, that *he* (Moses) *lift up the Rod and smote the Waters that were in the River, and all the Waters that were in the River were turned into Blood.* It is no less observable, that the same Rod was the immediate Instrument in the other Miracle, viz. in supplying the *Israelites* with Water; for the Scripture is very full and explicit in this Point, *And the Rod wherewith thou smotest the River, take in thy Hand and go — And thou shalt smite the Rock, and there shall come out Water*; *Exod.* xvii. 5, 6. This Conjecture is confirmed likewise by the Context, particularly ver. 5. which manifestly alludes to the Rod that struck both the Nile and the Rock, and may be equally applied both to the Cause and to the Effect. To establish this further, I shall shew upon what Account this River may be styled *αἰνῶς ποταμῶς*: 1. *Αἰνῶς* is applicable to it, as it is a common Epithet of a River. Instances of this may be found in the *Classic Writers*; *Horace*, particularly, thus describes the Perpetuity of its Course,

*Rusticus expectans dum defluit amnis; at ille  
Labetur, & labetur in omne volubilis ævum.*

*Epist.* lib. i. ep. 2. in Opposition to Books that often dry up, and have little or no Water in them. Thus *Calmet* expounds this Term, *Comment. in loc.* Besides this general Reason, may not the River Nile in particular be so called, 2dly, as being, in the Opinion of many learned Men, one of the four Rivers of Paradise, originally called *Gibon*, *Gen.* ii. 13. and as such, may be considered, in point of Time, as a perpetual running River. 3dly, The Nile may be termed *αἰνῶς ποταμῶς*, as a never-failing River, its Fountain being never dry, but its Streams continually fed, though

in a Country where it seldom or never rains: And though its Source remained concealed, yet its Supplies were constant, and, as it were, miraculous. Hence the *Phœnicians*, *Canaanites*, *Syrians*, *Greeks*, and other Travellers into *Egypt*, had a Notion that God himself supplied *Egypt* with these surprizing and never-failing Waters: And hence *Homer* probably calls the Nile, *Διῶνις ποταμός*, *Fluvius à Deo missus*, i. e. a River sent and maintained by God; *Odyss.* Δ. v. 581. *Strabo* gives it the same Title, lib. xvii. And indeed the *Egyptians* represent this constant Miracle by the Symbol of a River flowing out of the Mouth of the Sun, the known and fixed Image of God among them. 4thly, The Nile may be called *αἰνῶς*, as being, according to the *Egyptian* Notion, perpetual & *parte ante*, for they esteemed Water to be the very Origin and Principal of all Things, and on that Account they worshiped it: The Nile in particular is sometimes termed, *Ζεὺς Ἀγνῆλος*, and therefore God smote it in the first Place. And thus *Philo*, *Primum ab aqua Deus penas infligit, propterea, quod, cum aquam supra modum Egyptii colerent, originem rerum omnium & principium esse statuerent, eam primum equum esse putavit, ad eorum castigationem advocare.* *De Vita Moïsis.* Lastly, May not this very ancient and celebrated River, by *Juvenal* called *The River* by way of Eminence, *Sat.* xv. be considered as *αἰνῶς*, in contradistinction to the occasional Water in the Wilderness, which then first existed, and at length ceased to flow? [But, after all, *πηγὴς αἰνῶς ποταμῶς* may mean no more than *Water*; in which Signification it is often used by Tragedians, and other Poets, whose Style and Manner this Author imitates quite through his Work.]

*Ibid.* . . . *River troubled with foul Blood, for a manifest Reproof of that Commandment whereby the Infants were slain.* i. e. God changed the Waters of the Nile, which before was a clear running Stream, into a discoloured and foul Water, or rather a Sort of stagnating Blood, wholly unfit for the *Egyptians* Use. Our Author seems to represent the River as turned into real Blood, at once to exemplify and chastise the Crime of drowning the *Hebrew* Infants therein. See *Origen* and *Theodoret* in cap. vii. *Exod.* The latter expressly says, *Hanc plagam intulit Deus propter pueros Judæorum in aquis immersos; fluvius enim mutatus in sanguinem conqueritur de cæde puerorum per eos commissâ*: i. e. This Plague God brought upon them for the Children that were drowned; and the River thus turned into Blood complained of that Slaughter. *Coverdale's* Version is to the same Purpose, *Unto the Enemies thou gavest Man's Bloude instead of hyvinge Water*, which is a literal Translation of the *Vulgate*, *pro fonte sempiterni fluminis humanum sanguinem dedisti injustis.* *St. Austin* *De miraculis Scripturæ*, and other ancient Writers, mention what is equally surprizing, that the Springs and Fountains themselves were likewise so affected and changed, that if an *Egyptian* dug for fresh Water, what issued forth from the Earth was like actual Blood from a Wound. *Philo's* Account is nearly the same, *Unde cum mari cruentantur lacus, fossæ, alveæ, rivi, putei, fontes, universa in Egypto aquæ vis, aperta que humoris*



*humoris vena velut in profluvio sanguinis, cruoris torrentes emitterent.* De Mose, lib. i. But others think, that this Calamity extended only to that part of the River, or those Waters that were nigh the Court of Pharaoh; for if this Plague was universal, the Magicians could have had no Place to practise their Skill in, and effect the like. See Jackson's Works. That such bloody and foul Water should breed Distempers in the Egyptians, and be even poisonous to them is no wonder; but Josephus adds, that this was particular to the Egyptians, for the Water was wholesome to the Israelites, and, with respect to them, retained its own Nature and usual Sweetness. *Antiq. lib. ii. cap. 14.*

*Ibid. Thou gavest them abundance of Water by a means which they hoped not for.* God gave the Israelites Drink in a barren and uninhabited Desert, in a dry and thirsty Land where no Water is; and this he did from a solid and unpromising Rock. The Israelites, according to Josephus, *Antiq. lib. iii. cap. 1.* "Had conceived a Notion from Moses's mentioning Water out of the Rock, that dry and wearied as they were, a Way was to be cut by them through the Rock for the Water, which gave them more Uneasiness than the Thoughts of the cooling Refreshment gave them Pleasure. But when, upon the striking of the Rock with the Rod of Moses only, a large Stream of Water forthwith followed, they praised God for giving them *ωὐνησαν* and *ἐλπίσσαν.*" An Expression not very unlike our Author's. And to encrease the Miracle, this crystal Stream not only refreshed them for that Time in their Distress, but even followed them in their Journey. The Jewish Rabbins are very fond of the Conceit, that the Rock itself followed them; but others, to soften this Prodigy, more wisely assert, that the Water from the Rock became a River, and flowed after the Camp. The Reasons for this Opinion are, 1. That from the Time of this Flow of Waters from the Rock at Horeb, until they came to Kadesh, the Israelites are not said ever to have wanted Water, which they must have continually stood in need of, and indeed perished for want of in their Passage through the Wilderness, if God had not thus miraculously supplied them. 2. Some Expressions in the *Psalms* seem to imply, that a River from the Rock attended them from Place to Place in their Journeyings; *Psal. lxxviii. 16, 17. 21. cv. 40.* 3. St. Paul says, that they drank of the Rock which followed them, *1 Cor. x. 4.* which the best Interpreters agree in expounding of the Water that flowed from it, and went along with them. See Pool, Whitby, Hammond in loc. and Usber's *Annals ad A. M. 2513.* The rendering of the Syriac Version of this Passage is very particular and remarkable, *Quibus & aquam dedisti in optima illa vita, quæ non deficit,* [who seems to have read *ἀνεκπλήρης ζωῆς* instead of *ἀνεκπλήρης*] alluding probably to that living Water, *John iv. 14.* which our Saviour promises to all the Faithful, which shall be in them a Well of Water springing up into everlasting Life. In like manner this Miracle has been allegorized by the Fathers, and is, according to them, a visible Representation of the

Overflowings of Grace; for Christ is the true Rock from whence issue those Waters of Life, which quench the Thirst of his People, during the weary Steps they take in the Wilderness of this mortal Life.

Ver. 8. *Declaring by that Thirst then how thou hadst punished their Adversaries.* A Contrast or Comparison is carried on here, and in the Verse foregoing, between the Thirst of the Egyptians, occasioned by their foul and distempered Water, and that of the Israelites in the Wilderness; the first was the just Punishment of Obstinacy and Wickedness; the second was designed to prove and admonish God's chosen People. The Sense of the whole Verse is, that the Israelites perceived, by their Thirst of a short Continuance, the different manner of God's dealing with them and with the Egyptians; the former he treated with Mercy and Favour; and the latter with the utmost Rigour and Severity. St. Austin observes, that in this Plague, *bibentibus erat exitium, non bibentibus pœna ob sitim quam sustinebat.*—De Mirac. Scrip. i. e. unto them that drank it was Death, and unto them that drank not it was a sore Punishment on account of their great Thirst. Philo says yet more expressly, *πολλοὶ δὲ ἀνθρώπων ὄχλος ἀπὸ δίψης διαφθαρείς, κ. τ. λ. hominum siti eneciorum magnus numerus acervatim jacebat in triviis, non sufficientibus domesticis ad sepulture officia.* De Vita Mosis, lib. i. i. e. a great Number of Persons, dead with Thirst, lay by Heaps in the Streets, their Servants or Friends not being able or sufficient to bury them.

[Ver. 9. For when they were tried, albeit in Mercy, &c. *Ἐπειγόμεσαν, καίπερ ἐν ἰλθεί, &c.* The Beginning of this Verse would have been much clearer thus: *Ὅτε ᾧ ἐπειγόμεσαν δίκαιοι, ἐν ἰλθεί παιδευόμενοι ἔγνωσαν πῶς ἐν ὀργῇ κενόμενοι ἀσεβεῖς ἱερανοζούτο.* For *ἐπειγόμεσαν*, as it now stands, may belong to the Egyptians (who were the Persons last mentioned) as well as to the Israelites; and *καίπερ* does not seem to be of any use here: And then to *δίκαιοι* would be opposed *ἀσεβεῖς* (as xii. 9.) to *ἐν ἰλθεί* would answer *ἐν ὀργῇ*, to *παιδευόμενοι*, *κενόμενοι*. This, I say, would have been much clearer; but I do not say that the Author wrote so, because I find the like Omission of the same Word ch. xviii. 25. and the Accuracy of the genuine Greek Writers is not to be looked for in this Author.]

*Ibid. They knew how the Ungodly were judged in Wrath and tormented.* *Ἐγινωσαν πῶς ἐν ὀργῇ κενόμενοι ἀσεβεῖς ἱερανοζούτο.* I think the Rendering of Coverdale's and the ancient English Versions far preferable: *When they were tortured with fatherly Mercy, they knowledged how the Ungodly were judged, and punished thorow the Wrath of God.* The Geneva Bible is to the same Effect, *When they were chastised in Mercy, they knew how the Ungodly were judged, and punished in Wrath,* *ἐν ὀργῇ ἱερανοζούτο*, which is the better Construction. *Judged in Wrath*, as our Version has it, seems to carry a Reflexion upon the Equity of God's Proceedings. The Oriental Versions understand it in like manner, and render accordingly.

*Ibid. Thirsting in another manner than the Just.* The different Effect of their Thirst sufficiently



ficiently appears from the Description in ver. 8. that of the *Israelites* being only troublesome for a time, but the other was dangerous and fatal. The *Greek*, *Vulgate*, and all the ancient Versions entirely omit this Sentence in this Place. Our *Translators* seem to have inserted it here, to illustrate this Verse, and specify the Torment: It is fetched from ver. 14. in the *Vatican Copy* (the 15th in *Grabe's* Edition) where it certainly is very improperly placed, as having no manner of relation to the Context. So that one cannot but wonder how all the Copies and Versions should conspire, as it were, in this Mistake, and our *Translators* alone be so sagacious as to find it out, and restore this dislocated Passage to its proper Place. Though it would not come in amiss at the End of the 8th Verse, reading only διψήσαντας, instead of διψήσαντες.

Ver. 10. For these thou didst admonish and try as a Father, but the other as a severe King thou didst condemn and punish.] When the *Israelites* were chastised, their Trial continued but a short Time, and God never entirely withdrew his Mercy and Loving-kindness from them; even their Chastisement was tempered with Tenderness. But the *Egyptians* were loaded with Miseries without Intermission; for after having harassed them with ten successive Plagues, which terminated in the Death of their First-born, God at length drowned the whole Army of *Pharaoh* at once in the *Red Sea*. This Distinction, and the different Manner of God's acting, is well expressed here under the respective Images of an indulgent Father, and an inexorable King: And the Opposition is no less beautifully preserved in the Terms *ἐκτιμᾶς* and *ἐχέτας*. As the former implies Kindness and Respect, so the latter signifies the Extremity of Punishment, the putting a Man to the Rack, and examining him by Torture. And thus it is used by this Author, ch. i. 9. ii. 19. iv. 6. vi. 4. and in the Book of *Ecclesiasticus*, ch. xvi. 22. ch. xxiii. 10. The Comment of *Messieurs du Port Royal* has a judicious and useful Reflexion upon this Passage, "That we may hence learn with what "Patience and Thankfulness the Just ought "to bear the Evils which happen to them in "this Life; for though Calamities are common to them with the Wicked, yet the Reason of sending them is infinitely different: "God sends Afflictions to good Men as a "tender Father, who chastises his Children "because he loves them; but with respect "to the Wicked, they are to be considered as "the just Punishment of an abused Master, or "an enraged King." *Comm. in Loc.*

Ver. 11. And whether they were absent or present, they were vexed alike.] Some Interpreters understand this, that whether the *Egyptians* were present, or at a distance from the Place where *Moses* was, they were equally tormented; for there was this very remarkable Difference between the Miracles wrought by *Moses*, and those of the Magicians, that his were permanent, and extended over all the Land of *Egypt* at the same time. *Moses* no sooner orders Frogs or Locusts, but they appear at once, and cover the Face of the whole Coun-

try, so that the Absent, as well as Present, are equally incommoded by them; but theirs were but of short continuance, and disappeared almost as soon as produced; and their Influence went no farther than the Spot where the Magicians themselves were. But the Context seems rather to require the following Sense, that the *Egyptians* were equally tormented in the Absence and Presence of the *Israelites*, both when they were in *Egypt*, and after they were delivered from it. When they were in *Egypt*, they were visited with ten different Plagues on their account; and after their Departure thence, they were envious and uneasy at the Prosperity of a People whom they hated and despised. [But then it must have been ἀπόντων ἢ παρόντων: For ἀπόντες and παρόντες, in the present Context, must belong to the *Egyptians*, because of ἐρεχόντο.]

Ver. 12. For a double Grief came upon them, and a Groaning for the Remembrance of Things past.] Διπλὴ γὰρ αὐτοῖς ἐλαβε λύπη, καὶ στεναγμός μνημῶν τῶν παρελθουσῶν. The true Rendering is, Grief and Groaning came upon them doubly (for διπλὴ, scil. ὁδῶ, seems here to be used adverbially) upon the Remembrance of Things past. Our Translation expresses this ambiguously, it seems as if one Member of the Sentence was wanting; but the ancient *English* Versions quite mistake the Sense of the Passage; for can any thing be more foreign to it, than the Rendering of *Coverdale's* and the *Geneva Bibles*? Their Grief was double; namely, Mourning, and the Remembrance of Things past. Or διπλὴ may be understood, not numerally, to signify a precise Number, but as a *Hebraism*, that great Grief and Concern fell on them, upon the Recollection of Things past. *Junius* seems to have translated it not amiss, *Duplex eos occupavit dolor & gemitus, rerum præteritarum recordantes*. And thus *Calmet*, *Ils trouvoient pour eux un double sujet de peines, & de larmes, en se souvenant du passé*. "Their first Grief," says he, "was "their Reflexion upon their past Plagues, "their Want of Water, the Death of their "Cattle, and that more lamentable one of "their First-born. Their second Cause of "Grief and Concern was the Consideration of "the Happiness of the *Israelites* since their "going out of *Egypt*, and God's merciful "dealing with them in the Wilderness. The "first arose from a Shame of being seen in "such distressed Circumstances by a People "whom they despised; and the latter, through "a Jealousy of the Happiness which that People, through God's Favour, was possessed "of." *Comment. in loc.* [The Place is certainly faulty: For μνημῶν τῶν παρελθουσῶν is unintelligible, and cannot signify for or upon the Remembrance of Things past, which would have been μνήμης τῶν παρελθουσῶν, as the *Alexand. MS.* and *Complut. Edit.* read the last Word: And it was obvious enough to change μνήμης into the Plural μνημῶν, when a Participle Plural followed. This, I believe, is the true Reading, because of the Authority of the *Alexand. MS.* otherwise I should have preferred στεναγμός μνημῶν τῶν παρελθουσῶν.]

Ver. 13. When they heard by their own Punishments



ments the other to be benefited, they had some feeling of the Lord.] Our Version is somewhat obscure; the Meaning is, "When they understood the Israelites to be assisted and refreshed with a Supply of such Things, as they were punished with the want of, and considered the different Conduct of God towards his Friends and Enemies, they at length acknowledged his Power, which before they disregarded, and were obliged to own, that what had happened to them was from the avenging Hand of God and the Effect of his enraged Justice." For the Reason of this different Procedure with respect to the same Thing, or Element, was to exemplify to the World in general, and the Egyptians in particular, that God hath Power over all his Creatures to continue or alter them, to give or take away the Use of them, from whom, or in what manner he pleases.

Ver. 14. *For whom they rejected with Scorn when he was long before thrown out at the casting forth of the Infants, him in the end, when they saw what came to pass, they admired.* i. e. that same Moses, who had been sometimes the Subject of their Raillery, whom they had treated with Scorn and Contempt in the Execution of his Ministry, who had been formerly exposed and thrown into the River by the cruel Order of Pharaoh, and from a happy Escape thence received his Name, in the end commanded their Wonder and Admiration by the Power of his Miracles, which declared him to be the Favourite of Heaven, the Ruler of Nature, and the God of Pharaoh. And it is the Opinion of some Writers, that even among the Egyptians, Moses was honoured, after Death, with religious Veneration. Eusebius, from the Authority of Artapanus, says expressly, that he was honoured among that People *ισοθὲς τιμῆς*, *Præpar. Evang. lib. ix. Cyril. cont. Jul. lib. i. Tenison on Idolatry.* Our Version of this Place is obscure; it represents the Egyptians ridiculing Moses when he was flung into the River; which scoffing, though it may well be supposed true in general, yet is not particularly applicable to Moses at that Time: It is better therefore, and more agreeable to Truth, to understand this of him in his public Character, and in his Employment, as God's Messenger to Pharaoh, *ἀπείπον χλευάζοντες*, was often true. I think therefore the Sense would be more determinate and clear, if Part of the first Sentence was included in a Parenthesis, thus, *ὃν ᾧ (ὃν ἐκθέσει πάλαι ριφέντα) ἀπείπον χλευάζοντες, ἐπὶ τέλει τῶν ἐκθέσεων ἰθαύμασαν* i. e. him, whom they rejected with Scorn (that same Moses who was long before thrown out with the rest of the Children) they in the end admired, &c. For it was a remarkable Instance of Providence, as well as Matter of great Surprise to the Egyptians, that he who was thrown into the River should be the Instrument of turning that River into Blood, and that the Israelites, seemingly an abandoned and forsaken People, should be so wonderfully succoured and preserved.

[Ibid. *When he was long before thrown out.* *Ἐν ἐκθέσει πάλαι ριφέντα*, &c. I take these Words to contain and express the Subject or Matter of their *χλευασμός*, or jocular Mockery (not Scorn,

as our Version hath it) and therefore not to be put in a Parenthesis. I would translate it thus: *For whom they rejected with Mockery, as a Fellow formerly thrown out, when the Infants were exposed, him in the end, &c.* This Circumstance of the Egyptian's Raillery and Jokes upon the outcast Moses, seems to be a Fiction (though not an improbable one) of the Author himself; for I think there is nothing of this mentioned in the History.]

[Ver. 15. *But for the foolish Devices of their Wickedness, whereby being deceived they worshiped Serpents void of Reason.* [*Ἀλλ' ὃ λογισμῶν ἀσωμάτων*, &c. This answers to ver. 6. *ἀλλ' ἡ μὲν πηγὴς*, &c.] God, by way of Punishment for the Folly and Iniquity of the Egyptians, permitted them to fall into the most ridiculous Idolatries, to adore even Crocodiles and venomous Serpents. Jupiter in Lucian says, that the Egyptian Gods were *αἰχρῆ καὶ γελοιότατοι*, filthy and more ridiculous than the Gods of other Nations. De Concil. Deorum. And it is observable, that their Deities are called not only by the Fathers, but by the Poets, *Portenta* instead of *Numina*. Thus Juvenal:

*Quis nescit qualia demens*

*Ægyptus portenta colat?*

Sat. xvi.

And Virgil pays them no greater Compliment when he calls them

*Omnigenūmq; Deūm monstra.*

Æn. lib. viii. v. 698.

Origen has the like Charge against the Egyptians, and exposes some of their favourite Deities with much Pleasantry. "When you approach," says he, "their sacred Places, they have glorious Groves and beautiful Chapels, Temples with magnificent Gates and stately Portico's, and many mysterious and religious Ceremonies; but when once you are entered, and got within their Temples, you shall see nothing but a Cat, an Ape, or a Crocodile, a Goat or a Dog, worshiped with the most solemn Veneration." Orig. cont. Cels. lib. iii. Ælian says, that Serpents among the Egyptians *τιμῶνται ἰσχυρῶς*, are zealously worshiped, that they are kept in their Houses, and become so tame, that even among their Children they are innocent and inoffensive. He describes their Latibula, Diet, and the manner of feeding them, and shews in many Instances the great Care taken of them, and the particular Regard paid to them; Ælian. lib. xvii. Hist. Animal. cap. 5. Philo is very express as to the Crocodile in particular, *Ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ τὸ ἀνθρωποφάγον καὶ θηρίων ἀργαλειώτατον κροκόδειλος*, κ. τ. λ. i. e. The Crocodile, which devours Men, and is the fiercest of Animals, is bred in the sacred River Nile, and abounds in those Parts where he is worshiped by the Natives. Fragm. Philon. tom. ii. p. 646. Juvenal, to expose the Superstition of the Egyptians, very ludicrously describes a fierce Contest between the Inhabitants of two neighbouring Towns about the superior Honour of a Serpent or an Ape; Sat. xv. and Tully, amongst the monstrous Objects of their Worship, reckons *Crocodilos, Aspidas, Serpentes*. De Consol. See Note on c. xv. 18. Herodotus speaks of *ἱεροὶ ὄφεις*, or sacred Serpents about Thebes, which, when they were dead, were buried



buried by the Superstitious with great Pomp in the Temple of *Jupiter. Herod. in Euterpe.* It is certain, that in the *Egyptian* Hieroglyphics no Symbol was more frequent than that of a Serpent. See *Orus Apollo.* Many Reasons are assigned by the Learned for the particular Honour paid to Serpents, as because they can twine and turn themselves into all Shapes; hence probably called *σκολιοὶ ὄφεις* by our Author, c. xvi. 5. and because they enjoy, as it were, perpetual Youth, by annually casting their Skin, and therefore not improperly made the Symbols of Life and Health in *Egypt* and other Countries: But these, however plausible for their being made symbolical Representations, are not sufficient Reasons for their Worship, which more properly owes its Original to the Subtlety and Artifice of the Devil; for it is his favourite Stratagem, his darling Engine to deceive Mankind under this Form, encouraged, no doubt, by the fatal Success of his first Attempt upon *Eve* in this borrowed Shape. Nor is this true only of the *Egyptians*, but, wherever the Devil reigned, the Serpent was had in some peculiar Veneration. See *Stillingfleet's Orig. Sac.* B. iii. c. 3.

Ibid. And vile Beasts.] Tully observes of the *Egyptians*, that they consecrated almost every kind of Beasts; *Omne fere genus bestiarum Ægyptii consecrârunt.* De Nat. Deor. lib. iii. But the sacred Animals which they principally regarded were, according to a learned Writer, these that follow, viz. "The Serpent, the Beetle, the Hawk, the Wolf, the Lion, the Goose, the Crocodile, the Bull, the Cat, the Dog, and the Baboon. These, as being symbolical of their two principal Deities, *Osiris* and *Isis*, they accounted sacred, and substituted them in the Place of their Deities." *Shaw's Travels*, p. 397. At first, as *Plutarch* thinks, they did not directly worship these, but adored the Divinity that was represented in, and by them. But though it is certain, that the *Egyptians* chose at first the Figures of Beasts for the Symbols, or Hieroglyphical Signs of their Gods, yet it is as certain, that at length their Worship came to be terminated in them; for as they worshiped their *Jupiter Ammon* under the Figure of a Ram, their *Anubis* under that of a Dog (from whence *Virgil* calls him, *Latrator Anubis*) and their *Apis* under that of a Bull or Ox; so in time, at least among the Vulgar, who considered not sufficiently the Intention of these Symbols, these Representations were esteemed as real and original Deities themselves. *Lucian's* Account of the Introduction of these Animals into their Theology is very extraordinary, and even ludicrous, "That in the Wars between the Gods and the Giants, the former for Safety fled into *Egypt*, where they assumed the Bodies of Beasts and Birds, which they ever after retained, and were accordingly worshiped and revered in them, *εἰσέτι καὶ νῦν φυλάττειν τὰς αἰετὸς μορφὰς πρὸς θεοῖς.*" De Sacrificiis. *Grotius* thinks the Original of this Practice of worshiping Beasts came from hence, viz. that the Stars were by Astronomers cast into the Forms and Shapes of particular Beasts, and great Benefits were supposed to be received

from their Influence. *Explicat. Decal.* And it must be confessed indeed, that many of the Animals, of which the Stars bear the Name, and to which, by a strong Fancy, they were imagined to bear some Resemblance, were honoured with a religious Veneration by the *Egyptians*, such as the Bull, the Ram, the Goat, and the Dog. The first of these Animals, being their favourite *Apis*, the Prophet *Jeremiah* takes notice of, c. xvi. 15. and by a severe Sarcasm, according to the Version of the LXX, exposes the Worship of it; for he represents it as flying from the Desolation of *Egypt*: And the Question, *Διὰ τί ἔφυγεν ἀπὸ σὲ ὁ ἄπης, ὁ μὲνχος ὁ ἐκλεκτός σου;* (which is the Reading likewise of the *Arabic* Version) shews its Inability to assist others in Distress, though by the *Egyptians* esteemed *Θεὸς ἐναργέστατος.* See *Ælian. De Animal.* lib. xi. c. 10. *Spencer, De Legib. Hebr.* tom. ii. p. 848. The last, viz. the Dog, was the peculiar Object of Worship of a whole *Egyptian* Province, and was an Animal revered and sacred from one End of *Egypt* to the other. This *Juvenal* means, when he says,

*Oppida tota canem venerantur* — Sat. xv.

And in the same manner the other Pagan Writers make themselves merry with the *Egyptian* Superstitions. See Note on c. xii. 24. xv. 18. Nor can we, if more Authorities were wanted, have a stronger Instance of the very particular Regard paid by the *Egyptians* to Dogs, Cats, and Sheep, than what *Prideaux* mentions, viz. that *Cambyses* placed these in the very Front of his Army, when he took *Pelusium*, as knowing them to be sacred to, and honoured by them. *Connex.* vol. ii. p. 14. in Not.

Ibid. Thou didst send a Multitude of unreasonable Beasts [or irrational Animals] upon them for Vengeance.] The Author of this Book mentions elsewhere, c. xvi. 1. Beasts being sent among the *Egyptians* as Instruments of Vengeance; though no express mention is made of this in *Exodus*, or any Part of Scripture. Indeed, in *Exod.* c. viii. 21. where the Text reads, *Behold, I will send Swarms of Flies upon thee*, the Margin has it, *a Mixture of noisome Beasts*; and the *Chaldee* Paraphrase on *Psal.* xviii. 45. renders more explicitly, *a mixed Multitude of vile Beasts of the Field.* [Swarms of Flies are indeed *ἄλογα ζῷα*, unreasonable Beasts, or Brutes, which acquits the Author from any Suspicion of a Mistake.] The Jews have a Notion, as appears from the *Author of the Life and Death of Moses*, quoted by Bishop *Patrick* in loc. that God sent Lions, Wolves, Bears, and Leopards, and such like furious Beasts, which killed not only their Cattle in the Field, but their Children in their Houses; which seems likewise to be the Opinion of *Josephus*, who, among the *Egyptian* Plagues, reckons *θνητὰ παντοῖα καὶ πολύτροπα.* *Antiq.* lib. ii. c. 14. But as *Bochart, De Muis*, and other good Writers, understand these Passages of Scripture of Swarms of Flies only, so it is plain from what follows in our Author, that vile Beasts are not here to be understood, but rather Frogs, Locusts, and venomous Flies. And thus *Calmet* renders *des grenouilles, des mouches, des sauterelles, des poux.* Comm.



*Comm. in loc.* I think therefore here, and in *Revel. iv. 6.* where there is the like Mistake, *ζῶα* would be better rendered *living Creatures* than *Beasts*; and so the same Word is well translated, *Ezek. i. 5.* The Reflexion of *Messieurs du Port Royal* upon this Occasion is very just, and too fine to be omitted; *L'Homme abuse de la creature: i. e.* "Man abused the Creature to provoke God, and God made use of the Creature to punish Man: He shewed his Equity at the same time in proportioning the Punishment to the Crime, and his Power in making even the smallest, and otherwise the most despicable Creatures, become formidable to Man, which he can do with the greatest Ease, when he pleases to make use of them as the Instruments of his Vengeance." *Comm. in loc.*

Ver. 16. *That they might know, that wherewithal a Man sinneth, by the same also shall he be punished.*] In God's Government of the World, Instances are very frequent where the Nature of the Sin, and the Punishment attending it, have very remarkably answered to each other. It would be almost infinite to transcribe prophane History upon this Occasion; but it may not be unacceptable to exemplify the Truth of this Observation in general, from the principal Facts of this Nature recorded in Scripture, nor improper to illustrate it from a Survey of the Plagues of *Egypt* in particular. To begin with the first Sin, which, it is melancholy to observe, was almost as early as the very Existence of Man: *Adam* eats of the forbidden Fruit of the Earth, and the Curse of the Ground was the Punishment to him and all his Posterity. The Overflowing of Vice in the old World was miraculously punished with a Deluge of Waters; and *Sodom*, that had burnt so long with unnatural Lust, was at length consumed by Fire and Brimstone. *Nadab* and *Abihu*, for putting strange Fire in their Censers, were instantly struck dead in the Tabernacle by Fire from Heaven. *Samuel* observed the like Rule of Justice and Retaliation in the Execution of *Agag*, pronouncing, *That as his Sword had made Woman childless, so should his Mother be childless among Women.* The Adultery and Homicide of *David* was revenged by the Incests and Murders of his Children; and, because he gloried in the Number of his People, he was punished with the Loss of seventy thousand of them by Pestilence. And the barbarous *Adonibezek*, who had cruelly dismembered so many captive Princes, met himself at last with a suitable Requital, and was treated in the same manner. *Hezekiah's* Vanity in shewing his Riches and Treasures to the Embassadors of the King of *Babylon*, was requited with the Threat, that all that he had thus proudly shewn, should one day be carried away into *Babylon*. The like Return was made to *Saul*, *Goliath*, *Abag*, *Jezabel*, and *Jeboiakim*. See also *Ezekiel xxxv. 15.* *Isaiab xxxiii. 1.* *Joel iii. 6, 7, 8.* But this Retribution, called *ὁμομετρία*, or *the punishing like with like*, will be best and most appositely exemplified in the History of the *Egyptians* in particular, where the Connexion between

the Crime and the Punishment is visibly distinguishable in every one of the Plagues:

1. God turned the River into Blood, and thereby rendered its Water not only useless, but unwholesome, to punish the Death of the *Hebrew* Infants thrown into it. 2. The disagreeable Croaking of Frogs throughout the Land of *Egypt*, represents either the Cries of the Children, or the Shrieks of the oppressed *Israelites*. 3. The Nastiness of Lice was not only designed to chastise the Effeminacy and Luxury of the *Egyptians*, but, according to the *Jews*, was intended to punish them for employing the *Israelites* in Dirt and Filth. 4. The Stings of the venomous Flies revenged their oppression by cruel and painful Tasks. 5. God destroyed their Cattle by a Murrain, because they had deprived the *Israelites* of their Cattle, and had used them like Beasts of Burden. Or we may suppose this Plague to be inflicted for their Worship of Beasts. 6. The Boils on the *Egyptians* themselves from Head to Foot, represented the Marks of Cruelty upon the Flesh of the *Israelites* by their Blows and Scourges. 7. God revenged their Reproaches, Insults, and menacing Language, by Lightnings, strange Hail, and Thunders, which the *Hebrew*, and the *LXX* style the *Voices of God*, and the *Chaldee Paraphrase* very expressly, *Tonitrua Maledictionis*. 8. As they robbed and deprived the *Israelites* of their Wages, the Locusts in return eat up all the Fruit of their Ground. 9. The *Egyptians* kept the *Israelites* close Prisoners, and God confined them as remarkably by that thick Darkness which would not permit them to stir. 10. They evil entreated God's First-born, his chosen People, for a long time; and God destroyed all their First-born in one Moment. In the *Jewish* Writings there are many Examples, in which the Vengeance of God has discovered itself in a Manner and Way adapted and suited to the very Crimes. See particularly, 2 *Maccabees ix. 5, 6.* and *chap. iv. 24. 32.* Nor is the Connexion less visible in the History of the Church, and its Persecutors.

Ver. 17. *For thy Almighty Hand that made the World of Matter without Form.*] The Author seems to intimate by this Expression, that God created the World out of pre-existent Matter; and possibly he may speak this according to the Opinion of the *Platonists*, who held not any temporal Creation of the World in the strict and proper Sense of that Word, but the Production of its Form only from formless *Hylè*, which they called *ἀνομοία*, or *Shapelessness*. *Plato*, speaking of the Almighty *δημιουργός*, says, *εἰς τὰς αὐτὴν ἡγᾶται ἐν τῇ ἀταξίᾳ*. In *Timæo*. But *Chalcidius*, in his Commentaries upon this Piece, after a great deal of learned Pains taken to search out the true Meaning of *Plato* concerning the Origin of *Hylè*, thinks him to mean, not only the bringing of Matter into Form, but the original Production of Matter itself. *Chalcid. in Tim. p. 377.* Allowing therefore *Plato* to assert a Pre-existence of rude Matter before the Formation of the World, yet he may be understood in the same Sense that we believe a *Chaos*



to have gone before the bringing the World into the Order it is now in. Our Author therefore, though in this Sentiment he should transcribe *Plato*, may, and probably does mean, that God at first created all Matter out of nothing, which in the Beginning was *Tobu ve bobu*, i. e. *without Form, and void*, as our Version has it; but in the *Hexaëmeron*, God gave every thing its Form, and ranged and placed them in the Order we now see them. And this the Writer to the *Hebrews* seems to mean, when he says, *That the Worlds were made by the Word of God, so that things which are seen were made*, ἐκ μὴ φαινομένων, *Heb. xi. 3.* or rather, ἐξ ἑνός, as the Writer of the second Book of *Maccabees* more fully expresses it, c. vii. 28. For this, as it conveys a higher Idea of God's Omnipotence, so is it likewise more agreeable to the Scope of the Argument; for the reasoning in the following Verses, we may observe, proceeds *a majori ad minus*, that if God could create the World out of nothing, and stamp Beauty upon the rude *Chaos*, he might with much more Ease make any Part of the Creation fulfil his vindictive Will, or even create new Instruments of his Wrath on purpose.

*Ibid.* *Wanted not Means to send among them a Multitude of Bears or fierce Lions.* "God did not punish the Obstinacy of the Egyptians all at once, but by Degrees and Intervals, that he might evidence his Mercy, even in the pouring forth of his Wrath and Fury, and the Desire he hath that lesser Chastisements might prevent greater, and exterminating Judgments. It was as easy for God to have sent at first Lions to have destroyed them utterly, as to send the Flies and Frogs by way of a timely Warning; but he restrains the Course of his Wrath, and contents himself at first to inflict a lighter Punishment, to the end that Men, being affrighted with those timely and more favourable strokes, may judge how intolerable it will be to bear the Extremity of his Wrath, and to drink the Dregs of the Cup of his Fury. But when he meets with Hearts altogether hardened, he makes them pass through all the Degrees of his Anger; he is forced by their Impenitence to proceed to Extremity, and to be as firm in his Justice, as they are in their Obstinacy." *Royaumont's Hist. Bib. Philo.* who often imitates our Author, has likewise some useful Reflexions upon this Place, ἵσως τις ἐπιζητήσει διὰ τί τοῖς ἔθνεσιν ἀφανέσι καὶ ἡμελημένοις ζώοις ἐτιμωρεῖτο τὴν χώραν, παρεῖς ἀεὶ καὶ λέοντας καὶ λ. i. e. "Perhaps some may enquire why God punished Egypt with so small and despicable Animals, passing by Bears and Lions. The Answer is, 1. That God designed to correct the Inhabitants of that Place, rather than quite destroy them; for if he had intended the latter, he never would have made use of such small, and seemingly insignificant Creatures, as his Instruments, but rather *Famine*, or the *Pestilence*, which are Scourges from Heaven, and carry a sweeping Desolation along with them. 2. The different Manner of God's Procedure from that of his Creatures is

"hence discernible; for when Men go to war to revenge an Injury, they form the strongest Alliances, and such as are able to assist them with the most powerful Succours, and to strengthen their Weakness most effectually: But God, who is the Supreme Power, and all-sufficient for his own great Purposes, if at any time he makes use of Instruments of Vengeance, does not chuse the greatest, or the strongest, being indifferent as to the natural Powers of the Creatures; but he gives to small, and otherwise feeble Things, a superior and uncontrollable Force, and by them more surprisngly punishes the Wicked. For what is more despicable than Lice? And yet such was their avenging Power, as to subdue the Egyptians, and even extort a Confession from the Magicians themselves, that this was the Finger of God." *Phil. de Mose*, vol. ii. Edit. Mangey.

Ver. 18. *Or unknown wild Beasts full of Rage newly created.* [*Νεοκτίστος θύμῃ*, the true Reading is *νεοκτίστος*.] This may either mean Beasts of an uncommon Kind, and of a Fierceness hitherto unobserved, or Beasts that have unusual Venom, or in a greater Degree; for so *θύμῃ* is often used; see c. xvi. 5. and thus *Calmet* understands it, *Des bêtes d'une espece inconue, pleine d'une fureur toute extraordinaire, ou d'un venin nouveau.* *Comm. in Loc.* The *Vulgate* renders, *Novi generis irā plenas ignotas bestias*, which may take in any, or all the foregoing Senses.

*Ibid.* *Breathing out either a fiery Vapour, or filthy Scents of scattered Smoke, or shooting horrible Sparkles out of their Eyes.* Our Version follows a Copy which read *βεῶμους*, *filthy Scents*; [and *λικμωμένους* for *λικμωμένους*] but *Calmet* thinks *βεῶμον*, which other Copies retain, the true Reading, and understands it of Smoke, flung out with great Force and much Noise, like that which is thrown out from Mount *Vesuvius*, or that which the Poets have feigned to issue from some fabulous Animals, who are described by them as throwing Fire with a roaring Noise out of their Mouth and Nostrils: But should not the Reading then be ἡ βεῶμω λικμωμένους καπνόν, or *with a mighty Noise puffing out Smoke*? [The *Alexand. MS.* (and *Complut. Edit.*) reads *βεῶμον*, i. e. *βεῶμον, factorem*, the Letter *o* being put for *ω*, as is usual in that MS; and *Complut.* has *λικμωμένους* instead of *λικμωμένους*: Both which, I believe, are the only true Readings, ἡ βεῶμω λικμωμένους καπνόν, or *a Stink of Smoke*, i. e. *βεῶμωδῃ καπνόν*, *stinking Smoke*, violently thrown out. For stink (*βεῶμος*) without doubt would be a greater Plague and Punishment than Noise (*βεῶμος*).] The Description here of imaginary Beasts formed for Destruction, which is very poetical, is not unlike that fine one of the *Leviathan* in the Book of *Job*, with this Difference only, that those Circumstances of Terror which are here given to this or that particular Species of Beasts, are all united in him who can open the Doors of his Face, his Teeth are terrible round about; by his Neesings a Light doth shine, and his Eyes are like the Eyelids of the Morning: Out of his Mouth go burning Lamps, and Sparks of Fire leap out; out of his Nostrils goeth Smoke, as out of a seething Caldron,



*Caldron, his Breath kindleth Coals, and a flame goeth out of his Mouth; in his Neck lodgeth Strength, and Sorrow is turned into Joy before him.* Where the Rendering of the LXX is observable, and conveys a more lively Idea of Terror, ἐμπροσθεν αὐτοῦ προέχει ἀπώλεια, i. e. *before him marches Destruction.* Behold, the Hope of him is in vain; shall not one be cast down even at the Sight of him? ch. xli. 9. 18, 19, 20, 21. Ovid's Description, which has been much admired, comes far short of the inspired Writer in the Sublimity of the Sentiments:

*Ecce Adamanteis Vulcanum naribus efflant  
Æripedes Tauri, taetæque vaporibus herbæ  
Ardent ————— Metam. l. vii.*

Ver. 20. *Yea, without these might they have fallen down with one Blast, being persecuted of Vengeance, and scattered abroad through the Breath of thy Power.* Λιμνηθέντες ὑπὸ πνεύματος θανάτου, i. e. *by one pestilential Blast of Air*, as it is generally understood; or it may be rendered in a higher Sense, *by the Spirit of thy Power*, or *the powerful πνεῦμα, the Spirit of the Almighty.* See the Note on ch. v. 23. The Sentiment, according to the common Acceptation, is very grand and magnificent, that God could have created Beasts on purpose for Vengeance, whose very Looks, even without their Violence or Poison, should have scattered Death; and with more Ease could he have destroyed the Egyptians by a Look, a Word, a Blast. And thus he destroyed the formidable Army of the Assyrians; for when all Things seemed desperate, and the Enemies of Jerusalem thought themselves just Masters of it, God sends his Blast, and instantly a hundred fourscore and five thousand become dead Corpses; Isai. xxxvi. 7. 36. The Psalmist has finely expressed this, *by the Blasting of the Breath of God's Displeasure*; Psal. xviii. 15. which includes at once, what our Author has expressed in both these Sentences. Job, whom this Writer seems often to imitate, expresses himself concerning the Desolation of the Wicked in like manner; *They that plow Iniquity, and sow Wickedness, by the Blast of God perish, and by the Breath of his Nostrils are they consumed*, ch. iv. 8, 9. By any of these means might the Egyptians have perished, *being persecuted of Vengeance*, [τῆς δίκης. See upon i. 16.] and pursued by it, which the Vulgate understands, *of the Stings of their own Consciences, persecutionem passi ab ipsis factis suis*; and so Coverdale renders, *being persecuted of their awne Workes*. But though God can use all, or any of these extraordinary Instruments of Vengeance, yet his known and ordinary Way of Dealing is to follow the impartial Rules of Justice, and to proportion his Punishments to the Nature and Quality of Men's Crimes.

Ibid. *But thou hast ordered all things in Measure, and Number, and Weight.* This Aphorism is very just, when applied to the Beauty and Harmony of God's natural Works; but the Context necessarily confines it to the Government of the moral World, viz. that God's Wrath, in his Dealings with the Children of Men, is neither rash nor hasty, inconsiderate nor excessive, fickle nor inconstant, groundless nor unjust, as that of his Creatures too gene-

rally is; but he exercises his Justice with the strictest Impartiality, in Measure, Number, and Weight, i. e. he considers the Nature of the Offence, and the Heinousness of its Aggravations, and proportions the Duration and Extent of his Vengeance accordingly. And as he acts not through Passion, Resentment, or Hatred, his Chastisements are always just, suited to the Greatness of Men's Faults, and the Demerit of Sinners. It was not therefore without good Reason that the Heathens have painted Jupiter with a Pair of Scales, in which he weighs and determines Men's respective Destinies:

*Jupiter ipse duas æquato examine lances  
Sustinet, & fata imponit diversa duorum, &c.*

Æn. xii.

Ver. 22. *For the whole World before thee is as a little Grain of the Balance.* As God's Justice weighs all Actions in an equal Balance, so, with respect to his Power, the whole World may be considered as the most minute and inconsiderable Thing in it. The Prophet Isaiah has the very same Comparison upon the like Occasion, which the LXX expresses almost in the same manner, ὡς ῥοπή ζυγῆς, ch. xl. 15. and it might as well have been expressed by the *Dust of the Balance* here, as our Version has it in that Place. For as the *Nothingness of the World*, if I may be allowed the Expression, is placed here in a Contrast with God's infinite Power, the most inconsiderable, the most imperceptible Atom is properer to be mentioned, than a little Grain, or any, even the least sensible Weight, as the Margin has it.

Ver. 23. *But thou hast Mercy upon all, for thou canst do all things, and winkest at the Sins of Men, because they should amend.* Ἐλεῖς ᾧ πάντας, ὅτι πάντα δύνῃσαι. "Οτι should not be translated *for*, but *because*; the Meaning being here, that Almighty Power is the Cause or Foundation of his unbounded Clemency, as Mercy is always the generous Attendant upon real Greatness. That this is the true Sense, is plain from y 26. and ch. xii. 16. This Mercy God offers to all, and suspends, for a Time, the Execution of his Vengeance, to give them time and room for Repentance; [the Words *because they should amend*, should be translated *that they may amend, or repent*] and when they do repent, for so Calmet further understands these Words, as a tender Father, whose Arms are always open to receive the penitent and returning Prodigal, he is ready to pardon all that truly turn to him. It is a pious Reflexion of Messieurs du Port Royal, "Happy are those who rightly understand the infinite Goodness of God, and improve the Consideration of it to their great Advantage; for they who know it only so far as to abuse it, and lose Sight of his Justice, in the pleasing Contemplation of his Mercy, and thereby make it the Occasion of Sin, have great Reason to fear, that his Patience and Forbearance, so often disregarded by them, will at length turn into Rigour and Severity, according to the Account of the true Solomon, Prov. i. 26, 27, &c."

Ver. 24. *For never wouldst thou have made any thing, if thou hadst hated it.* God did not make



make the World, or any thing in it, for the mere Exercise of his Power, much less for the Sport of his Tyranny; but his Goodness was the Cause of the Production of all Things. God is an all-sufficient Being, perfectly blessed in himself, nor was his essential Felicity capable of any Accession from the Existence of any Creature; it was therefore his free Goodness only that moved him to create all Things, that he might impart Happiness to all his Creatures. That Notion therefore is certainly not only groundless, but cruel, which represents God from all Eternity decreeing some Men to endless and unspeakable Torments, whom, according to this Opinion, he must create with a formed Design of making them unhappy, and falling, without any Demerit, a Sacrifice to his Justice. This gloomy Tenet of the *Supralapsarians*, as it is called, is inconsistent with Scripture, which represents God not only as loving all his Creatures, but emphatically, as *Love itself*. How much juster, and more worthy of the great Creator is that Sentiment of *Phercydes*, *εἰς ἑωῖα μεταβληθεὶς τὸν Δία μέλ- λουσα διμυρεῖν*, i. e. *God transformed himself into Love when he made the World*.

Ver. 25. *How could any thing have endured, if it had not been thy Will?* The same tender Affection which at first inclined God to create Things as they are, and to communicate his extensive Goodness to the several Orders of Beings, moves him to preserve the Things made by him, and to continue them in their original Condition. For there is nothing which God has created, that is either so distant, so little, or so inconsiderable, which God does not inspect and take care of, and, to speak in the Language of a polite Writer, which he does not essentially inhabit. And if the great Maker of all Things should not be thus graciously disposed towards his Creatures, if he should withdraw his over-ruling Providence, there would not only be the greatest Confusion, but an End of universal Nature. *Seneca* assigns the true Reason of the World's Continuance, *manent cuncta, non quia aeterna sunt, sed quia defenduntur curâ regentis*. Epist. lviii. and the *Psalmist*, the cause of its Decay, *When thou hidest thy Face, they are troubled; when thou takest away their Breath, they die and are turned again to their Dust*; Psal. civ. 29.

*Ibid.* Or been preserved, if not called by thee.] i. e. How could any thing have continued, if thou didst not order it to continue? And thus the *Syriac* Version understands it, *Quomodo conservaretur aliquid, nisi tu præciperes?* And *Calmet*, *Qui se pût conserver sans vôtre order?* *Comm. in Loc.* To call, when applied to God, is the same as to create, ordain, command. And thus *St. Paul* uses the Expression, *Rom. iv. 17. God, who quickeneth the Dead, calleth those Things which be not, as though they were*; i. e. he equally commands the Dead and the Living. And the *Psalmist*, cxlvii. 4. he *calleth them all by their Names*, i. e. he commands them into his Presence. [I believe the Word *καλεῖν* is faulty, and that it should be either *φιλεῖν* or *σελεῖν*. If we consider the Passage of *St. Paul*, *Rom. iv. 17.* attentively, we shall find, that the meaning of *καλεῖ τὰ μὴ ὄντα, ὡς ὄντα,*

is, *who speaketh of Things that do not yet exist, as if they were actually existing*: Because he knows that they will exist in their due Time, having already determined that they shall. So in the Instance there mentioned, when he said to *Abraham*, *I HAVE MADE thee a Father of many Nations*, is was not true, humanly speaking, at that Time; for *Abraham* had then *no Child*, and was near an hundred Years old. But God knew that it would be true afterwards in its proper Season, when he had quickened the Dead, *Abraham* and *Sarah* (see *Heb. xi. 12, 19.*) and enabled them to beget *Isaac*, and from him and his Posterity many Nations, and us (saies *St. Paul*, v. 16.) among the rest: And therefore he spake of Things not yet in being (*I have made thee, &c.*) as if they were at that Time actually in being. As this Interpretation is so obvious, and *St. Paul's* Argument and Reasoning absolutely require it, it is wonderful that no Commentator (at least of those whom I have seen) should have it upon it.

The Interpretation above given of *Psal. cxlvii. 4.* seems too lax. The meaning of the whole Verse, *He telleth the Number of the Stars, and calleth them all by their Names*, I take to be this: "The Number of the Stars even to us seems infinite, is perfectly known to him; and he can call each single Star by its Name, as easily as we can the Objects we are most conversant with, or as a Shepherd can each Sheep in his Flock." For it is not improbable from the Custom of the Eastern Nations, that this last Circumstance was hinted at and intended by the *Psalmist*; which will make a beautiful and poetical Allusion, considering God as a Shepherd, and the Stars his Flock. See *Dr. Hammond* on *John x. 4. He calleth his own Sheep by Name, and leadeth them out*. The former Part too of the Verse, *He telleth the Number of the Stars*, may be considered as an Allusion to the Custom of Shepherds.]

Ver. 26. *Thou sparest all, for they are thine, O Lord, thou Lover of Souls.* *Φιλόψυχος*, or *Lover of Souls*, is the highest Character that can be given of God. To call him *φιλεῖται* or *φιλέειν*, a *Lover of Jews or Greeks*, is, in comparison, a low and scanty Denomination, as it expresses his Care for only a Part of the Species. See *Barrow's Works*, tom. ii. p. 208. Nay, even *φιάνθρωπος* itself, which is the most complex Term, and takes in the Genus of Mankind, is not so amiable and perfect as *φιλόψυχος*, which includes his Love and Tenderness for the more valuable Part of our Nature. It is pretty observable, that God is nowhere in Scripture called *φιλάγγελος*, though even this Character, if it was predicated of God, would not, with respect to us at least, be so adorable. But as God is said here to spare all, and to be a *Lover of Souls* without Distinction, perhaps our Author may allude to that Command of God to *Moses*, *Exod. xxx. 12, 13, 14, 15.* that when they took the Sum or Number of the People, every Man so numbered, from twenty Years old and upwards, should pay half a *Shekel* to the Sanctuary, as a Ransom for his Soul to God, under the Penalty of a Plague to ensue the Neglect of such a Payment;



Payment; which was a most easy and favourable Capitation, inasmuch as when their Lives were the Forfeit of their Sins to God, God in Mercy thus accepted a small Ransom for them; and he accepted an equal Ransom for the Lives of the lowest as well as the highest among them, as they were all of equal Value in his Sight, who careth for all alike.

## C H A P. XII.

## The ARGUMENT.

**T**HE Author mentions fresh Instances of Favour bestowed by God upon the Israelites, particularly in bringing them to, and settling them in the Land of Canaan, from whence he drove out the old Inhabitants for their barbarous and inhuman Rites of sacrificing their Children, and feasting upon Blood, &c. by which the Holy Land was defiled. But unworthy as the Canaanites were of Mercy, God did not exterminate them at once, but his Conduct towards them was very gracious. And from God's Slowness to take Vengeance even of these, he proceeds, & 19. to deduce this useful and comfortable Lesson, viz. that the Intention of God's Forbearance is to invite Sinners to Repentance, who are from hence encouraged to hope, that they shall be accepted through the Sincerity of it, but such as slight his gentle Corrections, and disregard his kind Notices, shall at length experience a Judgment worthy of God.

Ver. 1. For thine uncorruptible Spirit is in all things.] This Verse seems necessarily connected with the last of the foregoing Chapter, though in all the Editions it is separate and distinct from it. It contains the Reason why God is φιλόψυχος, or a Lover of Souls, viz. because his Spirit dwelleth with, or in, every Man, εἰς ἐν ὅλοις even with the Wicked, till they, through their own Fault, force it to depart. See Note on ch. i. 5. This is manifestly the Sense of the Syriac Translation, which is more explicit than the rest of the Versions, beginning this Chapter, *Amator es animarum, quia Spiritus tuus bonus habitat in omnibus.* And this it does without any Prejudice to its own Perfection, for the Spirit contracts no Defilement by its Inhabitation for a Time in a wicked Breast; its Purity, like that of the Sun's, remains unsullied, though it shines upon Filth and Dirt. The Vulgate is particular in reading this Place with an Epiphonema, or Note of Admiration, at the Goodness of God, *O quam bonus & suavis est, Domine, Spiritus tuus in omnibus! O how benign and full of Sweetness is thy Spirit, O Lord, towards all Men, or in all its Proceedings!* which pious Reflexion may refer either to God's Dealing with the Egyptians in the former Chapter, or with the Canaanites mentioned in this, or respect his Forbearance towards Sinners in general. [In all THINGS is the right Translation, as is evident from ch. xi. 26.—πάντων ὅτι σὰ ἐστὶ, &c. thou sparest all Things, because they are σὰ, thy Things, not σολ, then follows this Verse, which is ill separated from the foregoing.] Grotius understands by Spirit here, the Soul of Man, that it is incorruptible and immortal, and an Image

of the Divine Eternity, and refers to ch. ii. 23. which is not so agreeable to the Sense of the Context.

Ver. 2. Therefore chastenest thou them by little and little that offend.] God does not proceed with Haste and Eagerness to punish his Enemies, as if he was jealous or afraid that they would escape from him, nor does he pour on them all his Wrath at once, or on a sudden, as if he could not command his Temper or Resentment: He punishes not usually with such Excess and Rigour, as if he purposely sought the Destruction and utter Extinction of his Enemies, but aiming at the Amendment, Welfare, and Happiness of those he corrects, he chastizes rather as a Master, a Father, a God. St. Ambrose finely observes, "that what is here mentioned of God's Lenity in punishing by little and little, is an excellent Maxim for the Conduct of Life, for that we ought equally to avoid the two contrary Extremes, and to observe a Medium between a faulty Complaisance, or Tenderness, that pardons every thing, and a rigid Severity that excuses nothing, which makes no favourable Allowance for human Frailty, and is not at all softened by any mitigating and alleviating Circumstances."

Ver. 3. For it was thy Will to destroy by the Hands of our Fathers both those old Inhabitants of thy Holy Land.] The Israelites were raised by God on purpose to be a Scourge upon every shocking Vice and flagrant Villany of the Nations around them. This People, eminently distinguished by the divine Favour and Protection, God made choice of to chastise the Enormities of the Canaanites, Amorites, &c. who were every way profligate and utterly abandoned, as appears by the Context, to drive them out of the Holy Land by their Hands, and to retort in a particular manner their Cruelties upon their own Heads. As God had purposed utterly to destroy the Nations, of Canaan, so he did not dispose any of them to accept of Peace from the Israelites, in order to their Preservation; it was of the Lord, as the sacred Text expresses it, to harden their Hearts, that they should come against Israel in Battle, that he might destroy them utterly, and that they might have no Favour, but be destroyed as the Lord commanded, Josh. xi. 20. where the Exaggeration of the Expression is very observable, and is intended to denote the Certainty and Violence of their Destruction. See also Deut. vii. 1, 2.

Ibid. Thy Holy Land.] The Almighty at first represented himself to the Jews as a Gentilial God—the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; afterwards as a local Deity, who had preferred Judaea to all other Countries, and chosen it for his peculiar Residence, on which account it is generally characterized in the sacred Writings by the Name of his Land, Levit. xxv. 23. Deut. xi. 12. Psal. x. 16. Isai. xiv. 25. and here by this Writer more fully, his Holy Land. It was called The Holy Land, καὶ ἱερόχην, either because it was promised to the Patriarchs, and was the Habitation of them and the Prophets; or because God's chosen People dwelt there; or, lastly, because the



the true Worship of God, under the old Testament, chiefly flourished there. Upon account of the singular Temperature of the Air, the Wholsomeness of the Climate, the Fruitfulness of the Soil, and the very great Plenty of all kinds of Things, it is said in Scripture to flow with Milk and Honey, and Ezek. xx. 6. to be the Glory of all Lands, and frequently, upon account of the great Blessings with which it abounded, it is made a Type of Heaven, from thence called the heavenly Canaan. No wonder therefore that God should promise this good Land to Abraham and his Seed for an Inheritance, and that he should at length give it to the most worthy Colony of his Children. See y 7. and Adrichomius's Pref. to *Theatr. Terræ Sanctæ*, where he says, that it was anciently called *The Land of Promise*, and by the Writers of the Old Testament, and Josephus, *The Land of Canaan*, from Canaan the Son of Ham, who lived there with his Children. By Ptolemy, and the ancient Geographers, it is styled *Palestine*; but the most common Name is *The Holy Land*; and yet this does not occur in Scripture, nor any where in the Apocryphal Writings, but here and 2 Maccab. i. 7.

Ver. 4. *Whom thou hatedst for doing most odious Works of Witchcrafts.*] Canaan, from whom the Canaanites were descended, was the Son of Ham, or Cham, and from him the Learned derive the Original of Witchcraft and Sorcery. He is thought by some to be the same with Zoroastres, the Inventor of Magic. Cassian acquaints us from very ancient Tradition, that Ham, before he entered into the Ark with his Father Noah, engraved upon Stones and Plates of Metals, which the Waters of the Deluge could not spoil, his Art of Magic and Sorcery, that it might more effectually be preserved, which Memorials he found when the Deluge was over; and, communicating them to his Children, propagated that Art and wicked Superstition among his Posterity. Cassian. Collat. viii. cap. 21. He adds also, that, besides the Elements, the Inhabitants of Canaan worshiped a Multitude of Devils that presided over their τελεῖαις ἀνομίαις, or wicked Rites.

Ver. 5. *And also those merciless Murderers of Children.*] What is mentioned in this and the following Verse, about the inhuman Murder of Children, most undoubtedly relates to the sacrificing of them to Moloch. Thus Selden, whose Authority is beyond all Commentators, speaking of the Rites of Moloch, *De Diis Syris, Syntag. i. cap. 6.* says, *Hæc sunt sacra, quæ Sapientie voluminis autor vocat τεκνοφόνους τελεῖαις*, cap. xiv. com. 5 & 6. The Sacrifices that were offered to Moloch were of seven sorts, six of them were the same as some of the Jewish Sacrifices instituted by Moses; the seventh was the Sacrifice of a Son; and he that sacrificed this, kissed the Idol, which had the Face of a Calf; and to this the Prophet Hosea is thought to allude, c. xiii. 2. The Manner of offering the Children to Moloch was this: The Image was heated by Fire put under it, till it was red-hot, and shone again, and then the Priests took the Victim or Child, and placed it in the

burning Arms of Moloch, which were extended on purpose; and that the Parent or Relations might not hear the Shrieks of the Child, they danced before the Image to the Sound of Drums, from whence the Place was called *Tophet*. See Fagius in *Levit. ch. xviii. 21.* Selden *De Diis Syris, Syntag. i. c. 6.* and Note on ch. xiv. 23. That Parents did sacrifice their own Children, is evident from many Instances even among the Greeks and Romans; and innumerable Testimonies might be produced of it from prophane Writers, whether founded upon the mistaken Instance of Abraham's offering up his Son Isaac, I shall not determine. See Philo *De Abrahamo Macrob. Saturn.* Ovid. *Fast. Sbarrock De ἀνθρωποθυσίαις*, p. 496, 7. And that the Worshipers of Moloch, among whom may be reckoned the Canaanites and Phœnicians, whom Grotius supposes to be the same, in cap. xviii *Deuteron. Amorites, Moabites, Carthaginians, Cretans, Ammonites, Syrians*, too many and sad Instances of human Degeneracy! did consent to have their Children sacrificed to this Monster of Cruelty in particular, appears from many Passages of Scripture, *Levit. xviii. 21. 2 Kings, iii. 27.—xxiii. 10. Jer. vii. 31.—xix. 4, 5.* To instance in the Syrians only, we read expressly, *2 Kings xvii. 31.* that the Sepharvites burnt their Children in honour of Adrammelech and Anammelech, which are said to be the Gods of Sepharvaim, but in reality were no other than different Names for Moloch, as the Learned agree; see Selden in loc. citat. And the Psalmist observes, *Psal. cvi. 35.* that the Israelites, being mingled with these Heathen, learned their Works, insomuch that they likewise offered their Sons and their Daughters unto Devils, and shed innocent Blood, even the Blood of their Sons and their Daughters, whom they offered unto the Idols of Canaan, and the Land was defiled with Blood, ἐν τοῖς αἵμασι, LXX. in Sanguinibus, Vulg. both in the plural Number, to express the great Effusion of it. Plutarch Περὶ δαιμονίας, mentions what is still more shocking, that the Parents even stood by when their Children were offered upon such execrable Occasions. But that the Parents themselves should be the very Executioners, should kill with their own Hands their own Issue, innocent harmless Souls, destitute to be sure of Help, when their own Parents were their Betrayers and Murderers which our Author mentions in the following Verse, exceeds all Instances of Cruelty, as it does indeed almost all Bounds of Faith.

Ibid. *And Devourers of Man's Flesh, and the Feasts of Blood.*] Though one may easily guess at the Author's Meaning, yet this Passage is very perplexed in the Original; and amidst the Multitude of various Readings, it is difficult to find the true one. The Roman Edition and Alexand. MS. read, ἀπλῶς φάγον ἀνθρωπίνων σαρκῶν ποίναν, ἢ αἷμα. The Complutensian, ἀπλῶς φάγον, ἢ ἀνθρωπίνων σαρκῶν, ἢ ποίναν αἷμα. Ald. Edit. with Vatablus, ποίναν αἷμα ἐν μύσῳ. Our Version manifestly follows the second Reading which seems countenanced by all the Versions, which render in like manner. If we may suppose μύσῳ to be



be here understood, or to be brought forward from the preceding Verse, it will perhaps help the Difficulty, and give some Light and Clearness to this intricate Passage; i. e. *Thou hatedst both those old Inhabitants of thy Holy Land, as being guilty of Witchcrafts and abominable Rites, and also the Eaters of the Bowels of Men, comestores viscerum hominum, as the Vulgate has it, or the Devourers of human Flesh, and their Feasts of Blood, &c.* for so ἀνθρώπων σαρκῶν, I think, may be better rendered, as including the Flesh of Children, rather than Man's Flesh, as our Version has it; for it seems to be this Author's Opinion, that they did eat the Flesh of the Children that were sacrificed; and from thence they may be here called ἀλλοτρίοι. Calmet differs from this Writer, and says, "That though there are too many Instances of their sacrificing both Men and Children to Saturn, or Baal (which are Names likewise of Moloch) yet is it not sufficiently clear, either from Scripture or profane History, that they eat the Entrails of the unhappy Victims." *Comment. in loc.* We meet with ἀλλοτρίους indeed, 2 Maccab. vi. 7. and παρόντων ἀλλοτρίους, 21. in the Description of the Feasts of Bacchus. But the Entrails of Beasts seem there only meant.

Ibid. *Feasts of Blood.*] The eating of Blood was practised among the Heathen in their Sacrifices, Treaties, Feasts, magical Rites, and as a Ceremony of Initiation into their Mysteries, and the Worship of their Demons. This the Psalmist alludes to, *Psal. xvi. 5.* which Aquila translates ἀνδρῶν αἱμάτων ἐξ αἱμάτων and in this Sense Spencer understands the Place, *De Leg. Hebræor.* vol. i. p. 30. Maimonides observes of the Heathens, that, though they looked upon the eating of Blood as an Instance of Impurity and Uncleaness, yet it was practised by them, through a fond Conceit that it was the Food of their Demons, and that by eating of it they should ingratiate and recommend themselves to them, and have a freer Communication with them, and larger Discoveries of future Events made to them. *Lucian's* Account, in his Tract *De Sacrificiis*, of the Revels of the Demons at their Feasts of Blood, however witty or pleasant it may have been represented, yet, instead of inspiring us with any agreeable Sentiments, cannot but appear shocking to all who have any Bowels left, and are not themselves divested of the Tenderness of human Nature, which, far from being entertained with such unnatural Repast, startles and shudders, as it were by Sympathy, at the sad Relation.

Ver. 6. *With their Priests out of the midst of their idolatrous Crew (leg. Crew.)*] There are, I think, as many Readings of this Place in the Original, as there are Editions, which have either no Sense at all, or a Meaning widely different. The *Vatican* Edition reads ἐν μέσῃ μυσθίας σκ, which seems a manifest Corruption; for what does μυσθία mean, or in what other Author does it occur? The *Complut.* ἐν μέσῃ μύσας θείας σκ, which is no less unintelligible. The *Vulgate*, rendring a medio sacramento tuo, seems to have followed a Copy which read μυσθίας σκ. But this Reading

of the Passage is absurd; for how can the Canaanites, which knew not the true God, be said to feast upon Blood in the midst of his Mysteries, or indeed to act contrary to them, which they knew nothing of? *Vatablus* reads, μύσας θείας μῦ, and *Grotius* more fully, ἐν μέσῃ μύσας θείας μῦ. The *Alexand. MS.* has ἐν μέσῃ μύσας θείας, joining the two Words θείας σκ in the second Reading together, which seems in good Measure to remove the Difficulty; but I think the Whole would be more correct and better connected, if the Reading was ἐν μέσῃ μύσας τε θείας, which *Ald. Edit.* retains; i. e. *And also those Priests of Moloch whom thou principally hatedst, and directedst thy Vengeance against, and didst determine ἐν μέσῃ ἀπολέσαι, to take out of the Way; or rather (because ἐν μέσῃ may be thought at too great a Distance from its Adjunct ἀπολέσαι) Thou wast determined to destroy those Priests particularly amidst all the Crew of Idolaters, which is the Sense of our Version, ἐν μέσῃ θείας, ex medio Tripudiantium choro vel catu; for so θείας is understood by the Lexicographers: And next to these, the inhuman Parents, who either themselves killed their own Children, or gave them willingly to be sacrificed. Priests may relate indifferently either to those of Moloch, or those of the old Inhabitants of the Holy Land; but ἀνθρώπων γονεῖς relate only to the Worshipers of Moloch. The Version then of this and the three foregoing Verses (plainer in Construction, and more agreeable to the Greek, without the Transposition that is made in our Translation) lies thus: *For thou bating both those old Inhabitants of thy Holy Land for their odious Works of Witchcrafts, &c. and also (bating) those merciless Murderers of Children, and Devourers of human Flesh, and their Feasts of Blood, didst determine to destroy, by the Hands of our Fathers, the Priests from amidst their idolatrous Congregations, and the Parents that were guilty of destroying helpless Souls, viz. their Children.* If it be asked why any Distinction is made between the old Inhabitants dealing in Witchcrafts, and the Worshipers of Moloch, which our Version retains, the Reason probably is, because Moloch was an Idol originally of the Ammonites, and the Rites of sacrificing Children were likewise Ammonitish, and came only by Degrees into Canaan. See *Selden De Dīs Syris*, Syntag. i. cap. 6. Or if it should be further enquired, How did God destroy the Worshipers of Moloch, that his Holy Land might receive a worthy Colony of Children? I answer, in the Vengeance taken on account of Baal-Peor, when all the Midianites were utterly destroyed, the Priests ἐν μέσῃ θείας, from Balaam down to the meanest, and also all the Women, *Numb. xxxi.* which must include ἀνθρώπων γονεῖς. In Confirmation of this Opinion, see *Lightfoot*, vol. i. p. 783. who understands the Matter of Baal-Peor, to be the sacrificing of their Children to Moloch; answerable to which, he interprets *Psal. cvi. 28.* *They ate the Sacrifices of the Dead.* And this being the first Idolatry they fell into after their coming out of the Wilderness, and just before their getting Possession of the Holy Land, he tells us, that St. Stephen upbraided them with it in the Words of the Prophet,*



that after their Neglects of sacrificing to God forty Years in the Wilderness, they yet could presently take up *the Tabernacle of Moloch*. In Confirmation of this Opinion, see *Selden* also *De Dis Syris*; who says, that all the *Baals* (however distinguished) of *Syria*, of which *Baal-Peor* is the first-mentioned, were only other Names for *Moloch*. See also *Jer.* xix. 5. And to confirm what *Lightfoot* and *Selden* say, we may add the Authority of *J. Ger. Vossius*, who contends learnedly for the same Opinion about *Moloch* and *Baal*. *Theol. Gentil.* vol. vi. p. 123, 124. and 720. Edit. Fol. Thus we have a ready Solution of the History to which this Passage refers, and thus may it be interpreted consistently with little or no Alteration in the *Greek*. To what I before mentioned about the Manner of these unnatural and inhuman Sacrifices, (see Note on *v* 5.) we may add, that at first they made the Children only to pass between two great Fires lighted before *Moloch*, as a sort of imaginary Purification; but afterwards, confounding the Worship of this Idol with that paid to *Saturn*, the Worship of *Moloch* became equally barbarous and bloody. Such as thought they had too many Children, burnt them in Honour of him, and consecrated them to their tutelar God, for the greater Good of the Family, as they supposed: And often, on important Occasions, and in Times of imminent Danger, it was the eldest, the most beloved Child, whom they devoted to *Moloch*. This abominable Practice lasted long among the *Canaanites* in a Place called anciently *Gebenna*, or the Valley of *Hennon*; it was also called *Tophet*, for the Reason given above.

[Ver. 5, 6. This seems to be the most corrupt and difficult Passage in the whole Work. From the Diversities and Traces of the Copies, I would read it thus: *Και ἀπὸ λαγχοφάγους, καὶ ἀνθρωπίνων σαρκῶν καὶ θοινῶν αἵματος καὶ μύσους διασώτας, καὶ ἀνθρώπων γονεῖς, &c.* This is intelligible, without much Deviation from the Copies: And each Depravation is easily to be accounted for. Translate it thus: *For thou, having hated those old Inhabitants of thy Holy Land, for their odious Works of Witchcrafts and wicked Sacrifices, and also because they were merciless Murderers of Children, and Eaters of their Entrails, and Associates in Feasts of human Flesh and Blood and Abomination, and Parents, who with their own Hands, killed Persons (i. e. their own Children) destitute of Help; didst determine to destroy them by the Hands of our Fathers, that the Land which thou esteemedst, &c.* Τὸ μύσος is an Abomination or abominable Thing, more particularly one in which human Blood is concerned. Διασώται are associates in Sacrifices, or religious Matters. The Word is often used by *Philo Judæus*.]

Ver. 8. *Nevertheless, even those thou sparedst as Men, and didst send Wasps, Forerunners of thine Host, to destroy them by little and little.* The Meaning is not that God absolutely spared them; for this is not consistent either with the Context, or sacred History; the Sense must be, that to these as Men, and his Creatures, though the greatest Sinners, God shewed some Marks of Tenderness, and did not treat them with all that Rigour which they deserved. The *Psalmist*

has a Thought which very much resembles this, *Psal.* lxxviii. 39, 40. *Many a time turned he his Wrath away, and would not suffer his whole Displeasure to arise; for he considered that they were but Flesh, and that they were even a Wind that passeth away, and cometh not again.* By Wasps, Forerunners of God's Host, we may understand either that God, before the *Israelites* came into those Parts, sent Hornets, a Sort of Wasps, of all others the most deadly and pernicious, which so infested the *Canaanites*, that many of them were forced to leave their Country; or that, when the *Israelites* came to give them Battle, these Hornets made such Assaults upon them, as facilitated the Victory. Some Rabbins say they flew in the Eyes of the *Canaanites*, and made them so blind that they could not see to fight; and such as fled away they pursued, and killed in their lurking Holes. *Joshua* confirms the sending of these Hornets, ch. xxiv. 12. which God had before threatened to send, *Deut.* vii. 20. and says in general (for we have no where in Scripture any more particular Account of them) that the *Amorites* were not driven out by the Sword and Bow of the *Israelites*, but by the Stings of these venomous Creatures. *Philo* says of the *Canaanites*, that they were unworthy, many of them, to be conquered by Men, *ἐν ἰσχύϊ ἀνθρώπων ἀναξίς*; and therefore God sent Troops of Hornets to fight for his holy ones, and to destroy them by a most shameful Overthrow, *De Præmiis & Pænis*. To shew the Probability of this, *Bochart* instances in whole People who have been forced by them to forsake their Country. *Hierozoic.* lib. iv. p. 2. *Herodotus*, *Appian*, *Strabo*, and *Calmet* confirm the same. Many Writers, it must be confessed, have understood the Wasps or Hornets mentioned here, and in the Books of *Moses* and *Joshua*, metaphorically; *St. Austin* in particular supposes their Fear to have had the same Effect upon them as being pursued by Hornets. But, 1. the literal Sense, which our Author favours, is maintained by *Theodoret*, *Procopius*, and *Bochart*, vol. iii. p. 538. 2. The Fear which God threatened to send upon the Enemies of his People, is mentioned as distinct from these Hornets, *Exod.* xxiii. 27, 28. And, lastly, the Scripture speaks of them as real Animals, *Deut.* vii. 20. *Josh.* xxiv. 12.

Ver. 9. *Not that thou wast unable—to destroy them at once with cruel Beasts, or with one rough Word.* Of God's extraordinary Manner of punishing by vile Beasts, there are very many Examples in Holy Scripture. As the *Samaritans*, that were slain by them because they feared not the Lord, *2 Kings* xvii. 25, 26. the Children that mocked the Prophet *Elisha*, *2 Kings* ii. 23, 24. the disobedient Prophet, *1 Kings* xiii. 24. This was agreeable to what God threatened the Wicked, *Levit.* xxvi. 22. *That he would send vile Beasts among them to rob them of their Children, and destroy their Cattle, to make them few in Number, and their Highways desolate.* See also *Isai.* xv. 9. *Jer.* v. 6.—viii. 17.—xv. 3. *Ezekiel* xiv. 15. 21. The Instance which is next mentioned by this Writer, viz. that God can destroy guilty Nations by one harsh Word, finely displays his Power. *David*,  
in



in his Book of Psalms, seems to have had the same Thought, that one Word from the Mouth of God was sufficient to blast and confound his Enemies. See particularly, *Psal.* lxxxiii. 1. which some learned Men have understood in this Sense. Or if by a Metaphor we explain this of Thunder, which is often God's Voice of Vengeance, see *Psal.* xviii. 13, 14.—xlvi. 6. the Thought strikes us more forcibly. [But then it would have been φωνή (not λόγος) as in the Places quoted, and elsewhere frequently, *Isa.* xxx. 30, 31. *Psal.* lxxxvii. 18. more fully φωνή τῆς βροντῆς σου, and φωνὰς Θεοῦ, *Exod.* ix. 28.] If we suppose this to be meant of the Word of the Lord, or the λόγος, personally, as *Calmet* seems to take it, *Comm. in loc.* enraged and exasperated at the Proceedings of the Wicked, and executing the Almighty's Orders upon them, at he is represented, ch. xviii. 15, 16. and often under the Old Testament, the Idea rises still higher, is more magnificent and terrible.

Ver. 10. *But executing thy Judgments upon them by little and little.*] Though the History of the Wars against the *Canaanites* be briefly summed up in Scripture, yet they lasted a long Time, *Josb.* xi. 18. seven Years, according to the Opinion of many learned Men: And such a length of Time God was pleased the War should continue, partly in respect to the old Inhabitants themselves, who, being chastened by little and little, had place of Repentance given them, and also to exercise the Faith and Patience of his own People, and that the Difficulty of the Conquest might make them the more sensible of God's Power and Goodness. To these may be added the following Reasons, which are to be met with in Scripture: First, God did not drive out these Nations hastily by the victorious Hand of *Joshua*, that he might thereby prove *Israel* whether they would keep the Way of the Lord, to walk therein; for, if none of them had been left, there would have been no Temptation to worship their Gods, *Judges* ii. 22, 23. Another Reason for driving out these Nations by little and little was, lest the Land should become desolate and uncultivated, *Exod.* xxiii. 29. for the *Israelites* were not yet numerous enough to people the whole Country, had these Nations been destroyed all at once. And a third Reason occurs in the same Verse, that a great Part being thus left without Inhabitants, it would be possessed and over-run by vile Beasts, which would have been very dangerous to the *Israelites* in the other neighbouring Parts where they were settled.

*Ibid.* Not being ignorant that they were a naughty Generation, and that their Malice was bred in them, and their Cogitation would never be changed.] The Expression here is not unlike that mentioned *Gen.* vi. 5. *God saw that every Imagination of the Thoughts of Man's Heart was only Evil continually*, and his Dealing was in like Manner; for though he saw them unalterably bent upon Wickedness, yet he allowed the Men of the old World Time for Repentance, and the Prevention of their Ruin. And thus God knew that *Pharaoh* would not let his People go, and that his Mind would not be altered, *Exod.* iii. 19. and yet he tries him

by different Methods, he executes his Judgments upon him by little and little, and gives all possible Warnings to reclaim him. He foretels the Plagues, before he sends them, to admonish him; he performs Signs and Wonders before him, to soften him; he inflicts worse and worse Judgments upon him to affrighten him, but all without Effect; for it appears that *Pharaoh* six Times hardened his own Heart, before God hardened it once. But it may be asked, to what Purpose God gave the *Canaanites* place for Repentance, and visited them with admonitory Chastisements, if he knew that their Cogitations, or wicked Intentions, would never be altered? To this I answer, that though God certainly foreknew that they would not make a right Use of his Forbearance, yet his Prescience no way determined their acting; still they were at Liberty to have changed their Cogitations or Designs, and to have altered their vicious Course of Life; for there is a great Difference between God's Foreknowledge and his Decrees; a Distinction never to be forgot. God always knows when Men are wickedly disposed, and their sinful Habits become, as it were, natural to them; but he does not therefore decree their Sinning, nor take away all Possibility of their Conversion, nor does he unconditionally peretermine their Punishment; for then all Motives to Repentance would indeed be useless and ineffectual, and their Doom irreversible: His knowing therefore that the *Canaanites* would never change their sinful Inclinations, no more inferred any Necessity of their Sinning, than God's knowing that *Adam* would fall, was the Occasion of his Fall. Nor were all the Seed of *Cham* any more necessarily Vessels of Wrath, because of their innate and natural Propensity to Evil, than all the Seed of *Abraham* were necessarily Vessels of Mercy. See *Jackson's Works*, tom. iii. c. 41.

[Ver. 11. *For it was a cursed Seed from the Beginning.* It should be a Seed cursed, and pointed thus: *Never to be changed; for it was a Seed cursed from the Beginning.* Nor didst thou, &c. And so in the Greek.] It has been generally supposed that *Cham* or *Ham*, was the Person whom *Noah* cursed for discovering his Nakedness; but there are stronger and better Reasons to induce us to think that *Canaan* was cursed rather than *Ham*. 1. It has been a received Tradition, that *Canaan* first saw his Grand-father's Nakedness, and made Sport with it to his Father. 2. Several Expressions in Scripture seem to fix this upon *Canaan*; when *Noah* awoke, it is said he knew what his younger Son had done unto him, *Gen.* ix. 24. which could not be true of *Ham*, who was the middlemost; but *Canaan* may very well be called his younger, or little Son, nothing being more common than to call Grand-children Sons; and *Canaan* was indeed the youngest of them. 3. The most correct Editions of the LXX agree in pointing out *Canaan* particularly; for they read ἐπικατέχευε Χαναν ναῖς: which Reading both *St. Austin* and *St. Chrysostom* follow. And indeed this Particularity seems purposely inserted to prevent any Mistake with respect to his Father. 4. That if *Canaan*



Canaan himself is not meant, then by Canaan we must understand his Father Ham, which is a forced Interpretation. 5. This is probably the Reason why Ham is always mentioned as the Father of Canaan, as he resembled his Father most, and was concerned with him in the same wicked Crime. Lastly, if Ham was cursed, it would have affected his other Children and their Posterity; but it is observable, that the Curse affects Canaan only.

Ibid. *Neither didst thou for fear of any Man give them Pardon for those things wherein they sinned.*] The Meaning is not, that God really pardoned them, as our Version seems to imply, for the Canaanites are mentioned all along as devoted to Destruction; but God deferred their Punishment, indulged them in a seeming Security, and gave them ἀδειαν, i. e. Impunity for a Time, which was rather a Respite than a Pardon. And thus the Syriac and Arabic Interpreters understand it, rendring the Greek Word very justly by *Prorogatio*. Calmet observes very beautifully, "That God, whether he punishes or pardons, has no selfish or partial Views, is not influenced by any Motives of Hatred, Fear, or Interest, which Men are generally actuated by: He loves without Excess, is jealous without Uneasiness, repents without Grief, is angry without Disturbance, and punishes without Regretment." *Comm. in loc.* Herein he has happily transcribed St. Austin: *Amas, nec aestuas; zelas, & securus es; pœnitet te, & non doles; irasceris, & tranquillus es. Confess. lib. i. c. 4.*

Ver. 12. *Or who shall accuse thee for the Nations that perish, whom thou hast made?*] Τίς ἢ ἐγκαλέσει σοὶ κατὰ ἐθνῶν ἀπολωλότων, ὃ σὺ ἐποίησας. Our Version probably is faulty here; the true Rendering seems to be, *Who shall object to thee, or call thee to account for the Things which thou hast done to, or against, the Nations which are destroyed?* This is the Sense of ποιεῖν in the Beginning of this Verse, and in very many Passages of Scripture. The Greek would be better pointed thus: Τίς ἢ ἐγκαλέσει σοὶ, κατὰ ἐθνῶν ἀπολωλότων ὃ σὺ ἐποίησας. [Our Translators took κατὰ in the Sense of περὶ, concerning, as to: Which Signification it sometimes hath: See Job ix. 7. So that κατὰ ἀπολωλότων will mean the same here as περὶ ὧν ἀπόλεσας, ὧ 14. which they in like Manner render, *for any whom thou hast punished*, rightly reading ἐνόλεσας with the best Copies, for ἀπόλεσας. The Beginning of the Verse is taken from Job ix. 12. or xi. 10.]

Ibid. *Or who shall come to stand against thee, to be revenged for the unrighteous Men?*] Ἡ τίς εἰς καλᾶσαιν σοὶ ἐλεύσεται ἐδικῶ κατὰ ἀδικῶν ἀνθρώπων: Our Translators seem to understand καλᾶσαι in a military Sense, *Who will come to a set, or pitched, Battle with thee, to avenge the Cause of the Wicked?* Καθίστημι sometimes is so used in good Writers. But there is likewise another Sense of this Place: *Who will appear before thee, to undertake the Defence and Vindication of the Unrighteous?* for ἐδικῶ signifies an Advocate as well as an Avenger. And thus Messieurs du Port Royal render, *qui paroitra devant vous, pour prendre la defense des hommes in-*

*justes?* And so the Arabic Version, *quis se constituat apud te ad intercessionem auxiliarem pro hominibus iniquis?* But in either Sense ἐδικῶ κατὰ ἀδικῶν ἀνθρώπων, as the present Reading of the Greek is, seems not right. If we join κατὰ and ἀδικῶν together, which seem to have been separated through the Fault of the Transcribers, and make it κατὰδικῶν, i. e. *judicio damnatorum*, the Harshness of the Construction will be avoided, and a Sense rather more agreeable to the Context will take place; *Who shall dare to stand against thee in Battle to revenge, or who shall appear before thee to undertake, the Cause of those thou hast condemned to Death?* There is the like Expostulation in the Book of Job, ch. xxxvi. 22, 23. according to the LXX Version, which comprises the Sentiments in this and the following Verse, Τίς γάρ ἐστι καὶ αὐτὸν δυνάστης; τίς δὲ ἐστὶν ὁ ἐπ' αὐτῶν αὐτὰ τὰ ἐρεῖα; ἢ τίς ὁ εἰπὼν, Ἐπερὶ ξεν ἀδικῶν;

[Ver. 13. *Ἰνα δείξῃς ὅτι ἐκ ἀδικῶς ἐκείνης, seems to be out of their proper Place, and serve to no Purpose where they stand at present. I believe they should be placed in ὧ 10. after the Word μελανοίας, thus: Κεῖναι ἡ καλαβραχὺ, ἐδίδας τόπον μελανοίας, ἵνα δείξῃς ὅτι ἐκ ἀδικῶς ἐκείνης ἐκ ἀγνοῶν, ὅτι, &c.]*

Ver. 14. *Neither shall King or Tyrant be able to set his Face against thee.*] The Vulgate, which renders, *Neque Rex neque Tyrannus in conspectu tuo inquirunt de his quos perdidisti*, and the ancient English Versions, fall short of the Spirit of the Original; the Word ἀνιοφθαλμεῖν is remarkably strong and elegant; it is a vigorous compound Word, which singly contains all the Particulars before enumerated, ὧ 12. nor is our Translation less to be admired for preserving the Beauty and Boldness of the Expression here, which Junius renders but imperfectly by *oculum obfirmare*, and the Arabic still more faintly, *oculos attollere*; both of which, by being too literal, express not sufficiently the Force and Spirit of the Metaphor. See Blackwall's Sac. Class. vol. i. p. 10.

Ver. 15. *Thinking it not agreeable with thy Power to condemn him that hath not deserved to be punished.*] If δίκαιος, in the Beginning of this Verse, be taken to signify *strictly just*, the Sense then is, that the infinite Greatness of God's Majesty cannot sway his most holy Will from the exact Observance of the Rules of Justice; that though he is Almighty, he acts as if Injustice was out of his Power, as being contrary to his Will and the Perfection of his Nature, and therefore will never punish any of his Creatures that do not deserve to be punished, merely to display an Act of Power. This Sentiment, that God will not punish those that do not deserve to be punished, seems to me to convey no very high Idea of the Deity. For is it any Commendation of the God of Israel not to do a flagrant Act of Injustice? Or would this be an Excellency to be boasted of even in a Heathen Jupiter? How much properer, and more agreeable to the Nature of the God of the Old Testament, to say of him, that the Greatness of his Majesty does not prompt him to Cruelty, to fudden and immediate Revenge, or to exceed in the Degree of Punishment; but, all-powerful as he is, that he is forbearing and



and merciful, even to such as do indeed deserve to be punished, either passing by their Transgressions, or punishing them less than they deserved. And in this Sense of good, benign, merciful, I rather am inclined to understand δικαίος, which is a known Signification of the Word, and will furnish a sublimer and more agreeable Sense. From hence then I am induced to offer another Explanation of this Passage, and to attempt a small Alteration in the Reading of the Greek, which perhaps would be more perfect, if, instead of αὐτὸν τὸν μὴ ὀφείλοντα καταδικάζειν, we read αὐτὸν τὸν μὴ ὀφείλοντα, or (which I should still like better, if it may be allowed) αὐτὸν μὲν τὸν ὀφείλοντα καταδικάζειν ἀλλότῳ ἢ γὰρ τῆς σῆς δυνάμεως, *Illum quidem (or illum ipsum quidem) qui debet puniri, morte statim multare alienum putas a tua potestate—Thou thinkest thy Power does not extend so far as instantly to condemn to Death him that deserves to be punished.* For the whole Scope of the Chapter seems to be to display the Mercy of God; but there is no Mercy shewed, nor Justice properly, in not punishing the Innocent. Coverdale's Version in this Place is very faulty; *Thou puny'shest even hym that hath not deserved to be puny'shed*; which corrupt Reading in some ancient Copies, and particularly St. Jerom's Bible, as it is called, manifestly charging God with Injustice, and reflecting, in the strongest Manner, upon his Goodness, the Vulgate has corrected to the Sense of our Version.

[Ibid. Αὐτὸν μὲν τὸν, &c. Μὲν would not be so proper in this Place, because ὃ or μέν, does not answer to it in what follows; and though I know that μέν is sometimes used in that manner without ὃ to answer to it, yet it never will be allowed from Conjecture contrary to all the Copies. But, I perceive, you are aware of another Difficulty, attending this Correction; which is, that μέν will not yet complete the Sense and Truth: And therefore you translate καταδικάζειν, morte [statim] multare, which it does not signify; and an Adversary, with equal Reason, would translate it, morte, post longum tempus, multare: For it signifies the one no more than the other. I believe it is better to let τὸν μὴ ὀφείλοντα stand, as an Oversight, or Inaccuracy of the Writer; of which kind I am well satisfied there are several in this Piece. But the greatest Difficulty of this Passage seems to me to be in the Word αὐτὸν, which is perfectly needless, and I am pretty well certain cannot stand in that Place consistently with the Greek Language, unless the Author had been speaking of some particular Person to whom that Word might be referred. This makes me think that he wrote thus: Δικαίως ὃ ἂν αὐτοῖς, δικαίως τὰ πάντα δέπεις, τὸν μὴ ὀφείλοντα, &c. according to our Version, *For so much then as thou art righteous THYSELF, thou orderest all Things righteously.*]

Ver. 16. *For thy Power is the Beginning of Righteousness; and because thou art the Lord of all, it maketh thee to be gracious unto all.* i. e. thy Power is the Foundation or Basis of Justice and Equity, which are inseparable from it. The Power of Men is frequently the Source and Motive of their Injustice; and

Tyrants oftenest shew their Power by Acts of Cruelty and Oppression, as if their Maxim was that of the wicked one, in ch. ii. 11. *Let our Strength be the Law of Justice.* But God displays his Omnipotence most chiefly in shewing Mercy and Pity; and though he spares many guilty Nations in the Universe, yet he is the same absolute Sovereign of the World; as the Power of a King is no less visible, and always more amiable in Reprieves and Acts of Mercy, than in the horrible Pomp and Bloodshed of Executions: Nay, according to what follows in the next Words, he is therefore graciously disposed towards all, because he is Lord of all; and though he may exert his absolute Power how and when he pleases, yet he is the more favourable and indulgent to his Creatures upon account of his Dominion over them, and Relation to them. We cannot have a finer or more lively Instance of this, than what we meet with in *Jonah* iv. 11. where God is introduced arguing with great Tenderness in favour of *Niniveh*, devoted to Ruin and Destruction, *Shall not I spare Niniveh, that great City, wherein are more than sixscore thousand Persons?* From the compassionate Concern for the united Misery of so many of his Creatures, which prevailed with him no less than their Repentance at length to avert the impending Evil, we see that God is Love, and that Love is his very Essence as Creator.

Ver. 17. *For when Men will not believe that thou art of a full Power, thou shewest thy Strength; and among them that know it, thou makest their Boldness manifest.* Ταῦτόν γ' ἐδεικνύσαι ἀπιστήνῃ ἐπὶ δυνάμει τελειότητι, ἢ ἐν τοῖς εἰδόσι τὸ θεῖον ἐξελέγχεις. The Arabic renders, *Declaras robur tuum his qui plenitudinem potentiae tue minime credunt; inter eos autem qui norunt illam, audaciam eorum coarguis.* Exactly as our Version, the Translators of which seem to have read ἀπιστῶμένοις, in the Sense of ἀπισθεῖν, against Use, and without Authority. But I take the true and exact Rendering of the Greek to be, *When thou art suspected, or questioned, with respect to the Plenitude of thy Power, thou displayest it, or givest them a Specimen of it; and as to such as know thy Power (ceux qui connoissent vostre toute puissance, according to the Comment of Messieurs du Port Royal) and yet act in Defiance of it, thou convincest them of their Boldness.* And thus *Grotius* and *Jenius* understand ἀπιστήνῃ in this Place; and the Vulgate, which renders, *Virtutem ostendis tu, qui non crederis esse in virtute consummatus—Et horum qui te nesciunt, audaciam traducis;* from a Copy which read ἐν εἰδόσι. This latter Clause of the Vulgate, though the least perfect, is followed by *Coverdale's* Version; and from this Authority *Dr. Grabe* seems to have inserted it in his Edition, though it is not in the *Alexand. MS.* nor in the other Greek Copies, nor indeed necessarily wanted. [Instead of ἐδεικνύσαι, perhaps the Vulgate read ἐδεικνύς σὺ, ostendis tu, Though I think it much more probable, that in the Vulgate it should be read tu and quā, i. e. tum and quā. In this Verse are contained two Allusions to two remarkable Events in the History of *Moses*: The First, *When Men disbelieve the Perfection of thy Power, thou shewest*



by *Might*, is to be explained from what is related *Numb. xii. 4.* and *Psal. lxxviii. 19.* where the *Israelites* longing for *Flesh*, and distrusting God's Omnipotence and his Ability to supply them with it in the Wilderness, said, *Shall God prepare a Table in the Wilderness?* He smote the stony Rock indeed—but can he give *Bread* also, or provide *Flesh* for his People? Here was a fit Occasion for God to display the Protection of his Power, and to shew his Might: And accordingly (ver. 27.) by his POWER he brought in the *South West Wind*: He rained *Flesh* upon them as thick as *Dust*; and feathered *Fowls* like as the *Sand of the Sea*. In the second Instance, the Greek Text, *καὶ ἐν τοῖς εἰδοῖσι τὸ θεῖον ἐξέλεγχαι*, is faulty in the Editions, and ought to be, *καὶ ἐν τοῖς οὐκ εἰδοῖσι* *τὸ θεῖον*, &c. in those who do NOT know THEE, as I had conjectured from the History, and afterwards found it confirmed by the *Alexand. MS.* and the *Vulgate* Version. For it is a manifest Repetition of *Pharaoh's* insolent Answer to *Moses*, *Exod. v. 2.* *οὐκ οἶδα τὸν κύριον*, I know not the Lord: And the Words *ἐν εἰδοῖσι* are allusive to *Pharaoh's* *ἐκ οἶδα*, and are to be understood, as if the Author had written, *And thou reprovest the Boldness of those who say they know thee not.* Dr. Grabe added *εἰ* after *εἰδοῖσι*, from the *Vulgate*, *qui te nesciunt*. I think there can be no doubt but that the Author wrote so, and that *εἰ* was omitted or lost in the preceding Syllable *εἰ*, because, ch. xvi. 16. he writes in the same Manner concerning the same Thing: *ἀγενεῖς γὰρ εἰς εἰδέναι ἀσεβῆς*, &c. For the ungodly, who said they did NOT KNOW THEE, were scourged by the Strength of thine Arm. It is to be observed too, that the next Verse depends upon, and is opposed to, what is said in the latter Part of this, concerning God's Severity to those who say that they know him not: But, continues he, *Thou judgest us (thy People the Jews) with Mildness, and orderest us with great Forbearance.* The Word *ἡμᾶς* is to be added after *κεῖνους*, as well as after *δοκῆς*.]

Ver. 18. *But thou, mastering thy Power, judgest with Equity, and orderest us with great Favour.*] The Sense of this Place in our Version is, that God, out of regard to Mankind, waves and over-rules his Power for the more pleasing Work of Mercy; and though the frequent Instances of his Goodness and Loving-kindness are usually requited on Men's Part with Baseness and Ingratitude, yet does not the Greatness of his Majesty urge him to sudden Revenge, nor the Sense of his injured Prerogative prompt him to an immediate Resentment. Accordingly, Punishments are called by the Prophet his *strange Work*, *Isai. xxviii. 21. i. e.* they are what God is not inclined to inflict, they are disagreeable to the Benignity of his Nature, and such Acts as Mens Sins constrain him, as it were, to exercise. The following Reflexion of the very learned Dr. Jackson upon this Passage of our Author is so judicious, that it needs no other Light. "To derogate from God's Power is dangerous, and to compare the Prerogatives of the most absolute Princes with his is more odious; yet this Comparison may safely be made, that God doth not more

"infinitely exceed the most impotent Wretch on Earth in Power and Greatness, than he doth the greatest Monarch the World hath, or ever had, in Mercy, Justice, and Loving-kindness—Nor is his Will the Rule of Goodness, because the Designs thereof are backed by infinite Power; but because his Holiness doth so rule his Power, and moderate his Will, that the one cannot enjoin or the other exact any thing but what is most consonant to the strictest Rules of Equity —Bad therefore was the Doctrine, and worse the Application or Use which *Anarchus* would have gathered from that hieroglyphical Device of Antiquity, wherein Justice was painted as *Jupiter's* Assessor. It did not mean, as that Sophister interpreted it to *Alexander*, that the Decrees of great Monarchs are always to be reputed Oracles of Justice, and that their Practices are never unjust; nor that omnipotent Sovereignty alone would justify the Equity of all his Decrees, who was subject to Rage and Passion, but that Justice was always ready to mitigate and temper his Wrath with Equity. The true *Jehovah*, as he needs no sweet Tongue to moderate his Anger, so hath he need of no such Sophistry to justify the Equity of his Decrees." *Tom. ii. p. 66.* I shall only add, that *δυναστεύων* *ἐξ ἑαυτοῦ* in the Original, which our Translators and those of the *Geneva Bible* render *mastering thy Power*, hath been considered by others as a Title only, the same as *Lord of Might*, or *Lord of Power*, as *Coverdale* and all the other ancient Versions understand it; and *Calmet* renders in like manner *O Dominateur Souverain*. *St. Austin's* Sense is the most elevated, *Dominus Virtutum*, as if it was the same with *Lord of Hosts*, or *Κύριος Σαβαώθ*; or perhaps he may mean *Dominus omnipotentissimus*, as he elsewhere expresses himself, *Confess. lib. i. c. 4.* a Superlative which seems to carry its own Confutation with it; but should rather be ascribed to his Zeal than Inaccuracy, as if he could never carry his Thoughts or Expressions high enough in describing the Infinity of God's Attributes.

*Ibid.* For thou mayest use Power when thou wilt.] This Expression falls vastly short of the Sense and Majesty of all the other Versions. The Reading of *Fulgentius* here, who almost transcribes the *Vulgate*, is infinitely more magnificent, and worthy of God, *Subest enim tibi, cum voles, posse, i. e.* thou only wiltst a thing, and it is done. Nor is the *Syriac* much inferior, *Si velis, presto est potentia*. The Expression is not much unlike that of the *Psalmist*, *Whatsoever the Lord pleaseth, that does he in Heaven and in Earth, in the Sea, and in all deep Places.* *Psal. cxxxv. 6.* Where the true Reading, as well as the more sublime, is, *Whatsoever the Lord wills, that he does.* *πάντα ὅσα ἠθέλησεν ὁ κύριος, ἐποίησεν*, LXX. This Instantaneousness of the Effect upon the Act of his Will, is finely expressed by *St. Matthew*, *θέλω, καὶ γίγνεται*, I will, be thou clean, ch. viii. 3. Nor are the Words of our Author in the Original without their Beauty, *πᾶσι σοι, ὅταν θέλῃς, τὸ δύνανται*. We have the very same Thought, and even Expression, *Constit.*



*Constit. Apost. lib. vii. c. 35.* *Εὐ δὲ ὁ Χρῆστος ἐν εὐερεσίαις, καὶ φιλόδοξος ἐν οἰκτιρμοῖς, ὁ μόνος πάντων ἐργάτης· ὅτε δὲ θέλῃς, πάρεσι σοὶ τὸ δύνασθαι.* *x. τ. λ.* Calmet seems to understand the Passage in the Sense of our Version, viz. "Thou hast-  
"est not, having all Times and Seasons at thy  
"Command, to suppress the Insolence of the  
"Wicked, and to punish the Sinner, because  
"thou knowest they cannot escape thee, and  
"that thou hast it always in thy Power to cite  
"them before thee, and to deal with them ac-  
"cording their Works. God loses nothing by  
"waiting for the Repentance of the Wicked,  
"and the Wicked are no Gainers by the Im-  
"punity of a few Years. The Sovereign  
"Judge will at length sufficiently compensate  
"for the Slowness of his Proceeding by a  
"heavier Degree of Punishment."

Ver. 19. *But by such Works thou hast taught thy People that the just Man should be merciful.* *Ὅτι δὲ τὸν δικαίον εἶναι φιλόφρονον, i. e. Thou temperest all thy Judgments with Mercy and Equity, and by that Mixture of Mercy with Justice thou teachest thy People to shew the same Temper to one another.* St. Austin's Observation upon the Sinners of the old World is very pertinent; "God foreknew they would abuse the  
"Reprieve allowed them, yet he was so graci-  
"ous to vouchsafe it to them, teaching us by  
"this Example, how much it is our Duty to  
"bear with those whom we know to be bad  
"Men at present, but uncertain how long they  
"may continue so: That we should not be too  
"hasty or rigorous in condemning or punish-  
"ing them, since God himself is so merciful  
"as to allot even to such Sinners as he fore-  
"knows will make an ill Use of his For-  
"bearance, so long a Space for Repentance."

*De Catechiz. Rudib.* As these two Virtues are so intimately united, and have such a strict Relation to each other, we may perhaps not improperly consider them in the following View, as resembling Jacob's two Wives. Stern Judgment is deformed as *Leach*, but smiling Mercy is as beautiful as *Rachel*; Justice may claim the Privilege of being the First born, but Mercy is always the best beloved. Like Sisters should they lovingly go together, and be married to the same Man; what the Barrenness of the one wants, the Fruitfulness of the other will supply.

*Ibid.* *And hast made thy Children to be of a good Hope, that thou givest Repentance for Sins.* It should rather be, *That thou givest room for Repentance for Sins,—en leur donnant lieu de faire penitence,* says Calmet; for God does not give, but accept Repentance; and so the Vulgate reads, *Judicans das locum in peccatis penitentiae*, which Coverdale follows in his Version. Our Translators seem not thoroughly to have considered the Force of the Greek Word; for *δίδωμι* has another Signification, and more agreeable to this Place, i. e. *Thou allowest, permittest Repentance.* See *Acts ii. 27.* *Οὐδὲ δώσεις τὸν ὄσιόν σου ἰδεῖν διαφθορᾶν* Thou wilt not allow, or permit, thine Holy One to see Corruption. The Syriac seems to understand it in like Manner, *Filiis tuis spem fecisti: & concedis* (leg. *bonam spem fecisti, ut concedas*) *penitentiam delictorum.* The Sense of the Passage is, that Men may

from the Experience or Observation of God's Forbearance to punish, and the Continuance of his Long-suffering to Sinners, presume that God is placable and forgiving, and will not be rigorous in his Proceedings with them; may hopefully promise themselves, that God will favourably accept their sincere Repentance, and the Compensations of unfeigned Sorrow and Contrition, which they offer in lieu of the exact Performance of their Duty, and that at length their Guilt will be attoned by the truest Sin-offering they can present. This Consideration carries a pleasing and encouraging Hope with it. If God indeed judged his Creatures with the utmost Rigour of his Justice, how should even his own Children presume to hope for Pardon, or to be justified before him? But when he sheweth such Clemency towards his Enemies, what may they not then hope for, from a God so full of Goodness and Mercy? And can the Faithful have any greater Encouragement to have Confidence towards God, and assure their Hearts before him?

Ver. 21. *With how great Circumspection didst thou judge thine own Sons, unto whose Fathers thou hast sworn, and made Covenants of good Promises?* The Sense seems necessarily to require, that this should be read in the Future Tense, *With how great Circumspection wilt thou judge, or punish, thine own Children? &c.* which is the Rendering of the Geneva Bible. This is confirmed by the Arabic Version, which reads *sane* (leg. *sine*) *omni rigore & profundissima penetratione judicabis filios tuos.* Hence it seems probable, that the true Reading of the Greek is, *μετὰ πάσης ἀκρίβειας κενῆς τῆς ψῆς σου*, and not *ἐνεῖνας*, as the printed Copies in general now read. [I am of Opinion *sane* is right; and that instead of *πάσης*, the Arabic read *πάσης, omni.*] The Sense of this and the foregoing Verse is, "That, if thou didst shew so much Patience  
"towards the *Canaanites, ὁφθαλμοὺς θανάτου,*  
"who through Sins were worthy to die, as Cover-  
"dale renders, and had forfeited not only their  
"Land, but their Lives to thy Justice; with  
"how much more Wariness and Caution wilt  
"thou punish thine own People the *Jews*, with  
"whose Fathers thou entredst into Covenant,  
"and made to them therein goodly and pre-  
"cious Promises?" for so I chuse with the  
antient Versions to render *Covenants of good Promises*, in the latter Part of ver. 21. See the like Expression, *Ephes. ii. 12.*

Ver. 22. *To the intent that, when we judge, we should carefully think of thy Goodness; and when we ourselves are judged, we should look for mercy;* i. e. when we reflect upon the Difference thou hast made between us and our Enemies, it should teach us to remember the Example of thy Goodness and Long-suffering; when we judge or punish others, and to imitate it by treating them in the same tender and compassionate manner. This is the Sense of the Arabic Versions, which reads, *ut, cum judicamus, de tua simus bonitate solliciti, eamque imitemur*—And when we ourselves are punished, we are taught and encouraged by happy Experience, to put our Trust in thy Mercy (so Coverdale renders) and to expect a gracious Deliverance from our Troubles.

Ver.



Ver. 23. *Wherefore, whereas Men have lived dissolutely and unrighteously, thou hast tormented them with their own Abominations.* Such therefore of thy Enemies as lived unrighteously, *ἀδίκως*, and not *ἀδίκως*, as most Copies have it, in a foolish senseless Way of Life, *ἐν ἀφροσύνῃ ζωῆς*, (which our Version expresses but indifferently by *Dissoluteness*, and Coverdale's by *Ignorance*) having their Foolish Hearts darkened, as St. Paul, speaking of such Idolaters, Rom. i. 21. expresses it, *them didst thou torment with their own Abominations.* The Word *βδελύματα* sometimes signifies the false Object of Worship, and sometimes those abominable Sins and filthy Practices which were notorious and customary in the Mysteries of the Idol Worship; so that these Words may refer in a larger Sense to the Enormities and detestable Sins practised in the Heathen *τελεῖαι*, and hidden Mysteries. See ch. xiv. 24, 25, 26. 2 Maccab. vi. 4. and that God, as a just Punishment for such Wickedness, tormented them with their own Abominations, i. e. gave them up to a reprobate Mind and vile Affections. See Bishop Fell on Rom. i. 26. But if Abominations be taken in the first Sense, as signifying false Objects of Worship, it will be proper to enquire what they were, and who were guilty of such Worship. The Worship referred to in this Place, is that of vile Beasts and senseless Animals; and the guilty Persons must be either the *Canaanites* mentioned in the foregoing Part of the Chapter, or the *Egyptians*. Those who apply this Passage to the *Canaanites*, understand it of their being tormented by Hornets, &c. as a just Punishment, and perhaps too *ἐκπαυμένους*, to make sport of them for their ridiculous Worship. For the *Philistines*, and in all appearance, says Calmet in loc. the *Canaanites* too, worshiped Flies, the God *Baal-zebub*, particularly the people of Ekron or Accaron; see 2 Kings i. 2. where the LXX read *Μῦαν Θεὸν Ἀκκαζών*. Josephus and Greg. Nazianzen confirm the same; see also Selden De Diis Syris Syntag. ch. ii. 6. who says, the Name of this God was *Baal-zebub*, Θεὸς Μῦα, *Deus Musca*; and afterwards called *Βαλζεβούλ*, *Deus Stercoreus*, by way of Derision; see Piscator and Drusus in Matt. x. 25. and Leigh's Critica Sacra, p. 60. That religious Rites were paid to Flies in the Temple of *Apollo Atrius*, see *Ælian. De animalibus*, lib. ii. Grotius and Spencer think the Author returns here to the *Egyptians* and their Abominations, mentioned ch. xi. 15, 16. And indeed it must be confessed, that this and the following Verses, to the End of the Chapter, resemble the Argument there very much, and would come in better in that Place, if that was any Authority for such a Transposition: For the mixing and confounding the *Canaanites* and *Egyptians* together in different Parts of the Chapter, without any certain Marks of Discrimination, renders it obscure, and, without great Care, scarce intelligible. As applied to the *Egyptians*, the Sense is, that as they worshiped Beasts, God punished them by a Variety of living Creatures.

Ver. 24. *And held them for Gods, which even among the Beasts of their Enemies were despised.* *Θεὸς ὑπολαμβάνοντες τὰ ἐν ζωῇ τῶν*

*ἐχθρῶν ἄτιμα*, i. e. according to the common Acceptation of this Place, they worshiped such Beasts as were despised and laughed at by their Enemies, the *Hebrews*, who in their Sacrifices offered some of those very Beasts which they worshiped as Gods; which, in the Opinion of some learned Men, was purposely ordered and appointed to guard the *Israelites* against this Idolatry. See Spencer De legg. Hebr. tom. i. p. 298. But probably our Translation here is wrong, and *ἄτιμα τῶν ἐχθρῶν* should be neither rendered, *such Beasts of their Enemies as were despised*, nor *such Beasts as were despised by their Enemies*, as Grotius, not without some Violence, expounds the Greek; but, *they held for Gods despicable and mischievous Beasts*, such as Dogs, Cats, Wolves, Serpents, Crocodiles, *Hippopotami*, and other the most odious Creatures, which the Poet justly calls *Portenta*, see Note on ch. xi. 15. as fit only to inspire Horror. There is the like general Charge, ch. xv. 18. and *τὰ ζῷα τὰ ἐχθίστα* are mentioned as the Objects of their Worship. The Manner of Expression indeed by two Adjectives may seem particular; but this Construction is not unusual in the Greek Language, and is equivalent to *ἄτιμα ἢ ἐχθρά*. Nor am I singular in this Interpretation; Calmet understands the Words in the same manner, *c'est à dire, les animaux les plus vils, les plus méprisables, & les plus ennemis de l'homme*. Com. in loc. [I confess, I do not understand by what Construction *τῶν ἐχθρῶν ἄτιμα* can signify *ἄτιμα ἢ ἐχθρά*, and should be glad to see an Instance of it answerable to this. The Place, I believe, is faulty, the Words *τῶν ἐχθρῶν*, or any other in their room being quite superfluous, as the Sense is complete without any Addition to *τὰ ἐν ζωῇ ἄτιμα*: esteeming as Gods, Creatures that are vile even among Beasts. See upon ch. xv. 18.]

[Ibid. *Καὶ ὅ τῶν πλάνης ὁδῶν μακρότερον ἐπλανήθησαν*. For they went away very far in the Ways of Error, saies our Version: But this would be *ἐν ταῖς πλάνης ὁδοῖς*, not *τῶν πλάνης ὁδῶν*. Literally it is, *For they erred farther than the Ways of Error*: Which should mean, *They out-erred even Error itself*. But it cannot be imagined that the Author intended or wrote so. As the Context now stands, the Sense seems to require something directly contrary to *πλάνης*, viz. *ἀληθείας*, *δικαιοσύνης*, &c. and *ἀπεπλανήθησαν*. So ch. v. 6. *ἐπλανήθημεν ἀπὸ ὁδοῦ ἀληθείας*, Prov. xxi. 16. *ἀνὴρ πλανώμενος ἐξ ὁδοῦ δικαιοσύνης*. The nearest Conjecture that occurs is, *Καὶ ὅ τῇ πλάνης ὁδῷ μακρότερον ἐπεπλανήθησαν*, For they wandered far in the Way of Error.]

Ver. 25. *Therefore unto them, as to Children without the Use of Reason, thou didst send a Judgment to smite them.* Calmet understands this of the *Canaanites*, that as they fell into the most childish and ridiculous Errors, by transferring that Honour, which is due to God only, to despicable Animals, such as are described Ezek. viii. 10. which the *Israelites* are supposed to have taken from the *Phœnicians* or *Canaanites*, God sent upon them in like manner Chastisements seemingly as ridiculous, even an Army of Wasps, to attack, pursue, and destroy them. And the like may be observed of the *Egyptians*,



Egyptians, that God treated them as Children whom they resembled so much in their Folly; for as they pursued Flies and little Insects, so these went after κνώδαλα τέταρα, and were chastised with a suitable Punishment. At first he played with them, as it were, sending a Company or Swarms of inconsiderable Flies, *Exod.* viii. 21. dallying with them by mock Judgments, in comparison; for so I understand τὴν κρῖσιν εἰς ἐμπαιγμὸν and the Author seems to exemplify this Play by a *Paronomasia*, or a correspondent allusion in the original Words, διὰ τὸ οὗτως παίζειν τὴν κρῖσιν εἰς ἐμπαιγμὸν ἐπεμψας. But *Philo* calls such Idolaters by a more odious Name than Children, *bestias obambulantibus sub humana specie*. This Judgment is by the LXX styled κυνόμυα, *Exod.* viii. 21. *Psal.* lxxviii. 45. as if a particular Species of tormenting Flies was meant; but this, in both Places, is a corrupt Reading; the true one is indisputably κουνόμυα. *St. Jerom* accordingly reads *Cyno-myiam*, and explains it by, *omne genus muscarum*, and so do the other *Latin* Versions. *Aquila*, in both Places, renders it παρμύαν, and so the learned *Usher* understands it, calling this Plague *muscarum & aliorum insectorum colluvies*, *ad A. M.* 2513. See also *De Muis* on *Psal.* lxxviii. 45. [The Testimony of *Philo* is clear against this Emendation, *Vit. Mos.* i. p. 101. Edit. *Mang.* where he gives the Etymology of κυνόμυα thus, οὗ τῶν αἰσθησάτων ζώων συντιθέμετες τέτοια, μυίας δὲ κυνός. So in *Athen.* iii. 37. *Ulpian* calls *Cynuleus*, ὁ κυνόμυα, by way of Reproach and in an Allusion to his Name. In *I. iv.* 14. it is by mistake written κυνάμυα ἢ κινάμυα Νίκιον. *Nicum* is the Name of an Harlot.]

Ver. 26. But they that would not be reformed by that Correction wherein he dalled with them, shall feel a Judgment worthy of God.] This Verse may be understood either as a moral Reflexion with respect to Sinners in general in the future Tense, "That such as will not be reformed by those gentle Methods wherein God may be said only to dally with them, shall afterwards feel a heavier and much sorer Vengeance:" And this is the Sense of the *Greek*, and of the *Syriac* and *Arabic* Versions; or it may respect the Persons mentioned in the foregoing Verses, that they, having slighted God's milder Punishments, at length experienced a Judgment worthy of God. *Dignum Dei* [leg. *Deo*] *judicium experti sunt*, says the *Vulgate*, which *Coverdale* servilely follows even in this Mistake, they felt the worthy Punishment of God. *Grotius* says, that *περιζῶν*, which is the Reading of some Copies, is the true one, and that the present Tense is used for the *Præteritum*. In this latter Sense the Observation holds true with respect to the *Canaanites*; for such of them as were not affected, nor brought to a right Sense by the Plague and Persecution of Hornets, suffered much sorer Calamities afterwards in the Wars, which *Joshua* waged against them, and by their final Extermination. As applied to the *Egyptians*, the Remark is as just; at first God visited them with Plagues, that were rather noisome than destructive to them, (for we do not read of the Death of any useful Creatures, except Fishes, till the Plague

of the Murrain) but these had little or no Effect upon them; for *Pharaoh*, as *Dr. Jackson* expresses it, *tom. iii. p. 204.* behaved himself under them like a proud and wanton Humourist, and was still for experiencing a greater Variety of them; God therefore visited him with more, and more grievous Plagues, and at length terribly completed his Vengeance, and filled up the Measure of their Punishment, by those two unparalleled Judgments, the Death of their First-born, and the Destruction of *Pharaoh* and all his Host in the Red Sea.

Ver. 27. For look for what things they grudged when they were punished, (that is) for them whom they thought to be Gods; (now) being punished in them, when they saw it, they acknowledged him to be the true God, whom before they denied to know, and therefore came extreme Damnation upon them.] Our Translation here is so confused and so clogged with *Parenteses*, that it is very difficult to come at the true Sense of this Place; and as no Light is afforded us either from the old Translations, Oriental Versions, or Commentators, we must have recourse to the *Greek* Text itself, and from thence, obscure as it is, endeavour to find out the Author's Meaning. The present Reading of the *Greek*, according to all the Copies, is, Ἐφ' οἷς ὃ αὐτοὶ πάχοντες ἠγανάκουν, ἐπὶ τούτοις δὲ ἰδόντες Θεοῦ, ἐν αὐτοῖς κολαζόμενοι, ἰδόντες δὲ πάλαι ἠγνόουν εἶδέναι, Θεὸν ἐπέγνωσαν ἀληθῆ. διὸ καὶ τὸ τέρας τῆς κατὰ δίκης ἐπ' αὐτοὺς ἐπῆλθε. The *Vulgate* renders, *In quibus enim patientes indignabantur, per hæc quos putabant Deos, in ipsis cum exterminarentur, videntes illum quem olim negabant se nosse, verum Deum agnoverunt, &c.* This is very obscure; *Junius* is still more unintelligible, *Nam de quibus illi, quum perpeterentur mala, cum indignatione erant solliciti, de iis, inquam, quos putabant Deos, quum se iisdem puniri viderunt, verum agnoverunt Deum, &c.* *Vatablus* renders much more clearly, *Iis ipsis rebus quas passi sunt indignabundi Chananæi, cum per ea quæ ut Deos colebant punirentur, tandem suo malo agnoverunt verum Deum esse, quem ante negabant se nosse. i. e. The Canaanites being displeased and angry at what they suffered, when they were punished by those Animals whom they thought to be Gods, at length being made sensible by their Misfortunes, acknowledged there was a true God, &c.* This is very intelligible, and comes near the true Sense: But I cannot help observing, that *Vatablus* omits ἐν αὐτοῖς, and ἰδόντες, which immediately follow, and are the very Words which occasion all the Obscurity in the Original and the other Versions, as they now stand. I have therefore been tempted to suspect that there is some mistake in them, and that the true Reading probably is, ἐπὶ τούτοις κολαζόμενοι ἰδόντες, or ἐν αὐτοῖς κολαζόμενοι ἰδόντες; and my Reasons are as follow: 1. The *Bishops* and *Geneva Bible* both render, *When they saw themselves punished by them.* 2. *Junius*, who, in the other Part of the Verse, follows the *Greek* literally, renders, *Quum se iisdem puniri viderunt.* 3. *Calmet*, and the *Port Royal Comment*, explain it in this Manner, *Se voyant avec douleur tourmentez & exterminiez, &c.* The Sense then of the first



Part of the Verse I take to be this: "For  
 "whereas when corrected only they were dis-  
 "pleased and angry, seeing themselves yet  
 "more severely dealt with, and punished in  
 "good earnest by, or upon, account of those  
 "whom they thought to be Gods, they ac-  
 "knowledge the true God, whom before  
 "they denied to know, &c." [The Difficulty  
 of this Passage (which I believe stands here as  
 it came from the Author's Pen) seems chiefly  
 owing to the Words *ἐν αὐτοῖς*, which are re-  
 peated (not necessarily indeed, but) by a Re-  
 petition, which is usual in most Authors, and  
 to be found in the *New Testament* in very many  
 Places. The Construction is this: *Κολαζόμενοι  
 ὅτι ἐπὶ ταῖς αἰσῶν ἰδοὺν Θεοῦ, ἐφ' οἷς αὐτοὶ ἡγανακτεῖν  
 πάχοντες [κολαζόμενοι] ἐν αὐτοῖς, ἰδοὺν, ὅτι πάλαι  
 ἤκουστο εἶδέναι, Θεοῦ, ἐπ' ἐγνώσαν ἀληθῆ.* The Sense  
 (to which the Version may easily be reformed)  
 is this: "For being punished by those very  
 "Things, which they looked upon as Gods,  
 "by which to suffer, they, as being their Vota-  
 "ries, took it very ill; being punished, I say,  
 "by those, they perceived God, whom before  
 "they denied to know, and acknowledged him  
 "to be the true God: For which very Pur-  
 "pose this severe Punishment had been in-  
 "flicted upon them by him." *Πάχοντες ἡγα-  
 νακτεῖν* is *ἡγανακτεῖν* εἰς αὐτὰς πάχοντες, as in *Soph.  
 Philoct.* p. 408. Edit. *Canter.* *Καὶ οὐδ' ἐν αἰσῶν  
 νεκρὸν*, i. e. *εἰς αὐτὸν ἐν αἰσῶν*, *Neque novit se occidere  
 mortuum*: *St. Paul*, 2 *Cor.* x. 12. *Μετρώμετες  
 ἑαυτοὺς*, i. e. *They do not understand, or consider,  
 that they measure themselves by themselves, and  
 compare themselves with (or to) themselves.*  
 Where our Version in the Context is very  
 faulty: Somewhat better in the Margin.] The  
 next Difficulty lies in rendering *τὸ τέρας τῆς  
 κατὰ δίκην* by *extreme Damnation*, it might have  
 been better translated, *The utmost Extent of  
 Judgment, or the severest temporal Judgment or  
 Punishment*; (though *St. Austin* on *Psal.* ix.  
 quoting this Passage, understands it strictly)  
 but I take it to be no more than *αἰτία Θεοῦ καὶ κρίσις*  
 in the Verse before, as opposed to *παῖνις ἐπι-  
 τιμήσεως*, *slight Corrections, which they were dis-  
 pleased with*: But when it came properly to  
 Punishment, when they saw themselves *κολαζο-  
 μένους*, then they were awakened to an Acknow-  
 ledgment of the true God, who had thus pu-  
 nished them; and therefore it was that this  
 last and most effectual Method was taken with  
 them; *Διὸ καὶ τὸ τέρας τῆς κατὰ δίκην ἐπ' αὐτοὺς  
 ἐπῆλθε*, i. e. *When the Dailings of Correction  
 would not do, Punishment in full measure was  
 given, which had the Effect.* This Divine  
 Vengeance, when it fell so severely upon them,  
 made them open their Eyes; when they saw  
 and felt it, then, and not before, they acknow-  
 ledged him to be the true God, whom before  
 they denied to know; and therefore, or for  
 this End and Purpose that they might acknow-  
 ledge him, were they thus severely visited;  
 not only anathematized and exterminated, but  
*internecione deleti*, as *Grotius* renders, *cut off  
 with an utter and final Destruction.* *Comm.* in  
*loc.* This is spoken in Vindication of the  
 Justice of God, who does not punish particu-  
 lar Persons or Nations, without weighty Rea-  
 sons, and previous Notices of their Danger.

This extreme Severity therefore was at length  
 necessary, that those who had continued in wil-  
 ful Blindness and incorrigible Obstinacy, and  
 so were without Excuse, might be convinced  
 and made thoroughly sensible, that they had  
 brought this Damnation upon themselves, for  
 not discovering all the while the true God,  
 when they had such awakening Means afforded  
 them for that Purpose. And thus I think a  
 pretty good and consistent Sense may be fetched  
 from this Verse, which has none at all, or a  
 very obscure one, according to our Version.  
*Calmet* understands this of the *Canaanites*,  
 "That seeing themselves persecuted, afflicted,  
 "tormented by Hornets, which they regarded  
 "as Deities, and from whom they expected  
 "Favour and Protection, they were at length  
 "forced to acknowledge the God of the He-  
 "brews for the only true God." Not that  
 they actually on this Account turned from their  
 Idolatry, but, notwithstanding the Force of  
 inveterate Prejudice, were obliged to own the  
 Superiority of the God of *Israel*, and by con-  
 sequence that the little Animals they worshiped  
 were contemptible, less than nothing, and their  
 Religion gross Superstition. *Junius*, and many  
 others, apply it to *Pharaoh* and the *Egyptians*,  
 who could insolently say, when the Hand of  
 God lay not very heavy upon him, *Who is the  
 Lord that I should obey his Voice? I know not the  
 Lord, neither will I let Israel go*, *Exod.* v. 2.  
 But when he and his People were visited by a  
 Succession of Plagues and Judgments, and the  
 Land was corrupted by the grievous Swarms  
 of Flies, he as remarkably relents, and gives  
 them leave to go and offer Sacrifice to the  
 Lord their God, *Exod.* viii. 25. But as there  
 is no Authority in History, that the *Egyptians*  
 worshiped the very Insects, or Animals, that  
 God plagued them with, and as this Author  
 particularly mentions their being tormented with  
 their own Abominations, *διὰ τῶν ἰδίων βδελυσμάτων*;  
 I am inclined to think with *Calmet*, that the  
*Canaanites* are rather here meant, and that they  
 are spoken of through this whole Chapter.

## CHAP. XIII.

### THE ARGUMENT.

FROM the mention of the barbarous and ido-  
 latrous Rites of the *Canaanites*, expressed in  
 the former Chapter, the Author takes occasion to  
 treat of Idolatry in general, its Introduction and  
 Origine; of the Vanity, Folly, Impotence, or rather  
 Nothingness of Idols, and the mischievous Effects  
 attending such a Worship. He distinguishes Ido-  
 latry into three Sorts, that of the heavenly Bodies;  
 Images of deceased Princes, Heroes, and Benefactors,  
 and living Brute Animals. The first Sort he treats  
 of in the Beginning of this Chapter to v. 18. and  
 from thence, to the End of the fifteenth Chapter, he  
 considers the two other. Nor is this a Digression  
 or Deviation from his principal and main Design,  
 which is to exalt Wisdom, Piety, and true Religion,  
 and to excite a Love and Regard for them in all,  
 especially Princes and great Men. And can this  
 be done more effectually, than by showing the Folly  
 and Illusion of Superstition, exposing the false Ob-  
 jects of Worship, and pointing out the Mischiefs  
 and



and unhappy Consequences, which a Forgetfulness or Ignorance of the true God leads Men to?

Ver. 1. Surely vain are all Men by Nature who are ignorant of God.] *Μάρταις μὲν ὅτι πάντες ἀνθρώποι φῶς, οἷς παρέχῃ Θεὸς ἀγνοῖαν.* That

Idolaters are called vain Persons in Scripture is beyond Dispute; see 2 Kings xvii. 15. Rom. i.

21. But how are we to understand vain by Nature? I think, if this be the true Reading,

it either means, that such Men are naturally weak and senseless who are ignorant of God;

or that they are foolish who cannot, by the Light of Nature, make a Discovery of him.

But perhaps *φῶς* may be a Mistake here, for neither the *Vulgate* nor *Oriental Versions*, nor

*Coverdale's Translation*, take any Notice of it; possibly the original Word was *εἰς*, which they

all agree in, and retain. And the true Reading of the whole Sentence in the Greek may be

*μάρταις μὲν ὅτι πάντες ἀνθρώποι εἰσιν, οἷς περὶ Θεὸν ἀγνοῖαν.* [Perhaps *πεφύκασιν* (if any change is to be made) the first Syllable having been sunk

in the last of *ἀνθρώποι*, the foregoing Word.] *Calmet* seems to understand by *μάρταις*, insignificant, unprofitable, in the Sense that Vanity is used by *Solomon* in the Book of *Ecclesiastes*.

His Reflexion upon this Place, *Comm. in loc.* is too just and useful to be omitted: "With-

out the Knowledge of God, which is the first Principle of Wisdom, Truth, and Religion,

"all Men, even the greatest, are Vanity and nothing, all Science is but Darkness, all

"Philosophy Error and Delusion. Hence St. Paul renounced all other Knowledge,

"and determined to know nothing but Jesus and him crucified, 1 Cor. ii. 2. It was the

"superior Excellency of Divine Knowledge, which best discovers the Nature of God, that

"induced Justin Martyr, after having tried all the Sects of Philosophers, and entered into

"all Sorts of human Learning, to relinquish them as unsatisfactory: He was at length

"convinced, that there is no Wisdom, Science, or Philosophy, complete and perfect, with-

out the Discovery, Knowledge, and Worship of God." *Dial. cum Tryph. in init.*

Ibid. And could not out of the good Things that are seen know him that is.] *Τὸν ὄντα*, i. e.

The sovereign Being, the only Being, or Being itself. In the first Revelation which God makes

of his own Being, he entitles himself, *I am that I am*; by which Name the great Creator

does, in a manner, exclude every thing else from a real Existence, and distinguishes himself

from his Creatures, as the only Being, which truly and really exists. The ancient Platonic

Notion agrees with this Revelation which God has made of himself; for there is nothing, ac-

ording to that, which in reality exists, whose Existence, as we call it, is pieced, or made up

of past, present, and to come. He only properly exists, whose Existence is entirely present.

Hence *Plato* calls God *τὸ ὄν*, in *Timæo*, which probably he borrowed from *Moses*, *Exod. iii.*

14. and *Justin Martyr*, who once embraced that Philosophy, has often the same Expression.

By knowing God, is not barely meant that there is a God, but the Discovery likewise of

the Excellence and Beauty of his Perfections,

his Goodness, Wisdom, and other Attributes, which the visible World every where pro-

claims; for in all Creatures there are such lively Marks and Tokens of them, that from thence

we may form some, though imperfect, Idea of the inexpressible and infinite Perfections that

are in God. For the whole Extent of that which may be known of God, the *τὸ γνωστὸν τῷ*

*Θεῷ*, as St. Paul calls it, *Rom. i.* 19, 20. is manifest in the Creatures, and the invisible

Things of God, even his eternal Power and Godhead, are clearly seen in them. St. Basil

therefore very justly calls the World, *Θεογνωστικὴν παιδείαν*, The very School where the Know-

ledge of God is to be learnt. And *Clemens Alexandrinus*, the Book in which we read God,

using the same expressive Metaphor, *Strom. 6.* This Knowledge of the Deity from the Works

of Nature, is what some call natural Theology, and others, the Ascent of the Soul to God by

the Scale of the Creatures. Nor would any Injury be done to the Sense, if, instead of *τὸν ὄντα*,

we read *τὸν δόνα*, i. e. And from the good Things they saw could not trace out the God that gave

them; for thus *ἀγαθὸν* and *δόνα* answer to one another, as *ἔργον* and *τεχνίτην* do in the following Line.

Ibid. Neither by considering the Works, did they acknowledge the Workmaster.] The Know-

ledge of God was no difficult Discovery, and therefore Ignorance of him was not only sur-

prising, but inexcusable; for a Man need only lift up his Eyes to Heaven, and view the beau-

tiful Order and regular Motions of the celestial Bodies, to be convinced that there is a wise

Author of Nature, who at first created, and still preserves this System of Things. St.

Cyprian therefore very justly observes, *Hæc est summa delicti nolle agnoscere quem ignorare non*

*possis. De Idol. vanit.* But that of St. Chrysostom comes nearest this Writer, *ἐποίησεν ἔργον ὁ Θεός, ἵνα θαυμάσας τὸ ἔργον προσκυνήσῃς τὸν δημιουργόν, κ. τ. λ.* *Cælum condidit Deus ut opus admi-*

*rans dominum adorares: at alii, conditore relicto, cælum ipsum adorarunt, id vero propter eorum*

*ignaviam & insipientiam accidit. Hom. 25. De diabolo tentatore.* Thus Cicero expresses the

natural Sense of Mankind on this Head: *Cum videmus speciem primum candoremque cæli, deinde*

*conversionis celeritatem, tum vicissitudines dierum atque noctium, commutationesque temporum qua-*

*dripartitas, eorumque omnium moderatorem solem, lunamque, & stellas eosdem cursus constantissime*

*servantes; hæc cum cernimus, possumusne dubitare quin his præsit aliquis effector? Tuscul. Quæst. lib. i.*

But it would be almost endless to transcribe the many Passages that occur in his

Works upon this Subject, particularly in his Book, *De Nat. Deorum.*

Ver. 2. But deemed either Fire.] It is certain there were some among the Heathen who wor-

shipped universal Nature, or the System of the material World, as an entire Object, and made

God and Nature to be the same; see *Pliny's Nat. Hist. lib. ii. c. 7.* And others who wor-

shipped particular visible and useful Parts of it, which was the more general, the chief of which

are enumerated by this Writer; and the first is the Element of Fire. That this was the pre-

vailing Worship in the Eastern Countries among



among the *Persians* and *Chaldeans*; see *Pocock's Spec. Hist. Arab. Hyde De relig. vet. Pers. Strabo*, lib. xv. *Selden* observes: *Tametsi multi Persarum Dii, tamen ante omnes ignis ab eis cultus, & in omni sacrificio eum imprimis invocabant. Syntag. ii. cap. 8.* And a little after, to shew the very ancient Worship of Fire among the *Chaldeans*, he says, that the *Rab-* bins, by *Ur of the Chaldees*, *Gen. xi. 31.* understand their God *Fire*; and that, according to *Maimonides*, it means, *terra deserviens igni.* This he takes to be the *God of Nahor, Gen. xxxi. 53.* and the chief among the strange Gods worshiped in *Chaldea* during *Abraham's* Abode there, *Job. xxiv. 2.* We read also of *Horses* and *Chariots* consecrated to the *Sun* by some of the *Kings of Judah*, *2 Kings xxiii.* and of twenty-five *Apollates*, that worshiped the rising *Sun* towards the *East*, even in the *Temple of the Lord*, *Ezek. viii. 16.* The *Eastern Nations* worshiped *Fire* as the Cause of *Light*, and the *Sun* in particular, as being, in their Opinion, the perfectest *Fire*, and causing the perfectest *Light*. For this Reason, in all their *Temples*, they had *Fire* continually burning upon *Altars* erected in them for that Purpose, and before these sacred *Fires* they offered up all their public Devotions, as likewise they did their private ones before *Fires* in their own Houses, *Prid. Connell. Part i. B. 3.* As *Fire* among these Nations was a Symbol of the *Sun*, so the *Sun* itself probably was a Symbol of *God*, as being thought the most perfect Emblem of his Divinity, and to convey the most lively Idea of the Power, Beauty, Purity, and Eternity of *God*; but at length this expressive and noble Symbol was misunderstood and abused, and the Worship transferred to the Sign itself from the Being represented by it. *Vulcan* and *Vesta*, in the Pagan Theology, originally meant nothing but *Fire*. Thus *Ovid*:

*Nec tu aliud Vestam, nisi vivam intellige flammam.*

And the Name itself the Learned have derived from *Ἰgnis*. At length it was made one of the *Dii Penates*, and uncommon Honours decreed to it by the Appointment of *Numa Pompilius*.

*Ibid. Or Wind.]* The four principal Winds were esteemed as Gods by many People, by others particular Winds were acknowledged as such. The *Gauls* worshiped the Wind *Circius*; and, according to *Seneca*, *Augustus* when in *Gaul*, dedicated a Temple to it, *Nat. Quæst. lib. v. c. 17.* The *Egyptians* adored the Symbols of the *Etesian* and *Southern Winds*, which were most beneficial to them, and of the utmost Consequence with respect to the Overflowing of the *Nile*. The Worship paid to the Winds seems, in general, to have sprung from an ancient Tradition, that the Winds were governed by Angels set over them, and ruling in them. From what *Virgil* says of *Aeolus's* presiding over the Winds, *Aeneid. lib. i.* it appears that this Notion is very ancient; so that it is no wonder that in the symbolical Learning and Theology of the *Eastern Nations*, intelligent Beings, or Angels, should be introduced as commanding and directing them. The *Targum* on *1 Kings xix. 11.* as

quoted by *Lightfoot*, expressly mentions the Angels of the Winds.

*Ibid. The Wind, or the swift Air.]* ἡ πνεῦμα, ἡ ταχυνὸν αἰέξ. *Grotius* understands this quite contrary to our Version; by *πνεῦμα* he understands the *Air*, and by *ταχυνὸν αἰέξ*, the *swift Wind*; where it is observable, that he applies the Epithet to the Wind, rather than *Air*. The *Arabic Version* renders in like Manner, *sed ignem, aut rapidos ventos, aërem, aut astrorum orbem, &c.* as if the original Reading was ἡ πνεῦμα ταχυνὸν, ἡ αἰέξ. And indeed *Swift-*ness is the known Epithet of the Wind; hence we meet with the *Wings of the Wind* in Scripture, to denote their Rapidity. Hence probably the *Egyptians* made Birds the Symbols of the Winds, as esteeming them the most natural Emblems, upon account of the great *Swift-*ness with which they cross the *Air*. But *Swift-*ness does not seem always to belong to the *Air*, as such, the State of which varies according to its Qualities. If indeed we understand by the *Air*, the *Æther*, or that fine, fluid, agitated, and most subtile Part, which permeates the Pores of all Bodies, and is supposed to be the Cause of all Motion and Fermentation, which anciently the Heathens called *Zeus* or *Jupiter*, *ταχυνὸν* in this Sense will not be improper. But it is generally taken here to signify the *Clouds*; and this *Juno*, for so the Ancients called the grosser *Air*, was not without her Adorers and Votaries. Even *Socrates* is accused in the Poet for worshiping the *Clouds*, *Aristoph. in Nub.* and *Juvenal* charges the *Jews* with the same Folly:

*Nil præter nubes, & cæli Numen adorant.*

Sat. xiv.

*Coverdale's Version* makes the Wind, or the swift Air, to be the same, *Some took the Fyre, some the Wynde or Ayre . . . for Goddess.* "We know from *Sanchoniathon*, that the *Tyrians* had a Pillar sacred to Wind or Air in Motion, as well as they had to *Fire*; built, as they said, by *Ufous*, the Son of *Hypsouranias*, which *Fire* and *Wind* they worshiped as Gods." *Forbes's Works*, p. 199. "Hence the *Eagles* soaring Flight, and commerce thereby with the *Air*, brought that Bird to be the Emblem of *Air*, and such as imagined a Divinity in the *Air*, in *Clouds*, in *Winds*, took that Bird to represent their Deity." *Ibid.* p. 201.

*Ibid. Or the Circle of the Stars.]* i. e. the Constellations, according to *Calmet* and *Grotius*; by which some understand the *Pleiades*, others the Constellations in the *Zodiac*, called here, from the Asterisms in it, and its glorious Figure, the starry Circle; many of which are known to have been worshiped particularly by the *Egyptians*. *Selden* seems to have been of this Opinion, *Aegyptiis præcis Dodecatemoria signifieri θεοὶ βελαντιοί, seu Dii Consiliarii, Planetæ vero lietores, qui accensi Solis consistorio adstant, censebantur. Teste vetere ad Apollonii Rhodii Argonauticon IV scholiaste. Seld. De cult. extran. primord. cap. iii.* But as the Article is wanting before *ἀνέμων*, it may as well mean some other *Group* of Stars. This was a very ancient Idolatry, and spread farther than most other Superstitions. The *Israelites* are in



in Scripture often charged with paying their Adoration to the Host of Heaven, i. e. to the Stars, of whom the Sun and Moon were esteemed the Leaders, which they seem to have fallen into by the Intection of the neighbouring Nations. This Worship sprung from an early Notion, that the Stars were Tabernacles or Habitations of Intelligences, which animated those Orbs in the same manner as the Soul of Man animates his body, and were the Causes of all their Motions. But the Planets, being nearest to the Earth, and generally looked upon to have the greatest Influence on this World; the Heathens made choice of these, in the first place, for their Gods. Hence we find *Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Apollo, Mercury, Venus, and Diana*, to be first ranked in the Polytheism of the Ancients, as being their first and principal Deities. See *Prid. Connect. Part i. Book iii. p. 140. Fol. Edit.*

*Ibid. Or the violent Water* ] The Heathens had likewise a Multitude of Sea and River Gods, as *Oceanus, Neptune, Tbetis, Triton, Ne-reus, &c.* Homer speaks of the Rivers of *Troy, Simois and Scamander*, as two Deities. It is certain that the *Egyptians* esteemed the *Nile* as their God, called it *ὁ ἱερὸς Νεῖλος*, and that they worshiped the Water, above the other Elements, as being, in their Opinion, the Principle of all things. Hence, says *Philo*, God first smote their Water, and turned it into Blood, *De vit. Mos. lib. i.* *Suidas* humourously tells the Story of a famous Contest between the *Chaldeans* and *Egyptians* about the Strength and Power of their respective Deities, Fire and Water, in *voce Κάρων*. See also *Shaw's Travels*, where it is related; and *Gregory's Notes*, p. 222. *Tully* has, in few Words, comprised the several Objects of false Worship, *Erat persuasum etiam solem, lunam, stellas omnes, terram, mare, Deos esse.*

*Ibid. Or the Lights of Heaven to be the Gods which govern the World.* ] The Sun and Moon were worshiped in different Places by very different Names; see *Vossius de Orig. Idol. lib. ii. c. 5.* It was the Sun whom one Country worshiped under the Name of *Baal*, another of *Chemosh*, and others of *Mithras* and *Osiris*, which last was the Name given to it by the *Egyptians*, among whom the Sun was worshiped in the famous City of *Heliopolis*, which probably took its Name from thence, *Macrob. Saturn. lib. i.* The Moon was likewise worshiped under different Names, as *Hecate* and *Diana*; the same was most probably the *Egyptian Isis*, the *Assyrian Astarte*, or *Astaroth*, and the *Greek Ilithyia*. *Egypt* was early infected with Idolatry, especially of the Sun and Moon, as appears from *Diodorus Siculus*, and *Lucian De Dea Syria*. Though it is more probable that *Babylon* was the Mother of this kind of Idolatry, and from thence the Contagion spread through *Egypt, Assyria, Phœnicia*, and other Parts of the World. The Sun was the most glorious Object that ravished the Eye, and it shewed itself no where more gloriously than the Plains of *Chaldæa*. Some learned Men think that the Tower of *Babel* was consecrated by the Builders to the Sun, as the most probable Cause of drying up the mighty Waters,

*Tenison on Idol. c. iv.* who acquaints us, from *Julius Firmicus*, that the *Egyptians* expressed their Devotions to the Sun in this Form: *Sol Opt. Max. mens mundi, dux omnium principum.*

*Ver. 3. With whose Beauty, if they being delighted took them to be Gods, let them know how much better the Lord of them is; for the first Author of Beauty hath created them.* ] *Coverdale's* Version of this Place seems preferable, though they had such Pleasure in their Beauty, that they thought them to have bene Goddesses: yet shoulde they have knowen, how much more sayrer he is that made them, for the Maker of Beauty hath ordered al these thynges, *κατασκευασας*, the Original, the Founder, the Parent of Beauty hath created them, *ipsamet natura pulchritudinis origo*, says the *Vulgate*; nor does *St. Austin* express this Word anisly by *Pulchritudo pulchrorum omnium*: *Confess. lib. iii. cap. 6.* *Plato*, who himself calls these glorious Luminaries, *μεγαλοὶ Θεοί*, says, that the *Greeks* formed the Word *Θεός* from the Verb *θεῖν*, in *Cratyl.* for looking up to Heaven, and considering the Brightness and Glory of the celestial Bodies, running their several Courses with the most wonderful Harmony and Order, they entertained, in their Minds, so very high and exalted Notions of them, that they were tempted even to an idolatrous Worship of them. And other learned Men observe, that they gave the Name of *θεός* to the World, from observing the Beauty and Ornaments of it. *St. Jerom Comm. in Jon. c. i.* *Cæsar* assigns this as the Reason of the *Germans* worshiping the Host of Heaven, *Germani Deorum numero eos solos ducunt, quos cernunt, & quorum aperte opibus juvantur, Solem, & Vulcanum, & Lunam. lib. vi. De bello Gal.* It is generally agreed, that the Worship of these Luminaries was the first Idolatry; it is certain that the only kind of Idolatry mentioned in the Book of *Job*, and therefore we may presume of all others the most ancient, is the Worship of the Sun and Moon; *If I beheld the Sun when it shined*, says that holy Writer, *or the Moon walking in Brightness, and my Heart hath been secretly enticed, or my Mouth hath kissed my Hand* (in token of Adoration, and from whence indeed the very Term itself is derived; see *Selden De cult. extran. primord. cap. iii.*) *this also were an Iniquity to be punished by the Judge, for then I should have denied the God that is above,* ch. xxvi. 26, 27, 28. This idolatrous Practice of his Time he opposes, by asserting God to be the Maker of these very Bodies, and that *by his Spirit he hath garnished the Heavens*, xxvii. 13. See *Vossius De Idol. lib. ii. c. 5. Sbarrock, p. 326.* The Inference of this Writer is very just, that, instead of worshiping the heavenly Bodies, which, like those of the intellectual World, were all created by God, and for him, they should rather have concluded that there was a first Cause, the Author and Fountain of that Perfection and Glory, which are displayed in any, or all the Creatures; see Note on the latter Part of the next Verse.

*Ver. 4. But if they were astonished at their Power and Virtue.* ] It was a very ancient Opinion, and a received Tradition of Paganism, that the Gods had their Mansions in the *νοῦς*



τῶ κόσμῳ, or the celestial Bodies, and that the Luminaries of Heaven were all alive and instinct with a glorious and divine Spirit. For the Adoration they paid to the Sun and Moon, they paid it not to them, as mere inanimate Bodies, but as Intelligences, or the supposed Habitations of such beings; which seems evident from this Verse, addressed to the Sun :

Ἡελίος θ' ὅς πάντ' ἰφορᾷ, καὶ πάντ' ἐπαυῖει.

We have an Intimation likewise of this Notion in *Virgil, Aeneid vi.*

*Spiritus intus agit, totamque infusa per artus  
Mens agitat molem, & magno se corpore miscet.*

From this Notion they inferred, that it would be a thing pleasing to the supreme God, to address themselves to him by the Mediation of these glorious Intelligences, which they thought so much nearer to him than themselves, and to have the greatest Influence upon the World. This Conceit, seconded with pretended Revelations and Miracles, said to be done by the σοιχεῖα, or heavenly Bodies in time brought forth Sacrifices to them, and Images of them, by means whereof great Blessings, they thought, might be procured to them through their Power and Influence. *Maimon. De Idol. Tborn-dike's Epilogue, p. 287.*

*Ibid. Let them understand by them how much mightier he is that made them.] Coverdale's Version is here again preferable, or yf they marvelled at the Power and Workes of them, they shuld have perceaved thereby that he whiche made these thynges is myghtyer then they.* For notwithstanding the regular Courses of these heavenly Bodies, and their dispensing Life and Heat, Health and Vigour to all the Parts and Products of the Earth, yet they should not so entirely have depended upon their Sight, nor have been so far led by their own Imaginations, as to offer an idolatrous Worship to Beings, which a little Philosophy and the Assistance of improved Reason might have informed them, had themselves been made, and consequently were by Nature no Gods. How much rather ought they, from the Origin and the Effects of these heavenly Bodies, to have concluded and adored the infinite Power and most transcendent Perfections of the great Creator of them, the Father and Fountain of these Lights, from whom they received all that is glorious or beneficial in them, and must therefore be infinitely more excellent? *St. Austin* has some beautiful Sentiments upon this Head, *Si placent corpora, Deum ex illis lauda, & in artificem eorum retorque amorem, ne in his quæ tibi placent, tu displiceas—Hunc amemus, hunc amemus, ipse fecit hæc, & non est longè. Confess. lib. iv. cap. xi. 12.* and in another Place, from the Gifts discernible in the Creatures, he deduces the Perfection of the Giver, *Tu, Domine, fecisti ea, qui pulcher es, pulchra sunt enim; qui bonus es, bona sunt enim; qui es, sunt enim. At nec ita pulchra sunt, nec ita bona sunt, nec ita sunt, sicut tu, conditor eorum: cui comparata, nec pulchra sunt, nec bona sunt, nec sunt. Scimus hæc; gratias tibi. Et scientia nostra scientiæ tuæ comparata, ignorantia est. Confess. lib. xi. c. 4.*

Ver. 5. For, by the Greatness and Beauty of the Creatures, proportionably the Maker of them

is seen.] The Greek Copies vary here; the *Complut.* reads, ἐν ᾧ μεγέθους, καὶ καλότητος, καὶ κτισμάτων ἀναλόγως, κ. τ. λ. which *Junius* follows, nam ex magnitudine, & specie, ac creatis rebus convenienter, &c. and our Version, with a little Alteration. The *Vatican* Edition has ἐν ᾧ μεγέθους καλοῦς κτισμάτων ἀναλόγως, κ. τ. λ. and thus the *Syriac* renders, i. e. by the Greatness of the Beauty of the Creatures, the Maker of them is seen proportionably, or by Analogy, by comparing the Creature with the Creator, the Effect with the Cause, as far as the difference is capable of being known, cognoscibiliter, according to the *Vulgate*, and as the Natures of the Beings compared will admit, which probably is what *Junius* means by convenienter, and as the Ratio between finite and infinite, if any such could be, will allow. *St. Chrysostom* quotes this Passage of our Author, and has the following just Reflection upon it; εἶδες τὸ μέγεθος, θαυμάσον τὴν δύναμιν τῷ ποιῶντι· εἶδες τὸ καλόν, ἐκπλάγῃ τὴν σοφίαν τῷ κοσμοῦντι.

Ver. 6. But yet for this they are the less to be blamed; for they peradventure err seeking God, and desiring to find him.] *Coverdale's* Version is clearer; notwithstandinge they are the lesser to be blamed that seek God, and wolde fynde hym, and yet mysse. But that of the *Geneva Bible* is preferable here; but yet the Blame is lesse in those that seek God, and would find him, and yet peradventure do err. A Comparison is here made between the Worship of the heavenly Bodies, and that of Statues and Images. The former has most to be said in its Defence, though far from excusable, because these Luminaries are glorious and magnificent, have a visible and apparent Beauty, and sensible Virtue, Power, and Benefit issuing from them, and therefore are worshiped for their own sakes, and the Advantages which the World receives from them. But what Merit of any sort is in an Image, or what Pleasure or Profit can be drawn from it? which at best is a Representation only, and perhaps of some Thing or Person in itself worthless or disgraceful. If the Worship therefore of the former is not to be excused, as it follows, y. 8. the Worship of the latter is much more to be condemned, because nothing is a greater Dishonour to God, than to suppose him like the Image of a corruptible Creature, or the Product of Man's Art or Invention. There is this farther to be alledged in mitigation of their Error who worshiped the heavenly Bodies, that the Creatures which they worshiped they looked upon to be eminent Representations of the most glorious Attributes of the Deity: they worshiped the Host of Heaven, because they are visible Representations of his Glory and Eternity; and the Elements, because they represented his benign, sustaining, and ubiquitary Presence. *Philo* compares the Adoration of the Sun, Moon, and Stars with other Instances, and particularly with the Worship of Statues and Images, and has the very same Sentiments with this Writer, *Peccant proculdubio, speaking of the former, dum, posthabito principe, venerantur subditos; minus tamen a recto declinant, quam qui ligna, lapides, argentum, aurum similesque*



lesque materias vertunt in Statuas & simulacra.

Ver. 8. *Howbeit, neither are they to be pardoned.* [Heb. 5. But on the other hand, i. e.] in answer to this Objection xvi. 23. See Taylor upon *Lysan.* p. 80. Edit. Lond. Though there are these mitigating Circumstances in some measure to lessen the Guilt of the Worshipers of the heavenly Host, yet is their Offence very grievous. For, to instance in the Sun himself, which, undoubtedly, is the most glorious and perfect, what Property has he of Divinity? He is neither self-existent, nor sufficient to continue his own Being. And tho' he may warm and cherish the Earth, yet can neither of the Luminaries, nor both jointly of themselves, produce either Corn, Grass, or Fruit. It is therefore wisely conjectured by some learned Men, that one Reason why Moses, in the History of the Creation, particularly mentions, that the Fruits of the Earth and the Trees yielding Fruit were produced on the third Day of the Creation, Gen. i. 11. and the Sun and the Moon not until the fourth Day, v. 14. was, to guard against the Worship of them; that Men might not think the Influence of those celestial Bodies to be the Cause of the growing of these Fruits, but the Power and Providence of God; see St. Ambr. Hex. lib. iv. and Philo, Περὶ κόσμου. For this was a sensible Argument to the Jews and others, that these heavenly Bodies which the Heathens paid their Devotions to, were only secondary and instrumental Causes in the Hand of God, and that he could have supplied Mankind with all the Produce of the Earth without them. Nor is it without a weighty Reason, that the Sun, in the Hebrew Language, is called *Shemesh*, i. e. a Minister or Servant; Deut. iv. 19. Isai. lx. 20. Joel ii. 10. which very Name alone should have kept all that understood its Meaning, from worshipping that Luminary; and yet even some Jews seem to have fallen into this Idolatry, from what Ezekiel says, viii. 16. who are there reprov'd for turning their Faces to the East for this very Purpose.

Ver. 9. *For if they were able to know so much, that they could aim at the World.* The Sense which is most common and received of σοχαζαδς τῷ αἰῶνα is, that if they could give so good a Guess at the World, the Beauty of the heavenly Bodies, and the Effect and Influence which they have upon the Earth, could dive into the Secrets of Nature, as the Cause of Winds, Flux of the Sea, Violence of Earthquakes, Nature of Animals, &c. might they not have discovered, by the same Search of Reason and happy Conjecture, the Lord and Maker of the Universe? For there seems less Study and Meditation required to know that the beautiful Frame of Things which we see was not by Chance, or self-produced, but the Work of an Almighty Creator, than is necessary to penetrate into the Mysteries of the natural World, and unravel the Causes of such surprizing Events. But probably σοχαζαδς τῷ αἰῶνα is a Mistake, for σοχαζομαι has generally, if not always, in this Sense a Genitive Case in the most approved Writers, and therefore τῷ αἰῶνα seems wrong

in this respect, as well as in regard to τῶν, which follows. The true Reading seems to be αἰῶν αἰῶν. Besides, this Expression answers very well to the Things mentioned in the second Verse, which belong to the upper Regions. Whereas αἰῶν signifies principally Duration. Perhaps the Transcribers might mistake αἰῶν for αἰῶνα contracted, such Abbreviations being usual in Manuscripts. [In the Original, Εἰς τὸ πρῶτον ἰσχυρὰν εἰδέναι, ἵνα δυνάσται σοχαζαδς τῷ αἰῶνα, &c. The Word εἰδέναι is superfluous, or worse, because of σοχαζαδς, which immediately follows. Perhaps it was brought hither from ver. 1. For that St. Austin did not find it in his Copy is probable from Confess. v. 3. where he alludes to this Place thus: Qui tantum potuerunt valere (i. e. velle) ut possent æstimare seculum, quamquam ejus dominum minime invenierunt. Whence it likewise appears, that he read σοχαζαδς τῷ αἰῶνα, or τῷ αἰῶνι. The true Reading I should have thought to have been τῷ αἰῶνι (which is the usual Abbreviation of αἰῶνιον) had it not been for the Passage of St. Augustin, who wrote before such Abbreviations were in use. But, I believe, the Author wrote σοχαζαδς τῷ αἰῶνι, because of τῶν which follows. So Heb. xi. 3. Πιστεὶ ᾗ οὐκ ἔστιν καὶ ἰσχυρὰ τὸ αἰῶν ὡς πρῶτον. Οὐδ'. The Verb σοχαζαδς, if no other Preposition be joined with it, must have a Genitive Case, because the Preposition κατὰ is always understood.]

Ver. 10. *And in dead things is their Hope.* i. e. in Idols, which have no Life, no Knowledge, no Sensation. It is worth observing, that the original Word for an Idol signifies Vanity, a mere Nothing, that which has no Existence. The primitive Christians accordingly looked upon the Heathen Temples as Charnel Houses, esteeming their Gods as dead Men, according to that of Tertullian, Mortui & Diu unum sunt. De Spectac. c. xiii. And thus some learned Men explain ἐπεύων τὸ νεκρὸν, Deut. xviii. 11. according to the LXX, not of a mere Necromancer, who consulted familiar Spirits, but of one that enquires of the dead Idols, which the Heathens had set up in the Nations, round about the Israelites, in Opposition to the living God: Shuckford's Connect. vol. ii. p. 398. There may be also another Interpretation given of this Place, which is countenanced by the Vulgate, Coverdale's, and the other ancient English Versions, viz. that their Hope is vain, fruitless, desperate, without any Prospect of Help or Remedy, like that of dead Men, inter mortuos spes illorum est, according to the Vulgate. Ils sont, says Calmet, comme des gens reduits au tombeau, sans secours, sans esperance. As the Hope of good Men, or such as serve the true God after an acceptable Manner, is, on the contrary, a sure and certain Hope, a joyful confident Assurance, a Hope full of Immortality, ch. iii. 4.

Ibid. *Gold and Silver to shew Art in.* Χρυσὸν & ἀργύρον, τὴν τέχνην αὐτῶν, i. e. some Device, or Invention, of Art. Coverdale's and the old English Versions put the Comma after Silver, and understand τὴν τέχνην αὐτῶν, as a distinct Particular from Gold and Silver beforementioned, and render *Gold, Silver, and the Thing that is sounde out by Cunnynge.* The Vulgate takes it in



in the same Manner, and so does the *Syriac* Version, and *Calmet*. I cannot help observing here, the very great Resemblance which there is between this Passage and that of the *Acts*, ch. xvii. 29. Οὐκ ὁφθαλμοὶ νομίζουσιν χρυσοῦς ἢ ἀργύρεος ἢ λίθος, χαλκὸς γὰρ τεχνικὸς καὶ ἐκθυμῶντος ἀνθρώπου, τὸ θεῖον εἶναι ὁμοίον.

Ibid. Or a Stone good for nothing, the Work of an ancient Hand.] [In the Original, perhaps, it might better be distinguished, and read thus: ἢ λίθον ἀχρηστον χειρὸς ἰσχυρῆς ἀρχαίας εἶτε καὶ τοῦ ἐκθυμῶτος, &c. Or a Stone, the useless Work of an ancient Hand: Or if a Carpenter, &c. I do not see what Sense it can make. The Word εἶτε is to be understood in the 10<sup>th</sup> Verse, as if it had been written, εἶτε χρυσοῦς καὶ ἀργύρεος ἢ λίθον—εἶτε καὶ τοῦ ἐκθυμῶτος—φυτὸν ἢ περὶ—καὶ, &c. which is an usual Ellipsis: Whether Gold and Silver, or a Stone—or whether a Carpenter, after he hath sawn down a Tree, &c. ἀχρηστον ἰσχυρῶς πόνος ἀρχαίος, xv. 4. concerning the same Thing.] The Antiquity of the Idol was thought of great Importance; its venerable Rust added not a little to its Divinity: Hence *adoranda rubigo* in the Poet, applied to such Things as Time itself had, in a manner, consecrated, *Juvenal*, Sat. xiii. Even a Stone badly cut has had a Veneration paid to it, merely because it was ancient. Whole Nations, says *Calmet*, have adored, for a Succession of Ages, an ancient Block of Marble, badly finished, or a Figure in Wood rotten and worm-eaten. But supposing the most complete Piece of Work, and that the Hand of a *Praxiteles*, or a *Pheidias*, stood plainly confest, yet cannot Time, though it may and does add a Value to Busts and Medals, confer Divinity, nor excuse the Adoration paid to a Piece of senseless Matter, though beautified by Art, dignified by a celebrated Name, and recommended by the Prescription and Authority of many Ages. It may not be unacceptable, perhaps, nor foreign to the Occasion, to transcribe Part of an Epistle wrote by *St. Austin* to the principal Inhabitants of a City in *Africa*, who had murdered a great Number of *Christians*, because some of them were suspected to have taken away their God *Hercules*. That learned Father expostulates with them upon this Accident in these strong and pathetic Terms: “The barbarous Treatment, which ye have offered to so many innocent Persons, calls for Vengeance from Heaven and Earth. But as ye urge the Affront and Damage, which ye have received, against the Massacre we complain of, let us state, in a few Words, the Injuries on both Sides: You object, that your God *Hercules* is taken away; we are willing to make you Satisfaction; we have Money, Stones, and Workmen ready to set about the Work, they shall instantly cut you out another Deity, and paint it too in like Manner, and finish such a *Hercules* in its stead, as you shall have no Reason to complain of the Difference. It is thus we restore your Idol, it is thus we repair your Loss: Give us now back, in return, the Souls of those many Innocents you have murdered, and only to revenge the injured Honour of a sorry lifeless Piece of Stone.” *Aug. Epist. cclxvii. ad Princip.*

*Colen. Suffes.* This Instance shews the great Veneration paid by the Heathen to their Statues, and how far Superstition, or a blind Devotion, will hurry Men, even to sanctify Murder.

[Ver. 11. Εὐκρίνον φυτόν is translated, a Tree meet for the Purpose: As if they had read ἀχρηστον. The *Complut.* has ὀτρύνον, which *Bos* thinks ought to be ὀτρύνον. *Aldus*’s Edition reads ἐκρίνον. Perhaps ἐκρίνον or ἐκλεκτόν, a choice Tree, one chosen for his Purpose out of a Number.]

Ver. 11, 12, 13.] The Author in this and the following Verses exposes, with great Smartness of Argument, the Absurdity of Image Worship, by shewing their Original, and the Vileness of the Materials of which they are made: “That an ordinary Carpenter” (whom he purposely fixes upon to shew the Clumsiness and Inelegance of the Work) “having taken from a Tree cut down, what was best and most valuable, and fittest to be employed in some necessary Piece of Work; among the Refuse, or rather the Refuse of the Refuse, for so τὸ ἐξ αὐτῶν ἀποβέλημα signifies, “fixes upon a knotty and coarse Piece of Stuff, such as he could otherwise make no Use of; and this he thinks good enough to make a God of.” *Horace*, in like manner, makes himself merry with a Workman, who deliberated whether he should make a Bench or a God of an offal Piece of Wood, and at length determined it for a God: *Maluit esse Deum. Serm. lib. i. Sat. 8.* The chief Part of this Description is borrowed from *Isaiab*, ch. xlv. *Jerem.* ch. x. *Baruch.* ch. vi. and *Lowth*’s Paraphrase upon those Passages in the Prophets, is equally applicable here: “What an Absurdity is it for a Man to dress his Meat, and make his God with the same Stick of Wood? or to think that a Piece of Timber hath any more Divinity in it, than it had before, because it is fashioned, and carved into the Figure of a Man?” To give an Account of the Original of Images, how and whence made, is alone sufficient to expose the Folly of worshipping them. This Argument the ancient Apologists for Christianity often insist upon, to shew the Absurdity of the Heathen Idolatry; but none of them more happily than *Minucius Felix* in the following Words, and almost upon the like Occasion, allowing only for the Difference in the Materials: *Quando igitur hic (Deus) nascitur? Ecce funditur, fabricatur, scalpitur: nondum Deus est. Ecce plumbatur, construitur, erigitur: nec adhuc Deus est. Ecce ornatur, consecratur, oratur: tunc postremo Deus est, cum homo illum voluit & dedicavit;* which, in *Mr. Reeves*’s most excellent Translation, runs thus: “But when, pray, does it commence Divine? Behold it is cast, fashioned, and filed: Well, it is no God yet. Behold, it is soldered, put together, and set upon its Legs: Well, it is no God yet. Behold, it is bedecked, consecrated, prayed to: then, then at last behold a complete God, after Man hath vouchsafed to make and dedicate him.” Thus *Arnobius*, lib. vi. who was himself once a Pagan Idolater, and had, as he confesses, often asked Blessings,



sings, *nihil sentiente de ligno*, at length makes this just Reflexion upon such senseless Conduct: *At quæ dementia Deum credere quem tute ipse formâris, supplicare tremebundum fabricatæ abs te, Rei?* This sort of Idolatry, besides its Wickedness, hath something in it too very preposterous, for should not the Idol rather worship the Maker, than the Maker the Image, since, in some sort, he may be considered as the Creator of it? Philo has, I think, the like Observation, *certe si error placuit, pictores & statuarii magis merebantur ut divinos honores acciperent; nunc, ipsis contemptis, ac si nihil egregium præstitissent, pro diis habentur eorum opera.*

Ver. 13. *When he had nothing else to do.* i. e. postponing it to all other Work, as thinking it of no great Consequence, and then only taking it in hand when nothing better offered. Our Version follows a Copy which read *ἐν ἐπιμελείᾳ ἀργίας αὐτῷ*, which some Latin Translations render, *diligentiâ otii sui*; and others, *accurato otio*: Other Editions have *ἐν ἐπιμελείᾳ ἐργασίας αὐτῷ*, which is likewise the Reading of the Alexandrian Manuscript; and this the oriental Versions seem most to favour.

Ver. 14. *Or made it like some vile Beast, laying it over with Vermillion and with Paint, colouring it red.* That it was usual thus to paint, and set off their Images, see *Ezek. xxiii. 14. Arnob. lib. vi.* And no wonder that the *Lares*, or little Household Deities, for such this Writer seems here to mean, were so adorned, when *Pliny* acquaints us, that the Face of the Image of *Jupiter* was usually painted with Vermillion upon Festival Days, and other grand Occasions among the Romans; *Jovemque a Censoribus miniandum locari*, that the Censors hired Artists for that Purpose; that *Camillus*, and other Generals, to whom the Honour of a public Triumph was decreed, were painted in the like manner; and that, among the *Æthiopians*, *totos eo tingi procures, huncque Deorum simulacbris esse colorem.* *Plin. lib. xxxiii. ch. 6. and Calmet in loc.*

[*Ibid. Covering every Spot thereof.* *Πᾶσαν κηλὶδα τὴν ἐν αὐτῷ καλαχρίσας.* He had just before said *καλαχρίσας μίλιον*. Whence I imagine that he wrote here *καλαχρίσας*. Our Version is not exact.]

Ver. 15. *And when he had made a convenient Room for it, set it in a Wall, and made it fast with Iron.* This convenient Room we may understand to be a Shrine, which was a sort of little Chappel, representing the Form of a Temple, with an Image in it, which being set upon an Altar, or fastned in a Wall, or to some other Place, the Idol, when the Doors were opened, was represented to the Worshipers as standing or sitting in State. *Coverdale's*, and some other ancient Versions, call this a Tabernacle, following herein the *Vulgate*, which renders *faciens ei ædiculam illo dignam*, the very Word used by *Minucius Felix* to express one of these Shrines by. And in this Sense, probably, we may understand the *Tabernacle of Moloch*, *Acts vii. 43.* for the *σκηνὴ* mentioned there was a kind of little Cabinet, wherein the Image of the false God was kept. And such I imagine those Silver Shrines to be, *ναὺς ἀργυρεῖς*,

which *Demetrius* made for *Diana*, *Acts xix. 24.* *Isaiab* likewise mentions the Silver Chains by which these Idols were fastened to Walls or Pillars, *xl. 19.*

Ver. 18. *Humbly beseecheth that which hath least Means to help.* [Instead of *ἱκετεύει*, the Language, I think, requires *ἱκετεύειν*, sc. *ἀξιοῦ* thus: *Περί ᾧ ζωῆς τὸ (νὸν τὸν) νεκρὸν ἀξιοῦ, περὶ ᾧ θνητοῦ, τὸ ἀπερότατον, ἡλὲν περὶ ᾧ, &c.* *ἀπερότατον* seems preferable to *ἀπερότατον*, in the Sense of our Version, *most helpless*. In the 19<sup>th</sup> Verse, instead of *ἡ ἐργασία ἡ χεὶρ ἡ θνητοῦ*, I would read, *ἡ ἐργασία χεὶρ, ἡ θνητοῦ*.] *Τὸν ἀπερότατον*, i. e. that which hath no Experience at all, as our Margin has it. *Nannius* reads, *ἀπερότατον*, *egentissimum*; our Version seems to follow a Copy which read either *ἀχρεῖστατον*, or *ἀναπρόστατον*, any of which are more properly opposed to *θνητοῦ* than *ἀπερότατον*.

Ver. 19. *Askest Ability to do of him that is most unable to do any thing.* Our Version here manifestly follows the *Vulgate*, which reads, *et de omnium rerum eventu petit ab eo qui in omnibus est inutilis*; which *Calmet* thinks has been corrupted, and that the ancient Reading there was, *de manuum eventu petit ab eo qui manibus est inutilis*. And indeed the Greek, *τὸ ἀδυνάτεστον ταῖς χερσίν*, favours this Conjecture. I should not do Justice to this Writer, if I passed by the beautiful Turns unobserved, which close this Chapter, and cannot but strike every judicious Reader. I am sensible that *Arnobius*, *Lactantius*, *Minucius Felix*, and many of the primitive Writers, have been very large in exposing the Folly of Idol Worship; yet I know no occasional Remarks, nor even any whole Treatise purposely wrote on the Subject, where this is more happily executed than in the Compass of these two last Verses, which alone may serve as a Specimen of this Writer's Skill and Judgment, where the Contrast is so beautiful, and the Contraries so happily and justly placed to illustrate each other, that a Person of Taste cannot but immediately discern and admire the Justness and Elegance of the Piece. It is inferior only to some Instances of the same kind in the inspired Writings, particularly that well-judged Opposition which we meet with in the following Words of *St. Paul*, *As Deceivers, and yet true; as unknown, and yet well-known; as dying, and behold we live; as chastened, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things*, *2 Cor. vi. 8, 9, 10.* see also, *ch. iv. 8, 9.* I shall conclude this Chapter with a just Reflexion of *St. Austin* upon another Species of Idolatry, which, though less perceived, is no less fatal: "Besides the senseless sort of Idolatry, which consists in worshiping Brutes and Images, which may easily be avoided, there is a more common and dangerous Way of worshiping the Work of a Man's own Hands, continues he, by a secret and subtle Idolatry, which consecrates our own favourite Wills and Passions, deifying the Desires of our own Hearts, and giving them the Preference before the Will of God; and is, in other Words,



"Words, the Adoration of our own selves,  
 "an Idolatry, which is so much the more  
 "dangerous, as it is within our own Breasts,  
 "and we constantly carry the favourite Image  
 "about with us.

## CHAP. XIV.

## THE ARGUMENT.

**T**HE Insufficiency of Idols further shewn from their Inability to preserve their Worshipers in a Voyage at Sea; from hence the Author takes occasion to mention the first Invention of a Ship, the Form of which probably was taken from the Model of the Ark; that God rules the boisterous Element, and his Providence steers Men's Course, which can save them from Accidents without the Use of artificial Means. The Original of Idolatry is enquired into, & 14. and some Conjectures in the Verses following, from whence probably it might take its Rise. The Chapter concludes with the abominable Rites attending upon it, and the scandalous Vices introduced by it.

[Ver. 2. And the Workman built it by his Skill. *Τεχνίτης ὃ σοφία κατεσκεύασεν.* In the Alexand. MS. *τεχνίτης ὃ σοφία κατεσκεύασεν.* Which reading is much more agreeable to the Style of this Author.]

Ver. 3. But thy Providence, O Father, governeth it.] As Men had likewise their tutelary Deities and favourite Idols, which were thought to preside over the Sea, and able to assist them in their Voyages, the Author shews the Absurdity of Idol-worship in this Particular also, that neither the strongest Ship, built by the most skilful Workman, nor the rotten Images that are sometimes in it, or carved upon it, probably of Neptune, Castor, and Pollux, &c. are sufficient to procure a Man a safe Voyage, but the over-ruling Providence of the true God only, ἢ ὃ σὺ, πάτερ, διακυβεῖν πρόνοια, which is a proper technical Sea Term, and means that God's Providence steers and guides the Ship. That particular Deities were supposed to superintend Sea Affairs, appears from an old Inscription upon the Pharos built by Sostratus, mentioned by Pliny, Nat. Hist. xxxvi. 12. and Strabo, lib. xvii. which is quoted by Dr. Hody, De Bibl. Text. orig. p. 87. and is as follows:

ΘΕΟΙΣ ΚΩΤΗΡΟΙ  
 ΤΗΡΕ ΤΩΝ ΠΛΩΖΟΜΕΝΩΝ.  
 DIIS SERVATORIBVS  
 PRO NAVIGANTIBVS.

Gruter has an Inscription upon the same Occasion to Castor and Pollux,

ΘΒΟΙ ΜΕΓΑΛΟΙ ΔΙΟΣΚΟΡΟΙ ΚΑΒΕΙΡΟΙ.  
 CASTORI ET POLLUCI DIIS MAGNIS.

Grut. Inscript. xcvi. p. 13.

But the most remarkable is that of Jupiter Urius Bosporanus, published at first by Wheler and Spon, and afterwards more correctly by Gibb, who engraved a Copy of the Stone, which was brought from the Bosporus into England in 1731, and was afterwards among the Curiosities of Dr. Mead's Library. The Age of it appears from the Name of the Statuary,

Philo, Son of Antipater, being mentioned in it, who lived under Alexander the Great, see Plin. Nat. Hist. xxiv. 8. And the Statue likewise is taken Notice of in succeeding Ages by Cicero in L. Pisonem, in Verrem, and by Dionysius Byzantinus, and other ancient Geographers. The Inscription, in the common way of writing, is as follows:

Οὐρανὸν ἐκ πρύμνης τῆς ὁδοῦ ἡγεῖα καλεῖται  
 Ζῆνα, κατὰ προτοίαν ἰσίου ἐκπέλασας.

Εἰρ' ὅτι Κρανίας δῖος δρόμοι, ἔνθα Ποσειδῶν

Καμπύλον εἰλάσει κύμα πῶδ' Ἰαμάθοις,

Εἴτε κατ' Αἰγαίην πόντι πλάκῃ νόσον ἐρευνᾷ,

Νείδω, τῷδε βαλὼν φάειν αἰὲρ ἔσανω.

Ὡδὲ τὸν δ' ἀνέστην αἰεὶ Θεόν, Ἀντιπάτρης παῖς,

Στήσε φίλων, ἀγαθῆς σύμβολον ὀπλοῦς.

Thus rendered by Dr. Ashton:

Urion in clamato Jovem comitemque ducemque

Navita, cum ventis pandere vela parat.

Sive ad Cyaneas immani in vortice petras

Tendat, ubi horrificis aestibus unda fremat;

Sive iter Aegaei scopulosa per aquora tentet,

Tutus, ubi huic statuae liba sacrarit, eat.

Huncce Deum hic posuit nautis letabile signum,

Præsidiumque Philo, filius Antipatri.

That the Sailors, in their Distress in a Tempest, used to cry for Help to their false Gods, and even implore the Mercy of the Sea itself, appears from Erasmus's Naufragium, where they cry out in their Fright, O clementissimum mare, O generosissimum mare, O formosissimum mare, mitesce, serva; where the Epithets made use of are too soft for that boisterous Element, but are intended as Compliments to bespeak its Favour. But a more remarkable Instance, and which I shall, for its greater Authority, chuse more particularly to mention, is what occurs in the Prophet Jonah, ch. i. where we read that the Lord sent out a great Wind into the Sea, and there was a mighty Tempest in it, so that the Ship was like to be broken; then the Mariners were afraid, and cried every one unto his (false) God, & 5. But notwithstanding their Prayer to these pretended Deities, and their rowing hard to bring the Ship to Land, the Text acquaints us, that they found no Help, the Sea continuing tempestuous against them, till they cried unto the Lord Jehovah, the God of Heaven, the only true God; and then the Sea, at his Command, ceased from her raging. This unexpected Escape so affected the Mariners, that from thenceforth they feared the Lord exceedingly, & 16. being convinced of his Power and Greatness, which appeared both in raising the Storm, and so suddenly laying it. But the divine Power over that unruly Element never appeared more signally, than when our Saviour said to it, Peace, be still; and immediately there was a great Calm, Mark iv. 39.

Ibid. For thou hast made a Way even in the Sea, and a safe Path in the Waves.] This may either mean in general, that God giveth a safe and secure Passage over the Sea to the Faithful that depend upon and cry unto him; or it may mean, that God made a safe Way for his favourite People the Israelites to go through the Red Sea on Foot, which seems the most probable Interpretation, because this Sentence seems borrowed from Psal. lxxvii. 19. where the



the Words are almost the same, *Thy Way is in the Sea, and thy Paths in the great Waters*; which the best Interpreters refer to the same Occasion.

Ver. 4. *Shewing that thou canst save from all Danger: yea, though a Man went to Sea without Art.* [Greek ἐν πλωίς, by any means, the Word πλώσις being understood. Θεὸς θελόντος καὶ ἐν πλωίς πλέοις.] Ἰνα καὶ ἀνευ τέχνης τις ἐπιβῇ. Ἐπιβῇ seems to require something after it; and πλωίς, ver. 1. is too far off: I think the true Reading of the Greek is either νῆα καὶ ἀνευ τέχνης τις ἐπιβῇ, and thus the Arabic Interpreters translate, *ut quispiam sine ulla arte lignum abjectum conscendat*, or ἀλα καὶ ἀνευ τέχνης τις ἐπιβῇ; and thus Calmet takes it, *vous pouvez sauver de tout peril quand on s'engageroit même sur mer, sans le secours d'aucun art*. Comm. in loc. and the Vulgate itself so understands it, *etiamsi sine arte aliquis adeat mare*; [The Fault of this Passage is in the Word Ἰνα, which makes no Sense. The Alexandrian has ἵνα καὶ ἀνευ. It should be ἵνα καὶ ἀνευ τέχνης, &c. of which the Vulgate is the verbal Translation, *etiamsi sine arte*, &c. *Yea, though a Man should go on Ship-board even without Skill.*] Art or Skill is not always successful, nor indeed always necessary on Ship-board, or at Sea; not always successful, as appears from the Instance of the Mariners in *Jonah*, and because there are many Shipwrecks, notwithstanding the Skill of the best Pilots; nor always necessary, because God can save without the Use and Assistance of secondary Means; as in the *Israelites* safe Passage through the Sea, or contrary to the known Laws of Nature; as when *St. Peter*, at *Christ's* Command, walked upon the Sea. And though the Pilot should have little or no Skill, or, like *Palinurus*, should, by some Accident, fall overboard, yet God's Power can preserve from Danger, when the ordinary and usual Means fail. Or, should the Violence of a Tempest render all Art and Management ineffectual, and at length force the Ship upon Rocks, so that nothing but instant Death is apprehended, God can, even in this Extremity, unexpectedly succour the Miserable, by an unforeseen Interposition of his Providence; as he has done upon many Occasions, well attested in History. One cannot read the Description of *St. Paul's* Voyage, and of that sad Tempest, *Acts* xxvii. when neither Sun nor Stars in many Days appeared, when they were forced with their own Hands to cast out the Tackling of the Ship, so that all Hope of Safety was then taken away; nor reflect upon the ensuing Shipwreck of him and his Companions, and their very surprising and happy Escape to Land, some on Boards, and some on Pieces of the Ship, without discerning the Hand of God in their wonderful Preservation, which then is most visible and distinguished, when Hope is desperate, and Art ceases. [The Passage in the *Acts* is not a right Translation in our Version, because Boards (σανίδες) are Pieces of the Ship. You will observe that in the Greek it is not, ἐπὶ τινων τῶ πλωίς, but ἐπὶ τινων τῶν ἀπὸ τῶ πλωίς.]

Ver. 5. *Nevertheless thou wouldest not that the Works of thy Wisdom should be idle.* These Words may either mean, that God not only displays

his Power at Sea, but also his Wisdom is visible there, particularly in the Make of a Ship, and in the Art of Navigation; for God may very properly be said to have taught Men these, as he first gave the Model of a Ship when he instructed *Noah* to build the Ark after such a particular Form; and from thence, or by that Pattern, Men first attempted to build Ships, and to sail in them on the Surface of the Waters. The Heathens indeed have given the Honour of this Invention to different Persons, some to *Jason* and the *Argonauts* that sailed to *Colchis* to fetch the Golden Fleece, some to *Neptune*, others to *Atlas*, or *Minerva*, some to the People of *Crete*, and others to the *Phenicians*. But hence, or from the Plan communicated to *Noah*, we may, with most Certainty, derive it; and here we should fix the Epoch, or first Original of Navigation. Or the Meaning may be, that God would have a Commerce and Correspondence carried on even amongst the most distant Nations, by a Traffic and Exchange of their several Products and Commodities; that the Abundance of some might be a Supply for the others Want, that so none of the good Things which God has so liberally provided for the Comfort and Conveniency of Life, might be idle, i. e. useless and superfluous, and therefore, or for this Purpose of a mutual Intercourse, Men undertook long and dangerous Voyages, encompassing both Sea and Land to establish Commerce, and to circulate what might be necessary or wanting. We meet with the like Observation among the Fragments of *Philo*, ἀλλήλων διαμαρτέαν θάλασσαν, δι' ἧς, κ. τ. λ. Beneficio maris terræ regiones sibi invicem commutationes bonorum pendunt; atque tum ea, quibus carent, accipiunt; tum ea, quibus abundant, remittunt.

Ibid. And therefore Men commit their Lives to a small Piece of Wood.] *Seneca* has the like Expression:

*Audax nimium, qui freta primus  
Rate tam fragili perfida rupit,  
Dubioque secans æquora cursu  
Potuit tenui fidere ligno.*

And indeed the Poets in general are full of beautiful Sentiments on the Occasion, but none so jocular as *Juvenal*:

*I nunc, Et ventis animam committe dolato  
Confusus ligno, digitis a morte remotus  
Quatuor aut septem, si sit latissima tæda.*

Sat. xiv.

Which *Ovid* has as fully and more seriously described in the following short Verse:

*Tam prope nam letbum, quam prope cernit aquam.  
De Ponto, lib. ii.*

No Wonder therefore, that Persons of the greatest Courage have trembled at the Nearness of the Danger; and that the great Hero *Aeneas* himself was in such a Panic, in the violent Storm mentioned in the first *Aeneid*, especially as the Heathens had a Notion that the Soul was Fire, and might possibly be extinguished by the Waters. But the Description of the inspired Poet exceeds all others in Majesty and Terror, *They are carried up to the Heaven, and down again to the Deep, their Soul melteth away because*



because of the Trouble, Psal. cvii. 26. This is exactly in the Strain of Virgil:

*Tollimur in cælum curvato gurgite, & idem*

*Subducta ad manes imos descendimus unda.*

*Æneid. lib. iii.*

Ver. 6. *For in the old Time, when the proud Giants perished.* *Καὶ ἀρχὴν ἔδ' ἀποκαταλύων, κ. τ. λ.* [Perhaps *ἀπ' ἀρχῆς*, as v. 13.] I think this, which is the present Reading of all the Greek Copies, a Mistake, probably *καταρχὰς ἔδ' ἀποκαταλύων, κ. τ. λ.* is the true Reading. *Ab initio cum perirent superbi Gigantes, &c.* as the Vulgate has it, i. e. when the old World, through Excess of Wickedness, perished by Water. But why are the Giants particularly mentioned, when the Text in Gen. vi. 12. says, *that all Flesh had corrupted his Way upon the Earth?* The Answer is, that by a known Figure of Speech, a Part here is put for the Whole; and those Giants are principally mentioned, as being the Ringleaders, and the most flagrant Examples of Wickedness. For by the Word *Giants* we are to understand, not only Men of uncommon Stature, but violent and bloody Men, who filled the World with Rapine and Murders. Hence some of the Ancients explain the Word *γίγαντες* by *βίαιοι*, violent Men; and some by *ἀσεβείς*, wicked Men. They are here called *ὑπερήφανοι*, which may mean not only their being proud upon Account of their Size, but, which is a general Consequence, their being overbearing by reason of their great Strength. We may likewise understand by *perished*, their perishing by an everlasting Destruction: For the ancient Name for Hell among the Jews was, *Catus Gigantum*, and there are many Texts of Scripture that seem to lead to this Sense. *Job xxvi. 5, 6.* in the Hebrew and Vulgate. *Prov. xxi. 16.* See also Mr. Mede's 7th Disc.

*Ibid.* *The Hope of the World governed by thy Hand escaped in a weak Vessel.* Coverdale's, and the other ancient English Versions apply these Words to the Ship, and not to the Persons in it, rendring, *He, in whom the Hope was left to increase the World, went into the Shippe, whereby was governed thorow thy Hand:* And so the Vulgate understands it, and the Arabic. Our Version follows the Greek.

*Ibid.* *And left to all Ages a Seed of Generation.* [*ἀΐωνι, to the World.*] When the Earth was purged from a Deluge of Sin by a Deluge of Water, that there might be some living Witnesses of the World's being thus destroyed; and that the Memory of such an Instance of God's Justice, Power, and Hatred of Sin might be preserved to succeeding Ages, Noah and his Family, upon whose Safety likewise the future Encrease and peopling of the World again depended, and therefore here properly called the *Hope* of it, were preserved in the Ark from perishing by the Water, and by God's Command he preserved some few Individuals of every Species, to repair the almost universal Loss, and by a new Progeny renew the Face of the Earth, which is the *Seed of Generation* here meant. According to the Ancients, only *Deucalion* and *Pyrrha* survived the Flood, and in these they placed the growing Hopes of the World: Thus *Ovid*,

*Nunc genus in nobis restat mortale duobus.*

*Plato* and *Lucian* call those few Persons who remained alive *ζῶντες*, i. e. *live Coals*, who were to rekindle the vital Flame, and continue the human Race. When *Noah* went out of the Ark, God blessed him, and his Sons, i. e. he renewed the Blessings bestowed before upon *Adam*, saying, as after a new Creation, *Encrease and multiply*; nay, 'tis very observable, that God repeats this Blessing twice, *Gen. ix. 1, 7.* to denote as well its greater Certainty as Universality. "*Noah*, says *Theodoret*, *was now the Seed of Mankind, the new Root of human Nature*, and, as it were, a second *Adam*: Accordingly God confers upon him the same "Benediction, as upon the Father of the former World." *Quest. in Gen. 53.* As *Noah* stood thus as it were in the Place of *Adam*, so *St. Chrysostom* observes of *Noah*, that he repaired the Loss of Dignity sustained by *Adam's* Fall, and obtained, from the divine Goodness, some external Privileges *Adam* had lost; and, as an Instance of this, he alledges the Return of the savage World in the Ark, to that Submission, which, according to the divine Appointment, they paid to the first Man before the Fall. *Homil. 25. in Gen.*

Ver. 7. *(For blessed is the Wood whereby Righteousness cometh.)* i. e. Blessed is the Wood which serveth for good and righteous Purposes, and blessed is the Ark in particular, which preserveth so good a Man as *Noah* was (for Blessedness in Scripture is applied to Things as well as Persons that contribute to any good Work) for he was a great Instance of the Righteousness which is by Faith, and as such is numbered among the Heroes in the xi<sup>th</sup> to the Hebrews: He was also a remarkable Preacher of Righteousness to the old World, warning them, for an hundred and twenty Years, to escape the general Danger and Destruction that threatened them; and, in his Family, the true Religion was preserved, particularly in *Shem*, who was the Root of the divine *Peculium*, in the postdiluvian, as *Setb* was in the antediluvian World. But I cannot think that these Words are spoken prophetically of the Cross, or that they any ways allude to it: That they may be applied to it by way of Accommodation, and have actually been so applied by several of the Fathers, particularly *St. Cyprian*, *Justin Martyr*, *Ambrose*, *Austin*, *Chrysostom*, *Clemens Alexandrinus*, &c. I readily grant, and indeed such a Comparison seems easy and natural: For, referring this Passage to the Ark spoken of in the foregoing Verse, to which undoubtedly it originally and primarily relates, this Ark of Wood may, in a secondary Sense, be considered as a Type of the Church, and of that Salvation, which true Believers shall in all Ages obtain by Faith in a crucified Saviour, who in the Old Testament is called *the Lord our Righteousness*, *Jer. xxiii. 6.* Some have understood this Passage of our Author of the Punishment of notorious Offenders, that the Wood upon which such Sinners suffer, and which is the adjudged Instrument of Justice and Vengeance, is blessed, as doing Service to the Public, by the exemplary Dispatch of such



as are not fit to live. But this Interpretation seems forced.

Ver. 8. *But that which is made with Hands is cursed.* Something is here omitted or must necessarily be understood; for it is not true that every thing that is made with Hands is cursed, for then the Ark itself would be cursed; I conceive, therefore, that *Graven Images* should be supplied, *Cursed is the Graven Image which is made with Hands.* But this likewise must be understood with some Limitation, for the bare making of an Image is not in all Cases to be condemned: For, besides that *Moses* calls this Art one of the Gifts of God, that Act of God in giving Orders for the Brazen Serpent to be made and set up, and the *Cherubim* to be placed over the Mercy Seat, shews, that the bare making of Images is not unlawful. Accordingly the Writers of the Decalogue do not understand the second Commandment, as if it forbade the making of Images in general, but the making them with a design to represent the Divine Majesty, or to worship and kneel before them. The Sense therefore of this Passage seems to be, that the Image, which is made with an Intent to be worshiped, and by which cometh Unrighteousness, is accursed. And the Reason of its being accursed, is, from the great, I should say Infinite, Disproportion that there is between an Image and the Divine Nature; and that being corruptible it should be accounted God. If the insensible Wood, or Image, then is cursed, no Wonder that the Maker of it should be so in an equal or greater Degree, as it follows in the next Words. [But upon Examination nothing appears to have been omitted. This Verse answers to Verse 2. *Εκείνο μὲν ὃ ἔρεξεν—τὸ χειροποίητον* 3, &c. Read the eight first Verses without stopping (the seventh being put in a Parenthesis) and the Connexion will clearly appear. At the same Time observe, that τὸ χειροποίητον here signifies an *Idol*, without any regard to the Etymology of the Word, which, in Strictness and Propriety of Speech, may signify a *Ship* as well as an *Idol*, they both being made with Hands. So γλυπτόν signifies any thing that is carved or engraven: But the LXX apply it to a graven Image, made with a Design of being an Object of Religious Worship. Levit. xxvi. 1. Οὐ ποιήσετε ὑμῖν αὐτοῖς χειροποίητα, ἑδε γλυπτά.]

Ibid. *As well it, as he that made it.* This is agreeable to Scripture, which says, *Cursed is the Man that maketh any graven or molten Image, and putteth it in a secret Place, i. e. privately worships it; for 'tis upon Account of its being worshiped, that 'tis there called an Abomination unto the Lord*, Deut. xxvii. 15. Nor is it particular to the Scripture only, to denounce and execute Vengeance upon the Idol-maker, even the Poets, when they give us an Account of *Prometheus's* Vanity, tell us, at the same time, how their *Jupiter* vindicated his Honour, by the severe Punishment inflicted upon the insolent Offender. I think this Verse and the Context would be more perfect, if the Worshiper, who is the principal, if not the only Offender, had been inserted. For the Idol itself is senseless and inanimate, or, as *St. Paul*, in one Word, well expresses it, is

Nothing, and therefore, as such, cannot be the Object of Punishment; but the Person who sins by it, which is *Capellus's* Objection against this Place: And as to the Statuary that makes the Idols, how far he is faulty, the following Lines of *Martial* will inform us:

*Qui fingit sacros auro vel marmore vultus,  
Non facit ille Deos; qui colit, ille facit.*

So that as he alone turns Images or Pictures into Idols or false Gods, who worships them, he should have been chiefly taken notice of as most obnoxious to the divine Displeasure. As 'tis the Worship therefore that makes properly the Idol, possibly the Idolater may be included in the Maker, and is the ὁ ἀσεβῶν in the next Verse, and thus *Calmet* says it may be understood, *le faux Dieu, avec celui qui lui rend un culte sacrilege. Comm. in loc.*

Ver. 11. *Therefore even upon the Idols of the Gentiles shall there be a Visitation.* This may be taken in two Senses, according as we understand the Term Idol, which may either mean the material Image, or the false God represented by it. But it may be asked how a Visitation or Punishment can properly come upon the Idol which is inanimate? The *Chaldee* Paraphrase upon *Exod. xii. 12.* will explain this, where the Judgments threatened upon the Gods of the *Egyptians* are expressed in the four following Instances, *Idola fusilia liquefient, Idola lapidea rescabuntur, Idola testacea fient minuta frusta, Idola lignea fient cinis.* And that the Images of their God *Apis*, and their other Deities, were thrown down by an Earthquake when their First-born were slain, *St. Jerom* asserts, *ad Fabiol.* from *Jewish* Tradition, and *Artapanus* in *Euseb. lib. ix. de Prepar.* The like Example was made of *Dagon* by the Virtue of the Divine Majesty appearing on the Ark, for he fell before it, and laid on the Ground, a headless Idol, and a senseless Trunk. Or it may mean, that the Demons and evil Spirits, which inhabited these Idols, and from thence gave their delusive Oracles, shall be detected and dispersed. *St. Cyprian* speaks of them in after times as thus visited, *Hi adjurati per Deum verum a nobis, statim cedunt, & de obsessis corporibus exire coguntur—videas illos nostra voce & operatione majestatis occultæ, flagris cædi, igne torreri, incremento pænæ propagantis extendi, ejulare, gemere, deprecari.* De Idol. vanit. The Prophets, in many Parts of their Writings, foretel that there shall be a final Period put to Idolatry, *Isaiab ii. 18. Zech. xiii. 2. Jerem. x. 15.* where the Prophet, speaking of Idols, says, according to the LXX. ἐν καὶρῳ ὁπισκοπῆς αὐτῶν ἀπολεῖσθαι, an Expression which has a near Resemblance with that of this Writer; and in *Y 11.* he has the same Threatning, but in the *Chaldee* Language, as the Learned observe, see *Witsii Exercit. in Symb. Apostol. p. 125. Poli Synopsis. in loc.* that the Jews being thus prepared against the Attempts of the idolatrous *Babylonians*, might be better able to answer them in their own Language.

Ibid. *Because in the Creature of God they are become an Abomination.* The Sense seems to be, that Idols are an Abomination by the Abuse of some of God's Creatures; for whatever be the



Matter of their Idols, whether Gold, Silver, Stone, or Wood, Things otherwise harmless and useful are perverted by this Misapplication of them to idolatrous Purposes; and, on this Account, God will shew his Displeasure and Resentment even against such insensible Things. [*Ἐν κτισματι Θεῷ, sc. ὄντα, being of God's Creation, or, God's Creatures, the same as, ἐν κτισμάτων Θεῷ* which would have been clearer.]

Ver. 12. *For the devising of Idols was the Beginning of (spiritual) Fornication.*] In the Language of Scripture, Idolatry is represented as a sort of Fornication or Adultery; and the Worship of false Gods is called *the going a whoring after them*, Levit. xvii. 7. Ezek. xxiii. 30. Hof. iv. 12. ix. 1. Hence the Idolatry of the Jews is expressly called *Uncleanness*, because it was an Alienation of the Hearts and Bodies of them from the God of Israel, who had chosen that Church as his Spouse. And when the Jews were at length brought off from this Sin, they represented the Idolatry of others under the Name of Fornication, *John* viii. 41. Our Version, 'tis plain, takes it in this Sense, by calling it here *spiritual Fornication*, though none of the other Versions so confine the Sense, or take any notice of the Word *spiritual*. And indeed the Observation is equally true of Fornication strictly so called; for the Heathen Idolaters were likewise the most infamous Fornicators, and their hidden Mysteries were little else than Acts of Uncleanness, a melancholy Detail of which follows in the Conclusion of this Chapter. *Tertullian's* Words are very observable, who joins these Vices as if they were inseparable. *Quis immundis spiritibus operatus, non conspurcatus, & constupratus incedit? De Idol. c. 1.* And *St. Peter*, describing the vicious Customs of the Gentiles, says, *that they walked in Lasciviousness and Lusts, and abominable Idolatries*, 1 Pet. iv. 3. To these Impurities they were led by the traditional Accounts of the lewd Amours of their false Gods; and when once Men began, as it were, to consecrate Crimes by the Authority of their Gods, there was nothing which they did not commit without Scruple and without Shame, under the Shelter of their Example. *Ego Homuncio non facerem? Eunuch. Act. iii. Sc. v.* was therefore but a natural Conclusion, when the great Thunderer was known to have committed a Rape, and authorised the same Villany.

*Ibid.* *And the Invention of them the Corruption of Life.*] As the Practice of Idolatry was attended with Impurities of all Sorts, and particularly with unnatural and shameless Uncleanness, it is very properly here called *φθορά ζωῆς, the Corruption of Life*. That *φθορά* signifies Corruption through Lust, is evident from many Places of Scripture where it is so used, particularly in the Epistles of *St. Paul* and *St. Peter*; it is so taken by *Ignatius*, and other ancient ecclesiastical Writers, and by *Philo*, who ranks it with Fornication and Adultery; and as a Branch of great Uncleanness, ranks it among other Instances of Transgression, which are a Breach of the seventh Commandment. *Phil. de Spec. Leg.*

Ver. 13. *For neither were they from the Beginning, neither shall they be for ever.*] The most ancient Idolatry was, undoubtedly, the Worship of the heavenly Bodies; but as ancient as this was, we read nothing of it certain, and which may be absolutely depended on, before the Deluge; nor are learned Men, in general, agreed, that it was one of those Pollutions which defiled the old World. And indeed there were many Causes which might prevent the Sin of Idolatry so early; as, the Infancy of the World, from the Creation, the Memory of which must be still fresh; the Longevity of the *Antediluvians*, of *Adam*, *Seth*, and the rest of the holy Line, who could, and did most probably inculcate and deliver to their Families, what themselves were so abundantly assured of with respect to Almighty God's Being and Oneness. Add to this likewise the Appearance of the *Λόγος*, or Son of God, to *Adam* and others. See *Tenison on Idol.* p. 39. The Worship of Images came in much later; the earliest Account we have of them is, probably, that of *Laban's Teraphim*, *Gen.* xxxi. or his *Penates*, as they are thought; see *Selden De cult. extran. primord. cap. iii.* It appears from *Varro*, that the Romans had subsisted above an hundred and seventy Years before they had any Images, but they were Idolaters long before that Time. *Tarquinius Priscus* is first thought to have introduced them from the Greeks; see *August. De civ. Dei, lib. iv. 31.* *Thorndike of the Laws of the Church*, p. 289. Our Author intimates, that the Custom of worshiping dead Men for Gods contributed to it, & 15. the Date of which may be fetched from History. And as to Polytheism in general, one knows from thence the Epoch and Original of all the false Gods, when *Jupiter*, *Hercules*, *Neptune*, &c. first commenced Deities, and on what Account; so that Idolatry may be looked upon as of late Date, compared to the most ancient and true Religion, which has always subsisted, and will always continue in the World. And as God hath already blotted out the very Names of many of the Heathen Idols, it may be looked upon as an Earnest of the utter Destruction of the rest.

Ver. 14. *For by the vain Glory of Men they entered into the World, and therefore shall they come shortly to an End.*] Vain and proud Men, not content with common Honours, aspired after divine, and affected to be called Gods; and, from a Principal of Vanity and Self-love, would have their Images erected and adored, proposing Immortality to themselves from hence; but their Expectations have been frustrated, and their Images of no long Continuance. Our Translators render it in the *Future Tense*, as prophetic of what should happen hereafter; but the Original expresses it by the Time past, *διὰ τὸ σῴτομον αὐτῶν τέλει ἐπενοήθη*. The Arabic assigns here the same Reason for such ambitious Attempts, *Cumque propterea finis illorum sit brevis, hinc idola excogitarunt*; *That Idols were invented as a sort of Artifice to prolong the Shortness of their Lives*. The *Vulgate* takes *κενοδοξία* in the Nominative Case, and renders *supervacuitas hominum advenit* in



*in orbem terrarum, & ideo brevis illorum finis est inventus* understanding it probably, of the Sin of our first Parents: But Dr. Grabe, who has *ῥάνα* in a *Parentesis*, is more explicit, viz. that Death entered at first into the World thro' Man's Ambition, and, on that Account, they lost their intended Immortality, and a Period was fixed to human Life. This indeed appears to be the Sentiment of our Author in several Places, ch. i. 16. ch. ii. 23. but that Sense does not seem so agreeable to the Context.

[Ver. 15. *For a Father afflicted with untimely Mourning, when he had made an Image of his Child soon taken away, now honoured him as a God, which was then a dead Man.* In this Verse the Words *τὸ ἀφαιρηθέν τέκνον* are capable of three different Constructions: either 1. with *εἰκόνα*, as in the Edition and our Versions: or 2. with *πύθει*: or 3. with *πατήρ*. But the Word *νεκρόν* seems to be impertinent and to be rejected, as in ver. 20. *τὸν πρὸ ὀλίγου—ἀνθρώπον, ὃν σέβασμα ἐλογίσαντο.*] The Author here points out the Beginning or Source of a particular Species of Idolatry, viz. that a Father having lost, by an untimely Death, a dear Son, causes the Image of him to be made to perpetuate his Memory, which is adored by himself and Domestics. At first this was intended only to solace Grief, by an imaginary, or representative Presence of him that was dead, but that tender Respect which Parents bear to their Children, encreasing after their Death, and a certain impotent Desire joined thereto of still enjoying their Companies whom they so dearly loved, together with a fond Persuasion that the dead were in a Capacity of knowing and accepting such ceremonious Instances of Love and Respect, put them upon procuring Sacrifices, and other Acknowledgments of divine Honour to be publicly assigned them after Death; and at length a civil Respect terminated in Superstition and Idolatry. Thus St. Cyprian, *Inde illis instituta templa, inde ad defunctorum vultus per imaginem detinendos expressa simulachra, quibus & immolabant hostias, & dies festos dando honores celebrabant. Inde posteris facta sunt sacra, quæ primis fuerant assumpta solatia.* De idol. vanit. Cicero is a celebrated Instance of the very fond Affection of a Parent for a deceased Child. He had a mind to perpetuate the Memory, and consecrate the Virtue of his favourite Daughter *Tullia* by a Temple, the most ancient Way of doing Honour to the Dead that had deserved well. We have her *Apotheosis* in the following Words: *Te omnium optimam, doctissimamque, approbantibus Diis immortalibus ipsis, in eorum cætu locatam, ad opinionem omnium mortalium consecrabo—* De Consol. see also *Lactantius*, De falsa Rel. lib. i. 15. and the *Writer of his Life*, vol. ii. p. 378. Not unlike our Author's Account is what *Diophanes* the *Lacedæmonian* mentions of *Syrophanes* the *Egyptian*, whose Grief was so excessive for the Death of his only Son, the designed Heir of his immense Fortunes, that he ordered an Image to be made of him, as a sort of Relief and Comfort to him under his Distress; that his Servants and Dependants, to flatter their Master, used to crown the Image with Flowers, to burn Incense to it, and to fly to it as their Deliverer, *Quasi salutis certissimo colla-*

*tori*, after the Commission of any great Fault. *Fulgent. Mythol. lib. i.* and, according to him and the Etymologists, *εἰδωλον* is so called *quasi εἰδωλόν*, i. e. *doloris species*. And that in Scripture Idols and Sorrows are expressed by the same Word in the *Hebrew*, see *Selden. De cult. extran. primor. cap. iii.* So that our Author's Account is not quite singular, nor so much to be condemned as *Calvin, Instit. lib. i. c. 11.* and *Capellus* have represented it. *Strict. in lib. Sap.* For the Design of this Writer was not to set down all the Sorts of Idolatry, nor the Original and Order of each in Point of Time; he did not mean this as the only, or the first Source of all Idolatry; nor does he exclude, or deny, that there are others more ancient, which he himself mentions in some of the foregoing Chapters. His Design here is only to shew the Ridiculousness of Idolatry and the Folly of Idolaters; and this he has sufficiently done, by shewing the Rise of some of them, in some very remarkable Instances; see *Calmet's Diction. in voce IDOLATRY*, and his *Dissertation sur l'Origine de l'Idolatrie*.

Ver. 16. *And graven Images are worshiped by the Commandments of Kings* or Tyrants, as the marginal Reading is. And thus *Coverdale* renders, *Tyrantes compelled Men by Violence to honoure Images*; which seems preferable, as it suits better with the Character of the latter; for a good King will rather labour to establish Virtue, which is his best Image, a Stamp more honourable than any upon the most valuable Coin, or even than Art itself can reach. We cannot have a fuller Proof of the Vain-glory of a Tyrant, than in that Worship which *Nebuchadnezzar* ordered, upon Pain of Death, to be paid to the golden Image, which, in the Province of *Babylon*, he had set up, *Dan. iii.* Nor had *Darius's* Decree less Vanity in it, *That whosoever should ask a Petition of any God or Man for thirty Days, but of him only, should be cast into the Den of Lions*, *Dan. vi.* The like Observation may be made upon many of the *Roman Emperors*, whose Ambition carried them to have their Statues erected, and divine Honours paid to them. *Ninus* also introduced the same Superstition, for he set up the Image of his Father *Belus*, to be publicly honoured by his People; and, that great Resort might be made, and Respect paid to it, he pardoned all Offenders, how great soever their Crimes were, that fled unto that Image, which Encouragement, together with the Authority and Command of the King himself, multiplied the Number of its Worshipers.

Ver. 17. *Whom when Men could not honour in Presence, because they dwelt far off, they took the Counterfeit of his Visage from far, that . . . they might flatter him that was absent, as if he were present* [His Visage from far should be his Visage which was at a great Distance from them. For in the Greek it is *τὴν πόρρωθεν ὄψιν*, not *πόρρωθεν ἀνατυπωσάμενοι*. Observe the Word *ὄψιν* used in the same Verse in a very different Sense. Another Writer would have avoided this. See upon viii. 7.] The Author here considers the Original of the Worship and Deification of Kings, that at first an Image, Picture, or Statue was made of them, as an Instance



Instance of civil Respect to them, and Fondness for them; who being far distant from many Parts of their Dominions, and often absent from them in foreign Wars, their Subjects, by this Device, supplied the Loss of their personal Residence among them. But this afterwards was the Occasion of great Superstition and Idolatry; for in time, and especially after the Deaths of their favourite Kings, which was a Loss irrecoverable, and an Absence the most regretted, they proceeded even to Adoration of them. The Heathens were induced, probably, to this Worship of their Kings, either out of a Compliment to their Vanity, which was oftneft the Cause; or from an Opinion, that being the Representatives of God's Power on Earth, Worship was really due to them; or upon account of their extraordinary Virtues, or from a Sense of Gratitude for Benefits received from them: But there was something of Policy in the Worship of their dead Kings; for by thus paying Homage to departed Merit, they hoped hereby to induce their Successors to the like Endeavour of governing well. Nor was their *Apotheosis* without a Mixture of Flattery too of their Successor's Vanity, who were pleased to be thought of divine Extraction, and to be descended from so high an Original; which Notion itself contributed not a little to the Establishment of this Error; see *Lactantius De falsa Relig.* lib. i. 15. The same Observation, upon the Original of this Worship, is made by *Minutius Felix*, *Dum reges suos colunt religiosè, dum defunctos eos desiderant in imaginibus videre, dum gestiunt eorum memorias in statuis detinere, sacra facta sunt, quæ fuerant assumpta solatia*, p. 375. *Cypr. De Idol. van.*

Ver. 18. *Also the singular Diligence of the Artificer did help to set forward the Ignorant to more Superstition.* [i. e. To lead the Ignorant into more Superstition. *Coverdale's* Version of the Place is clearer, and better expressed, *The singular Conninge of the Craftmen gave the Ignorant also a great Occasion to worship Images.* [Further Occasion, *ἐκ τῆς ἐπιταγῆς*.] At first the Figures or Images of the Deities seemed to have been made of Earth, Clay, Stone, Wood, in a rude and imperfect Manner; see *Principes de la Sculpture*, liv. ii. c. 1. *Clement Alexandrinus* observes, that before the Art of Carving was invented, the Ancients erected Pillars, and paid their Worship to them, as to Statues of their Gods; *Strom.* l. i. *Pausanias*, in his excellent Survey of Greece, says, that in early Times Men worshiped rude Stones, sharpened only at the Top, for their Gods; which *Scaliger* shews was the Custom of the *Phœnicians* in particular; see *Append. ad lib. De emend. Temp.* But when Sculpture and Picture, and other Ways of Imagery, were brought to Perfection, Idolatry in Proportion advanced; for Images, as appears both from the Greek and Roman History, being the Means to encrease it, the more Art and Skill that was used to recommend and set these off, the more Danger there was of Men's being pleased with, and seduced by them; for the unskilful Multitude, seeing the sacred Image of their Prince, or some favourite Benefactor, carved into all the Members and Organs

of Life so artificially, that to the Sight it seemed to be a real and living Person, were easily drawn, through the Weakness of their Understanding, and the finished Beauty of the Piece, to imagine that it was really animated, and to adore it as a living and powerful Deity, such as was able to do them Good or Hurt, according to its own Pleasure. Hence, says *Philo*, *Moses* with great Prudence banished *ζωογραφίαν* *ἢ ἀνδραγόμοισιν* from the Hebrew Commonwealth, as fearing the dangerous Consequences which such artful Resemblances of Nature might have upon a gross People inclined to Idolatry, *lib. De Gigantib.* The like Observation may be made upon other Images of the Ancients, many of which were so contrived, as to help forward Superstition, and to lead the Ignorant into a higher Opinion of the supposed Deity. Of this sort were those, whose Mechanism was so curious, that they seemed to hold immediate Converse with Heaven: Thus in the Image of *Serapis* at *Alexandria*, a little Window was so framed by Art, that the Sun shone on the Eyes, Lips, and Mouth of it; insomuch that the People believed it to hold Communication with that Deity, and to be inspired by it. No less artful was that Device which *Pliny* mentions of an Iron Image, which was sustained with Magnets, that the People might behold it with more Veneration, and imagine it supported in the Air by nothing but Miracles. *Dædalus*, who brought Sculpture to great Perfection, and after his Return from Egypt instructed the Grecian Artificers to imitate, in their Statues, the Attitude of a Person in Action, or Motion, contrived himself a *Venus*, which moved so naturally, that it was thought to have real Life and Sensation; but all the Wonder lay in the Quicksilver, or Mercury, which that cunning Artist put within the Figure, to make it play; and so the good People were persuaded of the Presence of the Divinity, by the surprising Motion of the Figure. Nor was the singular Diligence of the Artificer employed about the Image itself only, to give it the Appearance of life and Sense, but as much care was taken to make the Idol-Temple beautiful; for the more superb and magnificent this was, the greater and better did the God seem to the Multitude, more easily allured through the Beauty of the Work. Thus *Alexander*, to solace the Excess of Grief for his *Hephæstion* not only decreed him a Temple, but promised uncommon Rewards to *Cleomenes*, the Overseer of his Works, to finish it with the utmost Nicety and Exactness. *Arrian. De exped. Alex.* lib. vii.

Ver. 20. *Took him now for a God, which a little before was but honoured as a Man.* [*Σέβασμα ἐλογίσαντο*. *Σέβασμα* is more generally taken for worship; but sometimes it signifies the Thing, or Being, that is worshiped. Thus we find it used, *Acts xvii. 23.* *ἀναθεωρῶν τὰ σεβάσματα ὑμῶν*, which our Translation renders, *beholding your Devotions*; but the Reading would be much better, *beholding your Idols*; or, as the Margin has it, *beholding the Gods you worship*. *Theophylact* accordingly expounds it by *δαίμονες*, which *Albans* was notorious for worshipping.



Ver. 21. For Men, serving either Calamity or Tyranny, did ascribe unto Stones and Stocks, &c.] This is a short, but somewhat obscure Rehearsal of the Causes of Idolatry, mentioned at large in the seven foregoing Verses; that, concurrently with other Reasons, it arose either from Grief for the Loss of some favourite Person, whose Memory, by an Instance of mistaken Tenderneſs, was endeavoured to be preserved; or from the uncontrollable Will and Authority of Tyrants, appointing Worship and Adoration to be paid to insensible Statues; which was complied with generally out of a servile Fear: But to good Princes they voluntarily erected them, not as mere Compliments to their Vanity, but as Testimonies of their Love and Respect. St. Chrysostom's Observation on the Beginning of Idolatry is very just, *ἔτι εἰδωλολατρεία τῶν ἀνθρώπων εἰσῆλθεν, ὑπὲρ μέτρων τιμωμένων τῶν ζώντων, καὶ τῶν ἀποθανόντων. ἔτι ζῶντα προσεκυνήθη, ἔτι πορνεία ἐκράτησε.* Hom. lxxxvii. in Matth. where πορνεία seems to be used in the Sense of our Author, § 12.

Ibid. Did ascribe unto Stocks and Stones the incommunicable Name.] i. e. Of God, as the Margin rightly supplies; which Title eminently, and by Way of Distinction from all other Gods, belonged to the God of Israel, the one absolute, and only true Being. The Hebrews accordingly call God *Haschem*, i. e. the Name; and from hence, no doubt, *Alhima*, an Appellation of God, is derived. The Critics likewise observe, that wherever the Name, or the Holy Name, is found by itself, or put absolutely, in the Mosaiſcal Writings, or elsewhere, it means God himself, or the incommunicable Name. And indeed the Name of God cannot properly be communicated, or be common to him and some other Being. For though Names proper are given, we know, to the Individuals of the same Species, to distinguish them from each other; yet, God being singular in his kind, his Name is as incommunicable as his Essence. And thus St. Cyprian, *Nec nomen Dei quæras, Deus nomen est illi. Illi vocabulis opus est, ubi propriis appellationum insignibus multitudo dirimenda est: Deo qui solus est, Deus vocabulum totum est.* De Idol. Vanit. And therefore when Moses earnestly enquired after his Name, he took the Name of *I am*, implying that he was the only one of his Species, that there is none but God that truly is, and that all others were false Gods, pretending to what they were not, and assuming a Name which did not belong to them. Hence therefore we see the Reason and peculiar Sanctity of the Tetragrammaton, for other Names of God being applicable to other Things or Persons, as *Elohim* to Princes, &c. the Name *Jehovah*, or *Jave*, or *Jai*, was not communicated to, or participated by, any other Thing or Being; wherefore God challenges this as his own peculiar Name, *Exod. iii. 14.* and thus the ancient English Translations, and the Oriental Versions seem to understand it. But there is another Sense likewise of the incommunicable Name, viz. that great ineffable Name which must not be communicated or mentioned. Josephus calls it *προσηγορίαν* *ὡς ἡς ὁ μὲν δέμιν εἰπῶν*, i. e. a

Name which it is not lawful to speak of. This the Jews were so tender of, and paid such a religious Regard to, that the Name *Jehovah* was among them *ἀνεκπαύστου*, never to be uttered, unless once in a Year by the High Priest, on the great Day of Expiation; and hence he was said to be a God without a Name: And thus he is described by some early Writers, particularly by Justin Martyr, who calls him *Θεὸς ὁ ἀνόμιλος*. *Apol. secunda.* And in this Sense we may understand *ἀνόμιλα ῥήματα*, 2 Cor. xii. 4. which [are] not so properly unspeakable Words, as our Translation renders, as Words which ought not to be spoke; and so *ἀνόμιλος* is used by Philo De somniis; or rather, to avoid the Tautology in what follows, Words which God alone can utter; and thus a learned Writer explains them, *Verba tantæ Majestatis, ut homine majora, Deum autorem & prolocutorem arguerent.* Witsii Miscell. sac. p. 23.

Ver. 22. Whereas they lived in the great War of Ignorance, those so great Plagues called they Peace.] *Μεγάλῳ ζῶντες ἀγνοίας πολέμῳ.* *Ἀγνοία* here plainly refers to the Words before, *πανῶς ἀπὸ τῆς τῆς Θεοῦ γνώσεως*, Ignorance of the true God and his Worship; which being attended with Slaughter of Children, obscene Rites, Adultery, Murder, and other great Evils and Mischiefs, of which there is a long and black Catalogue in the following Verses, may, in some Sense, be called the Mother of War as well as Superstition: And yet, as shocking as these Vices were, these they called Peace; i. e. they were pleased with them, and thought themselves happy in the most miserable Condition, and under the greatest Evils: *Ils sont assez insensibles, pour regarder cet état comme un bonheur;* says Calmet, *Comm. in loc.* And their Ignorance was as fatal, and their Case as deplorable, as those who should esteem the Calamities of a War a Blessing. The Expression in this Verse is very singular, but Tacitus has one which very much resembles it, *Jul. Agric. vit. c. 30.* where, speaking of the Romans, he says, that when they have destroyed all before them with Fire and Sword, they pretend to call all the Injuries they have done by the false Name of Peace, *ubi solitudinem fecerunt, pacem appellant.* [*Ἡγοροῦντες αὐτοὶ, they call Peace;* and so in the following Verses the Verbs run in the Present Tense. By which change the Author possibly may mean, that as the Case of Idolatry was such at the Beginning, so it still continues the same in his own Time.]

Ver. 23. For whilst they slew their Children in Sacrifices.] Some of the Vices mentioned in this and the following Verses, were the very sacred Rites of the Heathen Worship itself, as that inhuman and impious Custom of offering their Children in Sacrifice to Moloch. Grotius says, that it was a Custom among the Phœnicians for their Kings, in Times of great Calamity, to sacrifice one of their Sons, him especially whom they loved best. *Annot. in Deut. xviii.* Silius Italicus confirms the same,

*Mos fuit in populis quos convenit advena Dido  
Pascere cæde Deos veniam, ac flagrantibus aris  
(Infandum dictu) parvos imponere natos.*

Philo mentions the same Custom, *ἡ δὲ τῶν τοῦ*



παλαιοῖς . . . τὸν ἑαυτοῦ αἵμα τὸν τέκνον διὰ τὸ θυγῆναι  
 ἑπαρθῆναι, ἀντὶ τῶν τιμηθεὶς δαίμοσι. See *Lev. xix.*  
*lib. i. c. 34. Plutarch. De superst. Minut. in*  
*Orat.* Nor was this unnatural Rite of sacrific-  
 ing their own Children peculiar to barbarous  
 Nations; we likewise meet with Instances  
 of this Cruelty among the *Greeks and Romans*,  
 and even, by the *Psalmist's* Account, among  
 God's own People, *Psal. cvi. 39.* See Note on  
 ch. xii. 5, 6. where this Subject is handled  
 more at large.

Ibid. Or used secret Ceremonies.] *Κρύφια μυστήρια*. They were also called *ἀπόρρητα σύμβολα*, *ἱερὰ ἀπόρρητα, τελειὰ μυστικά*, and *apertanea sacra*, which the *οἱ μεμνημένοι* were acquainted with only, and were concealed from all others: Hence in such Writers as make mention of these Rites, as *Herodotus*, *Diadorus*, *Apuleius*, all is Mystery and Darknes; such were the Sacrifices of *Ceres*, *Isis*, *Cybele*, *Proserpina*, *Venus*, *Priapus*, *Bacchus*, and other impure Deities, which were usually celebrated in the Night, in Groves, Caverns, and secret Places; and to such Mysteries of Iniquities practised among the Heathen, *St. Paul* may be thought to allude, when he says, *That it is a Shame even to speak of those Things which are done of them in secret*, *Ephes. v. 12*. It appears also, that they were initiated into the Service of their Idols by lewd and indecent Ceremonies; the *LXX* therefore very properly, in *Hosea* iv. 14. where these Rites are referred to, call these Idolaters by the sacrificial Term, *τελειομύθοι*, which the *Chaldee* Paraphrase upon the Place thus renders, *Ipsi cum meretricibus societate se jungunt, & cum scorto comessantur & potant*. Nay, which is still more shocking, there are Instances, both in profane and sacred Writings, of Prostitutions even in the very Temples them-

Ad quas non Clodius aras? Sat. vi.  
And in a following Satire there is the like Charge,  
Quo non præstat fœmina templo? Sat. ix.  
The like may be inferred from the History of *Paulina*, who was debauched by *Dacius* in the Temple of *Isis*, under the Notion, and with the pleasing Thought, of her lying with the God *Amubis* there; see *Joseph. Antiq.* lib. xviii. c. 4. see also *Amos* ii. 8. which is, by many, understood in the like Sense. But the Account in *2 Maccab.* vi. 4. That the Temple was filled with Riot and Revelling by the Gentiles, who dallied with Harlots, and had to do with Women within the Circuit of the holy Places, is so full, that no further Proof seems necessary.

as it follows in the next Verse, they grieved others with Adultery. And so, where mention is made, *2 Maceab. vi. 4.* before quoted, that the Temple was filled, *ἀνέσθλας ἐν κόμῳ*, it is explained after, *by dallying with Harlots.* In the same Sense *κόμος* is used, *Rom. xiii. 13. Gal. v. 21. 1 Pet. iv. 3.* and by *Theocritus* and the Scholiasts on that Poet, an impure Person is styled *κόμης*; which is agreeable to the Character of the God *Comus*, who, according to the Ancients, is described to be *Dæmon amorum impudicorum incentor*; see *Philosfrat. lib. I. De Imagin. Suidas in voce Κόμος. Spencer De Leg. Hebr. tom. i. p. 618.* Instead of *ἐξ ἁδῶν θεσμῶν*, Dr. Mangey reads *ἀδικοῦτων θεσμῶν* here, which seems indeed more expressive and proper; see his Notes on *Philo*, vol. ii. *De Abrahamo.*

Ver, 25. So that there reigned in all Men, without Exception, Blood, Manslaughter.] Our Translation manifestly follows a Copy which reads *πάσας*, probably the *Vatican*; but the Expression must be confined, though a very general one, to the Idolaters only: For to fix such black Crimes upon all Men, without Exception, is too extensive and unjust a Charge, and if it be considered thus universally carries with it a false and unwarrantable Imputation: It must therefore have the same limited Sense as *τοῖς ἑθνεσίν*, *Acts* xiv. 16. which should not be rendered, *all Nations*, as our Translation has it, but the Meaning is, and the Rendering should be, that in Times past God suffered all the Heathen, as distinguished from the Jews, to walk in their own Ways: And so *πάσας* here must imply only the Heathen Idolaters, who were the Persons guilty of these detestable Vices. But the *Alexandrian MS.* has another and better Reading, *πάσα ἡ ἀσπιλὴ ἔξου, ἀσπιλὴ φόνος*, all Things, or rather Crimes, are confounded, i. e. all Sorts of Sins are promiscuously committed by these Idolaters, which are the sad Consequences of Idol-worship. This is the Sense of *Junius* and *Cabnet*, and is confirmed by the *Vulgate* and all the ancient Versions, and is indeed to be preferred, as it stands clear of the former Objection.

Ibid. *Blood, Manslaughter.*] Αἷμα ἢ Φόνος. I think our Translation should rather have rendered αἷμα by *Manslaughter*, than Φόνος, which undoubtedly means *Murder*, and ought so to have been expressed. Αἷμα in the Sense of *Manslaughter* is used *Deut.* xvii. 8. where mention is made of a Matter in Dispute between Blood and Blood, ἀνέμειον αἷμα ἀνέμειον where one of them must mean casual Murder, and both together answer to αἷμα ἢ Φόνος here, and to דם dam, and דמים damim in the Hebrew, i. e. *Blood and Bloods*, or *Bloodshed and Murder*; that דם in the *Singular Number*, takes in all *Manslaughter*, in *Battle*, *Tumults*, *Casualties*, &c. and דמים treacherous, wilful, and insidious Murders, and so implies the strongest Expression of Guilt; see *Pagninus's Thesaurus*, and *Kircher's Concordance*, in voce דם: And thus, in *Gen.* iv. 10. where *Abel's Murder* is mentioned, which was undoubtedly a wilful Murder, it is expressed in the *Plural*, according to the Hebrew. We have in *Eccles.* iv. 10. דמים



ἡ αἷμα, *Death and Bloodshed*; where αἷμα cannot mean Murder, because it is a Punishment inflicted by God, as by the Sword: So in *Ezek. v. 17.*—xxviii. 23.—xxxviii. 22. θάνατος ἡ αἷμα is rendered *Pestilence and Blood*; where αἷμα signifies any unusual sort of Death, rather than Murder.

Ibid. *Diffimulation.* Δόλος. This, I think, would be better rendered *Deceit or Cheating*, which is its more usual Acceptation; and so it is taken in the Description of such Idolaters, *Rom. i. 29.* This Sense likewise is more agreeable to the Context. By the *Syriac* Interpreters it is rendered, *Fraude*; and by *Calmet*, *la Tromperie*.

Ibid. *Corruption, Unfaithfulness.* Φθορά, ἀπιστία. We are not to understand Φθορά of Corruption of Manners in general, nor yet of Corruption by Lust in particular; but of such Practices, probably Bribery, in some, as induced others to Unfaithfulness, or Breach of Trust, which is the ἀπιστία that follows, and is used for *Perfidia*; and in this Sense the *Syriac* and *Arabic* Versions, with *Junius*, agree, rendering the Words by *Corruptela* and *Perfidia*; which latter is certainly a more proper Word than *Infidelitas*, which the *Vulgate* uses; see *Rom. i. 31.*

Ver. 26. *Disquieting of good Men.* Θόρυβος ἀγαθῶν. It may as well signify, according to the present pointing of the *Greek*, *confounding of good things, bonarum rerum confusio*; and so some Interpreters do indeed expound it. According to the Sense of our Version, and of almost all the Commentators, these Idolaters were not only ἀφιλάγαθοι, *Despisers of those that were good*, 2 *Tim. iii. 3.* but their Opposers and Persecutors: But I question the Propriety of this Rendering: for I do not well understand how Θόρυβος ἀγαθῶν can signify any thing, but a Crowd or Tumult of good People, as Θόρυβος τῆ λαῖς, *Mark xiv. 2.* means an Uproar of People in general; or how it can be rendered with our Translators, *disquieting of good Men*. Would not the Construction be better, if these three Words, ἀγαθῶν χάρις ἀμνηστία, were taken together, as they stand by themselves in the same Stiche in the *Alex. MS.* and Θόρυβος be rendered by itself? It will be sufficiently distinguished from τάραχος, which goes before, as it is of stronger Signification and greater Force. Τάραχος properly means, *Disturbance, Strife, Stirs*, τάραχος ἐκ ὀλίγος, *Acts xii. 18.* *no small Stir among the Soldiers*; but Θόρυβος is properly *Tumults, Riot, Insurrections*, which are of a more public and dangerous Nature, and it may be considered as the Conclusion of that Climax. And indeed the *Bible*, commonly called *St. Jerom's*, actually so distinguishes, and renders Θόρυβος by itself, *tumultus: Bonorum Dei immemoratio*, i. e. *Forgetfulness of God's Benefits*, or of the good things received from the Grace and Kindness of God; which is likewise *Tirinus's* Interpretation of χάρις. But, according to our Version, it means no more than *Ingratitude*; which is scarce of Consequence enough to be inserted in the midst of so black a Catalogue.

Ibid. *Defiling of Souls.* Ψυχῶν μiasμός. According to the Rendering of all the *English*

Versions no particular Vice seems denoted hereby; it may be equally predicated of every Crime here enumerated, that, as a Sin, it is a defiling of the Soul. I would therefore understand Ψυχῶν in the complex Sense, as taking in the whole Man, Body as well as Soul; in which Sense it often occurs in Scripture; and, as the Expression is plural, it may be supposed to include the Sin of more than one Person, some heinous Offence, in which Persons, their Bodies as well as Souls, were jointly concerned: And, accordingly to the Character of such Idolaters, and as it stands connected with other like shocking Vices, Sodomy seems most probably to be meant; especially as γενέσθως ἐναλλαγῇ, and ἀσέλγεια, both which our Version seems to understand of that particular Vice, are capable of another, and very consistent Sense. But if this Explanation of Ψυχῶν is not satisfactory, may we not then suppose σαρκῶν μiasμός to be the true Reading, and to denote that particular Species of Uncleaness? *St. Jude* has the same Expression, and, as it seems, upon the like Occasion of Filthiness. That σαρκῶν is often used plurally, see *Job ii. 5.* *Wisdom xii. 5.* *Apoc. iv. 15.*—xix. 18, 21. Or, lastly, if I may be indulged one Conjecture more, may not φύσεων μiasμός be thought agreeable to this Place? i. e. defiling of Natures, or Sexes, by bestial or unnatural Mixtures; see *Levit. ch. xviii.* where all the abominable Practices, here mentioned are forbidden, and the Idolatrous *Canaanites* on that Account said to be driven out. I shall only add, that Persons guilty of such Uncleaness, as if it did utterly depose them from their Manhood, and debase their very Nature, are, in Scripture, called by the Name of *Dogs*, *Apocal. xxii. 15.*

Ibid. *Changing of Kind.* Γενέσθως ἐναλλαγῇ. Our Translators seem to have read, γένεος ἐναλλαγῇ; but *Coverdale's* and the other ancient Versions, understand by it, *Chaungynge of Birth*, i. e. Uncertainty of legitimate Issue; for, says *Calmet*, where Marriages are defiled, and Adulteries frequent, there must be great Confusion in the Birth of Children, *l'incertitude de la naissance*; and spurious and doubtful ones will often be brought into Families. The *Vulgate* reads, *natiuitatis immutatio*; and the *Arabic* more clearly, *partus commutatio*; and *Badwell*, *prolis suppositio & adulteratio*; Expressions all denoting spurious or supposititious Children. *Grotius* is singular in expounding it of Sodomy. The learned *Selden* proposes it as a Conjecture, whether γενέσθως ἐναλλαγῇ may not relate to some idolatrous Rite, particularly the Change of the Sex (which is the marginal Reading) by the Woman assuming the Habit and Appearance of a Man, and the Man of a Woman, which was customary in the Worship of the *Affyrian Venus*; or *Astarte*. According to *Julius Firmicus*, the Priest of that Goddess must not otherwise officiate, *nisi effæminent vultum, & virilem sexum ornatu muliebri dedecorent.* *De errore prof. relig. cap. iv.* And in this Sense *Selden* expounds *Deut. xxii. 5.* for the mere Exchange of Habit was not in itself so faulty, but being an idolatrous Rite, as such, it was forbidden, and



is therefore called an *Abomination*; see *Selden. Syntag. ii. cap. 4.* who quotes *Maimonides*, as explaining the Precept in the same manner, *That the counterfeiting the Sex was not so much forbidden, as the Worship of Idols*; and particularly, *ipsa Veneris & mascula & femina sacra. More Nevoch. c. xxxviii. p. 3.* [*Grotius's* Interpretation seems to me the most probable, only I would read γενήσεως, *changing of Generation*, which *St. Paul* expresses by ἀφίσεις τὴν φύσιν χρῆσιν τῆς θηλείας, *Rom. i. 27.* *St. Jude* by ἀπελθεῖσαι ὁπίσω σαρκὸς ἐτέρας. This may be γενήσεως ἐναλλαγῇ, *a changing of the Act of Generation*, i. e. applying it to an Object different from the End designed by Nature. Though indeed this Colon, and θόρυβος αἰσθητῶν, and ψυχῶν μiasμός, if there be no Fault in the Original, are so ambiguously, and consequently, badly expressed, that it is impossible to know for certain what the Author intended.]

*Ibid. Disorder in Marriages.* Γάμων ἀταξία. This does not mean any Indecency committed by either of the married Parties, for that is contained in Adultery, which is next mentioned, but incestuous Marriages, which are mentioned at large, and forbidden, *Levit. xviii.* The *Vulgate* renders, *nuptiarum inconstantia*, by which it seems to understand unsettled Marriages, which were dissolved at Pleasure.

*Ibid. And shameless Uncleaness.* Ἄσελγεια. Not any particular Act or Species of Uncleaness is here meant, but this Word includes all the Kinds and Sorts of it; and thus *Grotius* explains it, *omne lasciviae genus, Annot. ad Gal. cap. v. 19.* For when Men are become to such a Pitch of Wickedness and Degeneracy, as to worship such Gods, or evil Spirits, as delight in Uncleaness, and whose Rites are so infamous and shocking, as to be even a Reproach to human Nature; such a Religion must of course corrupt their Lives, and produce those scandalous Disorders and vile Affections, which are here enumerated. We have the like melancholy Account of the Heathen Vices, *Rom. i. 23, 24.* which the Apostle charges upon their Idolatry, as the Consequences and Effects of it; for God abandoned them, who had displeased him so much by Idol-Worship, to those unnatural Lusts, called there πάθος ατιμίας, as being the greatest Abuse of the Species, and a Dishonour to the human Nature. That such Instances of Lust and Uncleaness, as are here mentioned, were practised frequently by the Heathens in their sacred Rites; see *Levit. xviii. 24. 1 Kings xiv. 24.—xv. 12. 2 Kings xxiii. 7. 1 Pet. iv. 3.* Hence πλεονεξία, which the Fathers generally interpret to signify an Action of Lust, is in some of *St. Paul's* Epistles called Idolatry itself. Such Actions of Lust were also among the *Gnosticks* in their Worship, *Epiphan. Hæres. xxvi.* And Instances are still more flagrant in prophane Authors.

*Ver. 27. For the worshiping of Idols not to be named.* The Jews were forbidden to make mention of the Names of the Heathen Idols, *Exod. xxiii. 13.* or *Idols of the People*, as the *Chaldee Paraphrase* expresses it; which the *Vulgate* explains by, *per nomen externorum Deorum non jurabitis, neque audietur ex ore vestro;*

which the *Psalmist* likewise refers to, and resolves against; *Their Drink-Offerings of Blood will I not offer, neither make mention of their Names within my Lips; Psal. xvi. 5.* And this the *Israelites* religiously observed; for they either changed the Name of the Idol, and of the Places dedicated to its Worship, or else substituted such a Word as had some Affinity with the true Name, but withal expressed their Contempt and Abhorrence of it: Thus they called *Baal, Bosbeth*, i. e. *Shame*; *Hof. ix. 10.* And when the Mount of Olives was defiled with Idolatry, they called it the Mount of Corruption, *2 Kings xxiii. 13.* changing the Hebrew Name: And *Bethel*, which signifies the House of God, when it came to be the Seat of Idolatry, was called *Beth-aven*, i. e. the House of Vanity, *Hof. iv. 15.—x. 5.* In like manner they changed *Beelzebub* into *Beelzebul*, i. e. *Dominus Stercoreus*, by Way of Contempt and Derision: And that grand Impostor *Barchochab*, who would have passed for the *Messiah* in the Reign of *Trajan*, they called, says *Selden, Barchozibam*, i. e. *filium mendacii.* *Syntag. iii. cap. 6.* where more Instances of this occur. And as the Jews were not to mention the Names of the Heathen Idols, or strange Gods, so neither might they cause to swear by them, *Job. xxiii. 7.* *Maimonides* says, that, by the Hebrew Canons, it was forbidden to make an Infidel swear by his God, or even to mention the Name thereof. *De Idol.*

*Ibid. For the worshiping of Idols not to be named.* ἡ ἀρχὴ, ἡ αἰτία, καὶ τὸ τέλος τοῦ κακοῦ. [*The Beginning, the Cause, and the End of all Evil.*] Idolatry is, in the Opinion of *Tertullian*, the principal Crime of Mankind, the chief Guilt of the World, the total Cause of God's Judgments and Displeasure; for thus he begins his Book *De idololatria: Principale scimen generis humani, summus sæculi reatus, tota causa judicii idololatria*; intimating hereby, that it is a kind of Mother-Sin, containing in it all other Evils on which the Judge of the World passeth Condemnation. *Tenison on Idol. p. 39.* *Lactantius* goeth still higher in his Censure of it, calling it the inexpiable Wickedness, *Instit. lib. i. ch. 18.* But, of all others, *Gregory Nazianzen* comes nearest this Writer in his Sentiments upon the Guilt of Idolatry; for he calleth it, ἡ ἀρχὴ καὶ τὸ τέλος τῶν κακῶν, *the Beginning and End of all Evil. Orat. xxxviii. De Idol.* which are the very Words of our Author.

*Ver. 28. For either they are mad when they are merry.* i. e. when they dance before the Idol, or rejoice at the Idol-Feast; in both which Senses the Verb ἐκπαίεσθαι, here used, frequently occurs; see *Acts vii. 41.* or it may refer to the mad Howlings in their Orgia, or *Bacchanalian* Feasts, or to the Drunkenness and Extravagance commonly attending them, when Women ran about like so many Furies, their Heads wreathed about with Snakes, wildly brandishing their *Thyrus*, and tearing the Flesh even of living Animals to pieces with their Teeth. *Julius Firmicus* thus describes these Revels, *Illic [in Orgiis] inter ebrias puellas, & vinolentos senes, cum scelerum pompa præcederet, alter nigro amictu teter, alter ostenso angue terribilis, alter cruentus ore,*



ore, dum viva pecoris membra discerpit—De errore prof. relig. That ὁμοφαγία, or eating of raw Flesh, and particularly the Entrails of the Victims, was customary at these Feasts, see 2 Maccab. vi. 7. where, in the Description of the abominable Rites of Bacchus, ἀλαγχισμός, is expressly mentioned, called also, παρρησιόμοτος ἀλαγχισμός, ver. 21.

Ibid. Or else lightly forswear themselves.] i. e. without any Scruple: Which is not to be wondered at; for an Oath can have no Tie upon, or sacred Authority among, such as are neither convinced of the Truth of their Religion, nor influenced by the Power of it, nor affected by any Awe or Expectation of Punishment. Innumerable almost are the Instances which may be produced of the Perjury of the Heathens; as that of Antiochus the younger, who, notwithstanding the Oath made to the People of Israel, yet overthrew the Wall of Sion, 1 Maccab. vi. 62. And Part of the Charge given by Judas Maccabeus to his Men, before his final Engagement with Nicanor, was to shew the Falshood of the Heathen, and their Breach of Oaths, 2 Maccab. xv. 10. To this Sin of Perjury, so frequent among the Heathen, Spencer and other learned Men think the Psalmist alludes, Psal. cxliv. 7, 8. Deliver me from the Hand of the strange Children, whose Mouth talketh of Vanity, and their Right-hand is a Right-hand of Iniquity, i. e. from such of the Heathen as devise Lies, and falsely swear to them, by lifting up dextra falsitatis, the Hand of Deceit; see also Ovid. Fast. lib. v. § 681.

Ver. 29. Inasmuch as their Trust is in Idols which have no Life, though they swear falsely, yet they look not to be hurt.] [Κακῶς ὁμοσάμεν· which, I believe, should be ἀδίκως, both because of what follows, § 30. ἀδίκως ὁμοσάν. And because this Author loves to play with the Similitude of Words, ἀδίκως ὁμοσάμεν, ἀδικηθῆναι & προσδέχασθαι. See ch. v. 18. 22. vi. 6. 10.] The like Observation is made upon Idols in the Epistle of Jeremy; Though a Man make a Vow unto them, and keep it not, they will not require it, § 35. As the Gods and Idols they swore by had neither Life nor Power, so the Heathens feared not any Punishment from them for any Breach of Faith, as knowing they were ignorant of what passed, and were secure from their ever hurting them. Minucius therefore very wittily sneers the Heathens on this Account, when he says, Tutius iis per Jovis genium pejerare quam Caesaris: For their Emperors and Magistrates they stood in Awe of, being sensible they would punish them for their Perjuries; but their Idols being res nihili, mere Nothings, their Oaths likewise were thought to be of no Consequence: Hence they made a Jest of the Obligation or Sacredness of them, not unlike those Greeks of whom the Orator speaks, Quibus iusjurandum jocus, & testimonium ludus. Cic. pro Flac. or those whom Juvenal describes, intrepidus altaria tangere, approaching the Altars boldly, without any Sense of Fear, without any Conscience of an Oath. The Heathens had likewise this further Reason to promise themselves Impunity in the Commission of many of their Crimes, that here-

in they imitated their Deities, and were warranted by their Example. It is therefore a very just Observation of St. Austin's, that Jupiter was to no Purpose armed with Thunder to punish guilty Mortals, which must be useless and imaginary, unless he himself had been better than his offending Creatures. Confess. lib. i. c. 16.

Ver. 30. Howbeit, for both Causes shall they be justly punished.] Ἀμφότερα & αὐτὰς μελενύσεια τὰ δίκαια. The true literal Rendering of this is, Utraque illos insequentur jura; where jura may either mean Reasons or Indictments, or Vengeance and Punishment. In the first Sense, Demosthenes uses τὰ δίκαια; in the latter Sense, Horace uses jura; forsā debita jura, superbe, te maneat ipsum. Carm. lib. i. od. 28. Dr. Grabe seems not sensible of this, and flings τὰ δίκαια, which is the Reading likewise of the Alexan. MS. as a corrupt one, into the Margin, substituting τὰ ἀδίκαια in its Place. From the double Punishment here said to pursue the Idolater, one may infer, that the Nothingness of the Idol will not, as has been pretended, excuse the Worshiper. For though an Idol be formally nothing of that which it is taken for, and nothing materially, but a lifeless Piece of Wood, or Stone, yet relatively, an Idol is something; and an Oath by it, or Worship and Sacrifice offered to it, is not offered to nothing, but to Demons, who in, and by these Idols, imposed upon the Heathen through their oracular Delusions.

Ibid. Because they thought not well of God, giving heed unto Idols.] Nor unlike is that of St. Paul, Rom. i. 25. where, speaking of the Gentile Idolaters, he says, that they worshiped the Creature more than the Creator, παρὰ τὸν κτίσαντα, i. e. they worshiped the Creature jointly, and together with the Creator; or rather, as the original Words will bear, they worshiped the Creature contrary to, and in defiance of the Right of the Creator; as by παρὰ φύσιν, in the next Verse, is meant a Practice contrary to the Right and Usage of Nature; for St. Paul cannot be understood, as if he blamed the Gentiles for being more given to the Service of the Creature than of the Creator (for one single Act of religious Worship designedly performed to a Creature, will make a Man an Idolater) nor can he be thought to mean, that they would be more excusable, if they had worshiped both equally; but he blames them for giving that Honour to other Things, or Beings, which is his peculiar Right, and belongs to him solely, and exclusively of all Creatures.

Ibid. Despising Holiness.] Καταφρονήσαντες ὁσιότητι. The Vulgate renders, in dolo contemnentes justitiam, applying ἐν δόλῳ to the last Sentence. St. Jerom's Bible, as it is called, reads very particularly, in idola contemnentes justitiam. All the Versions agree in rendering ὁσιότης, either by justitia or veritas, applying it to that Branch of Righteousness which consists in the Observance of Truth, Faith, Promises, Oaths, &c. which one Man has a Right to expect from another. And therefore Dr. Mangey, with great Judgment, conjectures, that the true Reading here is, ἰδὲν, which seems the more probable, as nothing is more common, than



than the Exchange of *idolus* and *idolus*, and vice versa. See Notes in *Pbilo*, *De decem orac.*

Ver. 31. *For it is not the Power of them by whom they swear, but it is the just Vengeance of (leg. against) Sinners, that punisheth always the Offence of the Ungodly.* [Greek, *ἐμμενέμεν*. In the *Alexand. MS.* it is *ἐμμενέμεν*. Whence the true Reading is *ἐμμενέμεν*.] Our Version is somewhat obscure; but the Meaning is, that Idolaters and false Swearers, who are here called the Ungodly, whose Offence is by the *Vulgate* rendered *perjuratio*, shall certainly be punished; yet not by any Act or Power of their Idols, or false Gods, who can take no Cognizance of Perjury, or Falshood; but by the just Vengeance of an Almighty God, the Revenger of Injustice, and of strange and false Worship: That the Punishment of perjured Persons, when it has happened (which the superstitious Pagans fondly attributed to the Power and Resentment of their false Gods; see *Juv. Sat. viii.*) was rather to be ascribed to the Vengeance of the only true God. St. *Austin* therefore rightly states the Difference, *Non te audit lapsus loquentem, sed punit Deus fallentem.*

## CHAP. XV.

### THE ARGUMENT.

**T**HE Author praises God for preserving his *Peculium*, or chosen People, from the Sin of Idolatry, with which all other Nations were infected. He enlarges upon the Folly of Idolaters, and the Inveective is carried on against such as make Idols; particularly Images made of Clay are condemned as an Instance of greater Folly, and the Maker of them less excusable than of the graven ones in the former Chapter; inasmuch as himself and Work are both a Composition of Clay, and are resolvable into Dust; and that the very Attempt to make a Deity of such perishing Materials, and by a Hand itself frail and mortal, is little less than a Contradiction; that they are contemptible, and nothing worth, as having neither Life, Sense, nor Motion, in common with other Images; but are more despicable on account of the Earth they are made of, which speaks its own Decay. The Chapter concludes with the ridiculous and wicked Worship of hurtful and venomous Beasts, such as created even Dread and Horror from their very Form and Appearance.

Ver. 1. *But thou, Our God, art . . . true.* [i. e. The true God, a Being that necessarily exists; whereas the Existence of Idols is only imaginary: Or the Meaning may be, that thy Word is true, and thy Miracles real; but the Oracles of Demons are equivocating, and their Works lying Wonders.]

Ver. 2. *For if we sin, we are thine, knowing thy Power.* [For though we should sin, we are thine, as knowing thy Power; but, &c.] This gives the Reason why he said *Our God* (not *O God*, as is in the Version): *Because we are thine, even though we should sin.* The whole Verse is very obscurely expressed; the Sense of this Passage seems to be, "If we sin, we are in the Hand of God, and under the Power of his Vengeance, and shall feel the Effects

"of it." At the End of the former Chapter, the Author says, that the Heathens perjured themselves without any Scruple, because they did not fear, or stand in Awe of, the Vengeance of their dumb Idols or blind Deities. As for us, says he, who have the Honour to be called thy chosen People, and have so many Proofs of thy Existence and infinite Power, we are convinced, that if we have the Misfortune to offend thee, thou wilt deal with us according to our sinful Works, and make us experience the Effects of thine Anger. *Calmet in loc.* Or it may be understood like *Isaiab lxi. 16.* *Doubtless thou art our Father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not; i. e. our Hope, even when we are Sinners, is in our Relation to thee.* So in all the other Places of Scripture, where good Men, as *Moses*, *David*, *Ezra*, *Daniel*, lament the Sins of the *Israelites* and supplicate for them, this Consideration is more especially urged, that they are (even in their Iniquities and Transgressions) his peculiar People.

*Ibid.* *But we will not sin, knowing that we are counted thine.* [i. e. If we continue faithful, and do not sin against thee, thou wilt reckon us in the Number of thy Children, and fill us with Mercy and Loving-kindness. All the ancient *English* Versions, it is observable, read in the *Present Tense*: Thus *Coverdale*, *If we synne not, then are we sure that thou regardest us*: And the *Arabic* is in like manner *Si minime peccemus, in tuos tuamque proprietatem nos reputari novimus.* The Comment of *Messieurs du Port Royal* upon this whole Verse is short and clear; "If we sin, we are in the Hands of God, as his Enemies; if we sin not, we are in his Hands as his Friends." Which is followed by this useful Reflexion; "How careful therefore should we be to pursue every thing that may make God our Friend, and to avoid whatever may make him our Enemy, because there is no Escape from his sovereign Hand, which is all-powerful either to save or to destroy?" St. *Austin* quotes this very Passage, and draws the like Inference; *Quis dignè cogitans inhabitationem apud Deum, non enitatur ita vivere, ut tali habitationi congruat?* *Lib. De fid. & oper.* There is also another Sense of this Place, which seems more agreeable to the *Greek*, viz. "We will not sin, because we know that we are in the Number of thy Children, and that thou regardest us as thine own *Peculium*; from this Consideration and Persuasion, and from a more generous Motive than that of a servile Fear, we will be careful how we offend thee at any time, and forfeit thy Love and Regard for us." The *Predestinarians* therefore grossly abuse this Passage, when they urge it in Favour of absolute Election; as if the Sense of the Place was, "We shall not sin, knowing that we are thy Chosen." But there is no Authority from any of the Versions for such a conceited Interpretation; nor does human Frailty permit it, or the Scripture make any Man a Vessel of Mercy absolutely and unconditionally.

Ver. 3. *(For to know thee is perfect Righteousness; and to know thy Power is the Root of Immortality.)*



mortality.]] By knowing God, is not meant a barren Knowledge, purely speculative; but a practical Knowledge, or such as worketh by Love, and is known by its Fruits, in which consists perfect Righteousness: And as the Commission of Sin is the Cause of Corruption and Misery, so the Knowledge of God's Power, and that Dread and Fear of its Effects, which keeps Men from sinning, may properly be said to be the Root of Immortality; as such a well-grounded Faith leads to Holiness, from whence, as from its true Source, Happiness is to be expected.

Ver. 4. *For neither hath the Invention of Men deceived us, nor an Image.*] It appears from this Verse, as well as other Particulars in this Book, that King Solomon was not the Author of it, however dignified with his Name: For, whether we understand us, to mean Solomon himself, which is not an unusual Manner of Expression, when applied to, or spoken by Kings, or whether we understand it of the People of the Jews in his Time, what is mentioned here does not suit with the Morals and Character of him, or his People. For it is certain, that Solomon revolted to Idolatry, and that this otherwise great Prince, contrary to the Caution given, *Exod. xxxiv. 16.* took him Wives of the Moabites and Ammonites and other strange Women, who turned his Heart after other Gods. And it seems highly probable, by what is mentioned, *1 Kings xi. 33.* that Numbers of the People followed his Example in worshipping *Astarteth, the Goddess of the Zidonians; Chemosh, the God of the Moabites; and Milcol, the God of the Children of Ammon.* The Jews indeed, after the Captivity, had the good fortune to keep themselves pure from the Abominations of the Heathens; and from hence one may conclude, that this Writer lived after the Captivity; for before that Time he could not say this with any Truth or Confidence, when Idolatry was so common both in Israel and Judah.

Ibid. *Nor an Image spotted with divers Colours, the Painter's fruitless Labour.*] From hence Grotius concludes the Author of this Book to be an Alexandrian Jew; for they, following the Exposition which the LXX make of the Decalogue (supposed likewise to be Alexandrian Jews; see *Hody De Bibl. text. orig.*) understand *ἐν παντί ὁμοίωμα* in the most extensive Sense; and include Pictures, as well as Images and Statues, under the Prohibition in the second Commandment; see *Grot. in Exod. xx.* And Philo understands the Words in the same Sense, *Lib. De gigant.* and the like Notion occurs in his Piece *De legatione.* It is observable likewise, that a Painter here is called *σκιαγραφός*, i. e. a Drawer of Shadows. Calmet observes from *Pliny*, lib. xxxv. that there was no Painter so early as the Time of the Trojan War; that its Beginning was rude and accidental, found out at Corinth, by tracing with a Pencil the Shade which a Man's Body cast upon the Wall. *Comm. in loc.* This was its Original, at first very simple, without any Colours, Diversity, or Mixture; without any of that Variety, Boldness, or Life; without that

Contrast, or pleasing Emulation between Art and Nature; in a Word, without that *je ne sçai quoy*, which is so much admired in complete and finished Pieces; which Improvement the Author seems to mention as a probable Inducement to Idolatry.

Ver. 5. *The Sight whereof enticeth Fools to lust after it.*] Our Translators seem to have made use of a Copy which read, *εἰς ὁρεξίν ἐρχέσθαι*, which is the Reading of the *Alexand. MS.* but the most common Reading is that to which our Margin refers, *εἰς ὀνειδος ἐρχέσθαι*. [That is, *becometh a Reproach.* I should prefer, *ἀφροσύνη* — *πρόβλημα*. The Word *ἐλπίδων*, *ψ. 6.* I think, plainly proves that *ὁρεξίν* is the true Reading.] Dr. Grabe, instead of *ἀφροσύνη*, reads *ἀφρονί*, in the Singular Number; as the *Vulgate* does *insensato*: And would not *πρόβλημα* suit this Emendation better than *πρόβλημα*, which is the common Reading of the next Sentence? By Lust here mentioned, probably is meant that filthy Lewdness which the Demon, that resided in the Idol, often raised in the Worshiper towards the Image itself: For, that very great and scandalous Indecencies were practised, not only before, but even to the very Statues themselves, is notorious from *Pliny* and *Arnobius*. Thus the latter, *Pygmalionem, regem Cypri, simulacrum Veneris adamasse ut fœminam, solitumque dementem, tanquam si uxoriam res esset, sublevato in lectulum numine copularier amplexibus.* *Lib. vi. cont. gentes.* And indeed the Word *ὁρεξίς* will warrant this Interpretation; for in such an impure Sense it is often taken, particularly *Rom. i. 27.* where the Vices of the idolatrous Heathen are enumerated. "We may hence see the Danger, and condemn the vicious Taste of Pictures, or Statues, represented naked, and in indecent Postures, which, says *Calmet*, raise loose Ideas in weak and unguarded Minds, and more so in Tempers already corrupted and depraved." *Comm. in loc.*

[Ver. 6. *Οἱ δὲ αὐτοὶ.* Our Version, *they that make them.* It should be, *they who do so.* For *δὲ αὐτοὶ* is not *facere*, but *agere*: to do, not to make.]

Ver. 7. *A Potter tempering soft Earth, fashioneth every Vessel with much Labour for our Service: yea, of the same Clay he maketh both the Vessels that serve for clean Uses, and also such as serve to the contrary.*] [In the Greek distinguish thus: *Τὰτε ἐναντία πᾶν ὁμοίως τῶν ἡ, &c.* And also such as serve to the contrary: all (or both) in like manner. I would not change *ἡμιοχθον*, since it is so usual in all Writers (and in this in several Places) to put an Adjective of the Neuter Gender for an Adverb.] *Καὶ ὃ κεραμεὺς ἀπαλὴν γῆν θάλασσαν ἡμιοχθον, πλάσσει πρὸς ὑπηρεσίαν ἡμῶν ἑκάστον.* I think the Reading would be better thus: *Καὶ ὃ κεραμεὺς ἀπαλὴν γῆν θάλασσαν, ἡμιοχθως πλάσσει, κ. τ. λ.* This is the Pointing of the *Vulgate*, which also reads *laboriosè*; and indeed Labour is more required here than in the first Instance. The Meaning of the whole Verse is, "Such Images in particular are most ridiculous, as are made by the Plasterer, or Potter, out of Clay; which, though very ancient and probably before those of Stone and Metal,"

see



see *Principes de la Sculpture*, liv. ii. c. 1. (for as all Arts had but rude and weak Beginnings, so there is less Difficulty to believe, that Images of Earth and of Clay, were the most early) "yet upon account of the Meanness of the Materials, and because the same Lump of Clay is often applied to base and dishonourable Uses, are therefore the most despicable. And though in general the Potter is the best Judge of what comes properly under his own Art and Way of Business, and knows what is most suitable to each Design, and in the Management of the same Lump of Clay has it in his Power to what uses he will employ it; yet he never shews his own Skill less, or the Wretchedness of such an Idol more, than when from a Parcel of common Earth, which serves for the meanest Uses, and often for Vessels of Dishonour, he attempts to make a *Jupiter* or an *Apollo*."

Ver. 8. *A vain God.*] Idols are generally called *Vanities* in the prophetic Writings, and by the LXX as frequently translated μάταια. In Hebrew they are called *Elilim*, which signifies, 1. Things nothing worth, or which have no Existence, τὰ μὴ ὄντα, *Things that are not*, as they are called in the *Additions* to the Book of *Esther*, ch. xiv. 11. *Dicuntur Elilim*, says *Mercer*, *a nibilitate, quasi nihil idola sint.* *Comm. in Job* xiii. 4. *St. Paul* confirms the same, when he says, that an *Idol is nothing in the World*, 1 Cor. viii. 4. Idols are. 2. called *Elilim*, as being *al Elim*, not God, without Power or Strength, *Lev.* xix. 4. *Psal.* xcvi. 5. whereas *Elim* and *Elohim*, are Gods of Strength; see *Drus. observ. sac.* lib. xvi. 3. Idols are called *Elilim*, from the *Radix, Ala*, because they are abominable and accursed Things. By the LXX they are also styled τὰ ψευδῆ, *mendacia*, *Amos* ii. 4. *Isai.* xxviii. 15. *Jer.* xvi. 19. and in very many Passages of the *Apocalypse*, Mr. *Mede* observes, *Idolaters* and *Lyars* are synonymous, *Book* v. c. 11.

*Ibid.* *When his Life, which was lent him, shall be demanded.*] Τὸ τῆς ψυχῆς ἀπαίτησις χρόνος. *Phædrus* thus expresses the like Thought, *Cum mors vicina flagitabit debitum.* Life is represented in the same manner as a Debt by many of the Ancients; thus *Plato*, ἡ τε ηλικία καὶ τὸ χρόνον, *vita etiam est debitum.* *Tully* has a very remarkable Expression upon the Occasion, *Dederunt [Dei] vitam tanquam pecuniam, nullā præstitutā die.* *Tusc. quæst.* lib. i. Thus *Seneca*, speaking of the wise Man, says, *Vivit commodatus sibi, repositus sine tristitia redditurus.* *De tranquill. animi*, cap. xi. Hence the Phrase, *animam reddere*, *to die.* We meet with the like Thought often in *Philo*; see also *Joseph. Antiq.* lib. vii. c. 15, lib. viii. 12. *Arrian. Dissert. in Epict.* lib. iii. c. 13. *Luke* xii. 20. where the same Expression is used, and on the like Occasion, ταύτη τῇ νυκτὶ τὴν ψυχὴν σου ἀπαίτησιν ὑπὸ αὐτοῦ.

Ver. 9. *Notwithstanding his Care is, not that he shall have much Labour, nor that his Life is short, but he striveth to excel Goldsmiths, and counteth it his Glory to make counterfeit things.*] Dr. *Græbe* thinks instead of ἀντιποιδῶν, which is the common Reading, ἀντιποιδῶν would be more expressive, and agree better with μί-

μῆται, which follows after. *Prolegom.* tom. ult. cap. 4. There is another Sense of these Words, which the *Greek* will admit of, i. e. he has no Concern or Care upon him, lest he should be sick, or die (ὅτι μέλλει κάμνειν) which is the marginal Reading, and that at best his Life is but short, but his whole Contest and Aim is for Glory, and to carry the Prize from all Competitors, even the most celebrated in other Arts; contending either for the Precedence of the *Plastick* Art, above that of *Sculpture*, &c. as being the Mother-Art (*mater statuariae, sculpturae, & calaturæ*; see *Steph. Dict. Histor. in voce PRAXITELES*) or that his own Excellence exceeds, or equals the best Performances in Metal; but his Ambition herein is faulty, for he ought to consider this material Difference, that not only his own Life is short and uncertain, but that the Materials of his counterfeit Things, i. e. his earthen false Gods (and such *Varro* assures us were common even in the City of *Rome*; see *Pliny*, xxxv. 12.) are mouldering and brittle; whereas the other Artificers here mentioned, whether Goldsmiths, or Workers in Brasses, make their Deities of what is more solid and durable, and do not descend to the same Instances of Meanness as to their Matter. Though the Worship of such Gods as come out of the Smith's Furnace, or are fashioned by the Anvil and Hammer, is not here the more commended upon account of the Value or Strength of the Materials, Idolatry in every shape being, according to *Arnobius*, who was once guilty of it, a Degree of Madness. *Lib. i. cont. Gent.* [*Ibid.* *Counterfeit things*, &c. κτεδῆλα. See Note on xi. 16, according to which this Place is to be explained. Observe the Opposition between δόξαν and κτεδῆλα, by which the Author exposes the Absurdity of this Artificer, who imagines that δόξα can be acquired by labouring in κτεδῆλοις.]

[Ver. 10. Σποδὸς ἡ καρδία αὐτοῦ. One might rather have expected ἡ κτεδῆλαια, or ἐργασία, or something to that Purpose.]

Ver. 11. *Forasmuch as he knew not his Maker, and him that inspired into him an active Soul.*] *St. Chrysostom* has the like Comparison and Observation, Πηλὸς μὲν καὶ κεραμέως ὁμοία μία, καὶ τ. λ. "The Clay and the Potter are of the same Nature; the Potter indeed excels the Clay in Beauty and Dignity; but it is not owing to any Difference of Nature, but to the Wisdom and Appointment of his Maker." *De incomp. Dei nat. Hom.* xxvii. His Obligation in particular therefore to God stands confessed, who made him what he is, gave him superior Excellence, and animated him above that senseless Mass which he abuses, by inspiring into him an active Soul; *animam quæ operatur*, says the *Vulgate*, *that very Soul by which he works*, according to *Coverdale's* Version; and *Calmet* understands it in the same Sense, *cette même ame par laquelle il travaille*, a Soul so active in its Operations, that it may be in general affirmed to be the Principle of all the Designs, Inventions, and Actions of the best Workmen, and most experienced Artists. [But then it would be *animam per quam operatur*; and in the *Greek* there must have been the Article, ψυχὴν τὴν ενεργῶσαν, which even then would not



not have expressed Coverdale's Version. Our Translation is right, supposing the Author meant ενεργητικόν. Ζωτικόν πνεῦμα, a quickening (not living) Spirit. Πνεῦμα ζωοποιόν, 1 Cor. xv. 45.]

Ver. 12. But they counted our Life a Pastime, and our Time here a Market for Gain.] i. e. says Calmet, such Persons of unlawful Occupations seem to imagine Life to be either a Farce, or Comedy for Diversion, or a Fair and Market for Advantage: The Fathers very commonly make use of the first Simile, representing Life as a Comedy, in which every Man must bear his Part, and should endeavour to acquit himself with Applause and Satisfaction; but in a Sense quite different from that of Libertines, who indeed make Life, and what is serious and useful in it, a Farce, and by proposing mere Diversion and sinful Pleasures as the *Ultimatum* of their Happiness, make a ridiculous Figure upon the Stage of Life, and their Exit is as contemptible. There are others who consider Life as a great Market for Gain, who are only intent upon amassing Riches, without considering the Lawfulness of their Callings, or the Means they make use of for obtaining them; who care not how they are employed, whether it be in making Earthen Deities, or Silver Shrines for some *Diana*, provided it may bring no small gain unto the Craftsmen; as if their Maxim was that mentioned in Horace,

*Ut facias rem,*

*Si possis, recte; si non, quocunque modo rem.*

Epist. lib. i. Epist. 1.

which cannot be better translated than as it stands in our Version, *We must be getting every Way, though it be by evil Means.* St. Chrysostom's Reflexion upon the mistaken Conduct of Mankind is very just, "Our Life and our Employments are like the Pastimes of Children; like them we make a serious Affair of laying up Trifles, building Houses, which tumble suddenly; and should they continue any long Time, would be of no great Service to us, as we must leave them, and what we have heaped together will not follow us into the other World." [In the Greek, it is ἄλλ' ἐλογίζαντο, which, I believe, should be ἐλογίζατο, but he counted, viz. the Person he has been speaking of: as ἡγνόησε just before, and φησιν in this Verse.]

Ver. 14. And all the Enemies of thy People that hold them in Subjection.] Καταδυναστεύσαντες αὐτὸν, which seems to imply more than holding them in Subjection; it means oppressing them, and abusing their Power over them. Accordingly Junius renders, *Qui potentia in ipsum abutuntur.* From hence likewise an Argument may be drawn, that Solomon was not the Author of this Book, because what is mentioned here of the *Israelites* being held in Subjection, and oppressed by their Enemies, does not agree with the happy and prosperous Times of Solomon; see 1 Kings iv. 20, 21, 24, 25. [It is the *Preterperfect Tense*, καταδυναστεύσαντες, who have held, not, who hold.] If therefore the Jews were in the low and oppressed State here mentioned, and were not so in the Time of Solomon, it follows by an easy Consequence, that this Book was not wrote by him, nor in his

Time. This probably relates to the Condition of the Jews, after their Return from the Captivity; when this Writer seems to have lived.

Ibid. *Are most foolish, and are more miserable than very Babes.*] As being Idolaters; for that Children, through Inexperience and Weakness of Judgment, may often mistake Images or Statues for real Persons, is no Wonder; since sometimes Art has arrived to such a happy Imitation of Nature, that even grown Persons at first Sight, at a Distance, have mistaken them for Life. Hence those Expressions in the Poets, *vivi de marmore vultus*, and *spirantia æra*. And hence probably the Fable of *Pygmalion's* Love of a favourite Statue. Lactantius, producing those Verses of Lucilius,

*Pueri infantes credunt signa omnia abena  
Vivere, & esse homines.*

observes, like this Writer, that such as worship Idols, are weaker than Children, *illi enim simulacra homines putant, hi Deos.*

Ver. 15. For they counted all the Idols of the Heathens to be Gods, which neither have the Use of Eyes to see.] i. e. they cannot observe the Behaviour and Devotion wherewith their Votaries look up to them, and prostrate themselves before them. The Imperfection of Idols is described in like manner, *Psal. cxv. 5, 6, 7. — cxxxv. 16, 17.* which this Writer seems to have copied. Nor can we better expound that controverted Passage, 2 Sam. v. 6. 8. than of David's ridiculing the Idols of the *Jebusites*, or certain Brazen Images, and Statues of those Heathen Divinities in which they confided, calling them *the Lamé and the Blind*, by Way of Derision, supposed indeed by them, to be the Divine Guards of the Fort, the *Talismanical* Protectors of it; see Gregory's *Notes and Observat. p. 33.*

[Ibid. For they counted, &c. ὅτι καὶ ἄδωλα — ἐλογίζαντο. This is not exact, nor the Reasoning clear. Instead of ὅτι καὶ πάντα, the *Alexand. MS.* and *Complut. Edit.* have ὅτι πάντα: And *Alexand. πάντα τὰ εἰδωλα.* Whence I would read and connect the Passage thus — Οἱ ἰχθῆροι τῆ λαῶς σου, καὶ ἀδυναστεύσαντες αὐτὸν, οἳ τε πάντα τὰ εἰδωλα τῶν ἔθνων ἐλογίζαντο Θεοὺς, &c. So that here will be two sort of Persons declared *miserable and foolish*, viz. Those who have ever oppressed the Jews, God's People; and those who have counted the Idols of the Nations or Heathen to be no Gods at all. If the vulgar Reading πάντα εἰδωλα be retained, it may be translated *any Idols*, which is a very usual Signification of πάντα.]

Ibid. Nor Noses to draw Breath, nor Ears to hear.] They have not the Faculty of Respiration, though necessary to the very Being of Life: And for the same Reason the Offering of Incense and sweet Odours to them is fruitless, since they are insensible of the Smell of them, and of the Respect intended by them. It is equally vain to put up Prayers and Supplications to them; for, as appears from the Instance of the Worshipers of *Baal*, though they cry aloud to their false Gods from Morning even until Noon, *There shall be no Voice, nor any that will answer*, 1 Kings xviii. 26. Philo sneers such Worshipers, whom he calls, *homines deploratae amenitæ*, in smart, but pleasant Terms,



*Heus vos, viri egregii, votorum summa, & felicitatis finis est, reddi Deo similes; orate igitur ut similes fiat vestris statuis, non videntes oculis, non audientes auribus, & summa felicitate fruamini.*

Ibid. *Nor Fingers of Hands to handle, and as for their Feet they are slow to go.* And though they are often represented to their Worshipers with Thunderbolts in their Hands, and made to appear terrible with Daggers, and other Instruments of Vengeance, yet have they no Use of them, nor do the Wicked experience any Harm or Punishment from them. Their Feet too are equally useless, *ἀργοὶ πρὸς ἐπιβασιν*, which would be better rendered *unable to go*; for Idols cannot properly be said to move slowly, which do not move at all, *ἀργοὶ* here being the same as *ἀεργοὶ*, i. e. *Feet idle and useless for walking.*

Ver. 16. *But no Man can make a God like unto himself.* Οὐδεὶς γὰρ αὐτῷ ὅμοιον ἄνθρωπος ἰχθυεὶ πλάσαι Θεόν, *Nemo enim sibi similem homo poterit Deum fingere*, says the *Vulgate*, which our Version follows, as if the original Reading was, *ἐκ αὐτῷ* [or *αὐτῷ*] ὅμοιον, and not *αὐτῷ*. The *Alexand. MS.* has *ἰδεὶς γὰρ ἀνθρώπων ὅμοιον ἰχθυεὶ πλάσαι Θεόν* but something seems here wanting: Probably the true Reading here is, with a very little Variation, *ἰδεὶς γὰρ αὐτῶν ὅμοιον ἀνθρώπων ἰχθυεὶ πλάσαι Θεόν*. And I offer this Conjecture with the more Confidence, as it is the exact Reading of the *Syriac Version*, *Nemo autem illorum fabricare potest Deum homini similem*, i. e. *None of the Artists can make a God like, or equal to, a Man*; for the Maker of the Idol, having Life and Motion, far exceeds the artificial God, who wants both: Herein only the Idol-makers, and such as worship and confide in them, are like the Idol, because they are equally senseless. And thus that Passage of the *Psalmist* is to be understood, *They that make them are like unto them, and so are all they that put their Trust in them*, *Psal. cxv. 8.* see *De Muis in loc.*

Ver. 17. *For he himself is better than the Things which he worshipeth.* If the Maker therefore of the Idol be mortal, how can the dead Thing which he worketh be supposed to have Immortality? The Reasoning therefore in the *Epistle of Jeremy* is very just, *They themselves that made them can never continue long, how should then the Things that are made by them be Gods?* vi. 46. "What an Absurdity is it," says *Chrysostom*, for a Person to worship an Idol, the Work perhaps of his own Hands; "as if Men had the Power of making a God, and it ceased to be any longer their Workmanship. If Idols had any Sense, they ought rather to worship Men as their Makers, since even the Laws of Nature teach us, that, according to the stated Order of Causes and Effects, the Maker is more perfect than his Work, and not preposterously the Work than the Maker." *Serm. de tribus pueris.* And *Lactantius* no less expressly, "What Divinity, says he, can an Idol have, which it was in the Maker's Power to have made in another manner, or not to have made at all?" Upon the Comparison therefore, as *Pbilo* justly argues upon this Occasion, the Artists themselves deserved rather to have been consecrated, and to have received Divine Honours, than

their Works to be deified, and themselves forgotten: Which shews the great Absurdity of Idol-worship in general, and of the Maker particularly, in falling down before his own Handy-work.

Ibid. *Of whom he lived once, but they never* ὅν αὐτὸς μὲν ἐζησεν, ἐκείνα δὲ ἔδραπέ. This is the Reading in the *Alexand. MS.* and all the Editions; but it seems difficult to determine what *ὅν* relates to, or is governed by, except some such Preposition as *ἀπὸ* be dropt, or understood before *ὅν*, or we might read instead of *αὐτῷ*, *ὅν* in this Place, *ἀπὸ ὅν*. But if this be objected against, why may not *ὅτι αὐτὸς μὲν ἐζησεν, κ. τ. λ.* be admitted? Which Sense is confirmed by the *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, and *Arabic Versions*, and therefore probably may be the true Reading. *Calmet* renders *parce qu'il vit quelque tems*, which answers to *ὅς* or *ὅτι*, the former of which might likewise do here. [ὅν, quorum, ex quibus, ille quidem vixit: ista vero numquam. Pointed thus: Αὐτῷ ὅν, αὐτὸς μὲν, &c.]

Ver. 18. *Yea, they worshiped those Beasts also that are most hateful.* Τὰ ζῶα τὰ ἐχθίστα, which may mean either mischievous, or odious, such as Wolves, Dogs, Cats, Lions, Crocodiles, Serpents. Thus *Cicero*, after having mentioned that almost all Sorts of Beasts were worshiped by the Egyptians, *Boves, Canes, Lupos, Feles, quibus nihil fœdus, obscœnius, lutulentius ne Natura quidem ipsa viderit*, adds, that even such Animals as were really mischievous and hurtful to Mankind were adored by them, viz. Crocodiles, Asps, Serpents; *Etiam animalium monstra illa, a quibus hominum generi præcipua incommoda inferuntur, Crocodilos, Aspidas, Serpentes. De consol.* See Note on ch. xi. 15. and ch. xii. 24. This Worship of the Serpent is the more surprizing, as the Naturalists observe, that, ever since the Fall of our first Parents, occasioned by the Subtlety of the Serpent, there is the most deadly Enmity between Mankind and the Serpent, and the strongest Aversion and Antipathy to it above all the Beasts of the Field: This, says *Mr. Mede*, discovers itself both in the natural and sensitive Faculties of them both, for their Humours are poison to each other, and each of them is astonished and frightened at the Sight and Presence of the other. *Disc. 42.* [As the Author here seems to be speaking of those Beasts which are most monstrous and frightful to look at, I should think that, instead of *τὰ ζῶα τὰ ἐχθίστα*, he wrote *εἰδεχθέατα*, the most ugly, as xvi. 3. *διὰ τὴν εἰδεχθείαν τῶν ἐπαπεσάλμενων* which greatly favours this Conjecture, which seems to be necessary to the Sense. For he is proving, that as they worshiped the most ugly Creatures, so they were punished in kind, by the most ugly Creatures, *δι' ὁμοίων ἐκολάσθησαν*. Possibly something of the same Kind may be concealed under the Words *τῶν ἐχθρῶν*, in ch. xii. 24. *Τὰ ἢ ἐν ζωῆς τῶν ἐχθρῶν ἀτιμα.*]

Ibid. *For being compared together, some are worse than others.* Either more mischievous, more odious, and more senseless than others. In the last Sense *Grotius* understands this Place; and the *Vatican*, and some other Copies, it must be confessed, seem to countenance it, which read, *ἀνοικὶ γὰρ συγκρινόμενα τῶν ἄλλων ἐστὶ χειρόνα.* And



And so does the *Vulgate*, *insensata enim comparata his, illis sunt deteriora*. And the like Sense is favoured by the *Bishops Bible*, and all the ancient *English Versions*: But *αἰσία* in this Place is liable to many Objections, whether taken adjectively, or considered as a Substantive. The true Reading, undoubtedly, is that of the *Alexand. MS.* *ἐν τῷ συνχεῖν αὐτῶν τῶν ἄλλων ἐστὶ χείρονα*, which our Translators very justly render, *being compared together, some are worse than others*, which is true in general, or with respect to those particular Animals which the *Egyptians* worshiped, as appears by the next Verse.

Ver. 19. *Neither are they beautiful, so much as to be desired in respect of Beasts.* The *Bishops* and the *Geneva Bible* render more properly and explicitly, *neither have they any Beautie to be desired in respect of other Beasts*. Calmet observes, that as to the Appearance of Reason and Understanding, many other Animals, particularly the Horse, Elephant, and Fox, are more surprising, sagacious, and cunning than the Ox, Sheep, Wolf, or Beetle, which the *Egyptians* reckon among their Deities. And as to Beauty, almost all Beasts (not to mention Birds, which may be here included among the ζῷα, or living Creatures) are preferable, in that respect, to Serpents and Crocodiles, which they have such a great Regard for. *Comm. in loc.* According to *Messieurs du Port Royal*, the Meaning of this and the foregoing Verse may be, that some of the Animals, which the *Egyptians* worshiped, were so frightful and monstrous, that, if compared even with some curious Pieces of Art, particularly with Idols, or Statues expressed to the Life, they seem less worthy of Adoration, because such finished Pieces of Art have something in them pleasing and entertaining to the Sight, and are the more engaging by their great Likeness to, and Resemblance of Men; whereas their sacred Animals and Serpents in particular, are so odious above all others, that they naturally strike those that look on them with Dread and Horror. [Translate thus: *Neither as Beasts are they beautiful, so as to be desired, i. e. so as that any body should be fond of them.*]

Ibid. *But they went without the Praise of God and his Blessing.* i. e. says Calmet, they are not of the Number of those whom God praised and blessed; they have, by being abused and perverted to Idolatry, renounced, in some measure, God's Benediction, and lost that original Goodness and Beauty which they were possessed of in common with other Creatures, when they first came out of the Hands of their Creator; *Gen. i. 31*. The Author seems to intimate, that God, provoked with the Crime of Idolaters, cursed, in like manner, these Animals, as, in the Beginning of the Creation, he did the Serpent, the Instrument of Man's Deception and Ruin, whom, on that account, he condemned to go, ἐπὶ τῷ σῆθει καὶ τῇ κοιλίᾳ, upon his Breast and his Belly, *Gen. iii. 14*. for so the *LXX* read, by way of Punishment and Disgrace, being probably before a glorious flying Seraph. See Mr. Mede, *Disc. 41*. Or more generally thus, "All created Beings, animate and inanimate, praise God in their Beauty, and derive it from his Hand as a Blessing;

"but odious and deformed Objects, such as, for their Ugliness, are called Monsters, pro-claim not their Maker's Praise, as not having received from his Bounty those amiable and good Qualities, which are to be esteemed a Blessing." Some have fancied the Meaning here to be, that God passed by all creeping things, and Serpents among the rest, when he gave his Blessing to other Creatures, *Gen. i. 22, 28*. Others, that he excluded these from their Share of Praise, when he pronounced, of the Works of his Creation, that they were very good, as being produced at first from Corruption, and consequently not of his making. But these are forced Expositions, and fond Conceits, the one unsupported by Scripture, the other contrary to it, and to the received Notions of true Philosophy. Nor can I assent to those Interpreters who think the Meaning here to be, that Serpents, by being so frequently worshiped in different Places, usurped the Glory due to God only, and rivaled his Power of Blessing; for though the Fact itself must be acknowledged to be a melancholy Truth, yet no such Interpretation is warranted by the Original, or any of the Versions: It arose, probably, from mistaking the rendering of the *Vulgate*, and reading there *effugârunt laudem Dei*, instead of *effugerunt*, as it is in all the correct Copies. The *Syriac* and *Arabic* Interpreters understand these Words of the Worshipers themselves, and not of the Animals, and indeed this Sense is agreeable to the Beginning of the next Chapter.

## C H A P. XVI.

## The ARGUMENT.

THE Author opens this Chapter with the Observation, c. xi. 16 that God deals more graciously with his favourite People than with the wicked, exemplified by a Parallel drawn between each, by his sending Frogs among the *Egyptians*, which came upon their Tables, and made them to loath, and fly from even their necessary Food, but the *Israelites* were fed with Quails. That God, even when he punishes his chosen, deals more favourably with them than with the Heathen, shewn by a Comparison between the Punishment of the *Egyptians* by Flies and Locusts, and that of the *Israelites* by fiery Serpents, who, though their Torment was greatest for the present, had a sovereign Remedy appointed for their Cure, even the brazen Serpent, which was the Means and Instrument of Health, and a Sign of Salvation to such as turned to it, and with Faith looked upon it—To the strange Hail and Rain sent upon the *Egyptians* is opposed the Manna, or Bread from Heaven given to the *Israelites*: That, to serve the Purposes of God's Providence, the very Elements suspended their natural Force, according to his Appointment; so that Hail was not melted by Fire mixed with it, nor Manna dissolved by its Power, though the Sun had a different Effect upon it. By all which Instances opposed to each other by way of Antithesis, God's care in preserving the Righteous was remarkably displayed, and his Vengeance against Sinners no less visible.

Ver.



Ver. 2. *Thou preparedst Meat for them of a strange Taste.*] i. e. A Taste they were unaccustomed to. Coverdale renders a new Tayst, for we must not suppose any new Creation of Quails for their Use; the Miracle consisted in this, that they were brought in such Quantities, and at such a particular Time, and fell in such Places only as God appointed, viz. round the Camp for their Nourishment. Bishop Patrick, from the Authority of Ludolphus, thinks, that Locusts are here meant; but the Psalmist, by calling them feathered Fowls, manifestly understands real Birds; Psal. lxxviii. 28. See De Muis in loc. Bochart. vol. iii. p. 108.

Ibid. *To stir up their Appetite.*] Εἰς Ἀνθυμίαν ὀρέξεως. This seems not properly rendered, for that their Appetite was sufficiently keen, appears from their impatient murmuring for Meat. The Geneva Bible renders better, *to satisfy their Appetite thou hast preparid a Meat of a strong Taste.* But Coverdale's and the Bishops Bible come nearer the Greek: According to the former, God gave them *their Desire that they longed for*; according to the latter he prepared for the Desire of their Appetite a strange Taste: And thus Calmet, *En lui donnant la nourriture délicieuse qu'il avoit désirée.* The Psalmist expresses it by, according to the LXX. τὴν Ἀνθυμίαν αὐτῶν ἤνεγκαν αὐτοῖς. Psal. lxxviii. 29. This gracious Dealing, as 'tis here called, seems to refer to the first sending of Quails mentioned Exod. xvi. 13. rather than the second, which happened a Year after, Numb. xi. 31. for the Israelites upon their second Petition for them, betraying too much Impatience, were afflicted with a Plague for their murmuring, and, as the Psalmist expresses it, *While the Meat was yet in their Mouths, the heavy Wrath of God came upon them, and slew the Wealthiest of them,* Psal. lxxviii. 31. Calmet seems to include both, and thinks there is a Mixture of Mercy towards his People, even in this Judgment; his Reflection upon it is worth inserting, "If God, says he, fed his People thus deliciously even when they had provoked him, what will he not give them, when they shall be faithful and obedient to him?" In either Sense the Instance proves what the Author brings it for, viz. God's different Manner of dealing with his own People, and such as are Strangers to him. [For εἰς Ἀνθυμίαν, the Alexand. MS. reads, οἷς εἰς Ἀνθυμίαν which, I believe, is right, if, instead of διηγέτηςας, you write διηγέτηςας, and τροφῆς (or τροφῆς) for τροφὴν, and τῶν ἀναγκαίων for τὴν ἀναγκαίαν. The whole thus: Ἀνθ' ἧς κολάσεως διηγέτηςας τὸν λαόν σου, οἷς, εἰς Ἀνθυμίαν ὀρέξεως, ξένην γέυσιν τροφῆς ἡτοίμασας, ὀρυγομήτην· ἵνα ἐκείνοι μὲν Ἀνθυμίαις τροφῆς, διὰ τὴν εἰδέχθειαν τῶν ἐπαπεσάλμεναι ἢ τῶν ἀναγκαίων ὀρεξιν ἀποσρέφωσι· αὐτοὶ δ', &c. See a parallel Place, ch. xix. 11, 12. where ξένην γέυσιν is expressed by νέαν γένεσιν, and τροφῆς (or τροφῆς) by ἰδίωμα τροφῆς. Ὅρεξις τῶν ἀναγκαίων is, an Appetite to those Things which are necessary to the Preservation of Life, viz. Meat and Drink.]

Ver. 3. *To the End that they, desiring Food, might, for the ugly Sight of the Beasts sent among them, lothe even that which they must needs desire.*] Καὶ τὴν ἀναγκαίαν ὀρεξιν ἀποσρέφωσι. The

Bishops Bible gives the true and literal Translation, *To the Intent that they . . . might begin to lothe even their necessary Appetite.* The Vulgate, and St. Jerom's Bible, as 'tis called, render in like manner, *Etiam a necessaria concupiscentia averterentur*, i. e. through the Disagreeableness of the Animals sent amongst them, ἀπὸ τὴν εἰδέχθειαν τῶν ἐπαπεσάλμεναι, as the true Reading is, particularly the Frogs, which tainted and spoiled their Meat, they loathed the Thoughts, and the Desire even of necessary Food and Refreshment. Josephus gives the same Account of these disagreeable Animals, τὰς τε καὶ οἶκον αὐτῶν ἀγίτας, κ. τ. λ. Domesticam etiam vitæ eorum consuetudinem turbârunt in eduliis & potu repertæ, & in lectis eorum passim oberrantes. Antiq. Jud. lib. ii. c. 14. This Plague puts one in mind of the Harpyes, which Virgil thus describes:

*Extruimusque toros, dapibusque epulamur opimis.  
At subitæ horrifico lapsû de montibus adsunt  
Harpyiæ, & magnis quatunt clangoribus alas,  
Diripiuntque dapes, contactuque omnia sædant  
Immundo: tum vox tetrum dira inter odorem.*

Æneid. lib. iii.

Ver. 4. *For it was requisite that upon them exercising Tyranny, should come Penury which they could not avoid.*] Ἀπαργίτην ἐνδειαν ἐπέλαβαν, Poverty without Excuse, according to some of the ancient English Versions; the Geneva Bible has extreme Poverty, and Coverdale's follows the Vulgate, which renders, *interitum sine excusatione*: ἀπαργίτην will bear any of these Significations, which occasioned such a Difference in the Versions. The Author shews, in this and the following Verses, God's different manner of dealing with the Israelites and Egyptians in three Particulars. 1. That he punished the Egyptians with Rigour, as a severe Judge, tormenting them for their Tyranny and Oppression of others, with deserved, extreme, inevitable Want or Hunger, occasioned by the Animals which infested them, and drove them from their necessary Sustenance: But he chastised his own People, as a Father, afflicting them comparatively but a little, but, by that little, making them sensible, how tenderly he had dealt with them in comparison of their Enemies. 2. That though he suffered the Hebrews to be in want for a small Season, yet he kept them from perishing by Hunger in the Wilderness; and to recompence, as it were, that short Affliction by Hunger, he fed them after not only with necessary Food, but satiated them with Delicacies in abundance. But a Succession of Plagues, without Respite, pursued the Egyptians. 3. That though the whole Wilderness, through which the Israelites marched so many Years, was full of fiery Serpent, Deut. viii. 15. yet God did not permit these to assault them but for a small Season only, and even then he appointed an immediate Remedy to heal them, viz. the brazen Serpent: But the Egyptians died without Mercy, neither was there any Cure provided for the Wounds and Stings which they received from the Flies and Locusts.

Ver. 5. *For when the horrible Fierceness of Beasts came upon these.*] Ὅτι αὐτοῖς δεινὸς ἐπῆλθε θηρίων



θυμῶν θυμός. Θυμός here does not signify Fierceness, but Poison. Thus *Apoc.* xiv. 8. what our Version renders, *the Wine of the Wrath of her Fornication*, Mr. Mede expounds the *Poison of her Fornication*. See also ch. xviii. 3. where there is the like Expression. And it is remarkable, that the same Word in the *Hebrew* signifies both Wrath and Poison. *Mede's Works*, p. 910. And θυμός is used, by the *Hellenistical Jews*, in the same double respect. To the Observation of this very judicious Writer, I shall add an Instance or two from the Old Testament, than which nothing can be closer, or more evince the Sense I am contending for. The first is *Deut.* xxxii. 33. θυμός δρακόντων ὁ οἶνος αὐτῶν, ἢ θυμός ἀσπίδων ἀνίαλός, where it is twice used, in the same Verse, in this Sense, and our Translators render accordingly, *their Wine is the Poison of Dragons, and the cruel Venom of Asps*. The next is, *Job* xx. 16. θυμόν ἢ δρακόντων θηλάσσειν, ἀνέλοι ἢ αὐτὸν γλώσσα ὀφείας, which our Translators rightly render, *He shall suck the Poison of Asps, the Vipers Tongue shall slay him*. And in *ψ* 14. of the same Chapter, χολή, which is synonymous to θυμός, is used in the same Sense. Χολή ἀσπίδος ἐν γαστρὶ αὐτοῦ, which, though it signifies both Wrath and Poison, our Version takes in the latter Sense, and renders, *the Gall of Asps is within him*. The last Instance I shall mention is that in *Psal.* lviii. 4. θυμός αὐτοῦ ὡς τὴν ὁμοίωσιν τῆς ὀφείας, which, in our Version, is happily rendered, *their Poison is like the Poison of a Serpent*. This Poison, as Naturalists observe, is the Consequence of their Rage, and thrown out by it, and therefore may be considered as one and the same. The Word ἐπῆλθε, here used by our Author, intimates, says *Bochart*, the Suddenness of the Attack of these venomous Creatures, who accordingly renders this Place, *supervenit (tanquam ex improviso) Serpentum venenum*, vol. iii. p. 425.

*Ibid.* And they perished with the Stings of crooked Serpents, thy Wrath endured not for ever.] The sacred Story relates, that the *Israelites*, by their rebellious murmuring, provoked God to send Serpents among them, whose Poison was so mortal, that it brought the most painful Death upon them.—In this Affliction, they addressed themselves to the Father of Mercies, who, moved by their Repentance, commanded *Moses* to make a Serpent of Brass, and erect it on a Pole in view of the whole Camp, that whosoever looked upon it should be healed. This Punishment, by Serpents, the Son of *Sirach* reckons among other Instances of God's Vengeance, *All these were created for Vengeance, Teeth of wild Beasts, and Scorpions, Serpents, and the Sword, punishing the wicked to Destruction*. *Ecclus.* ch. xxxix. 30. where the Margin refers to this very Passage. But it has been thought, by some learned Men, to have been a Punishment adapted on Purpose by God to the Transgression of the *Israelites*, which was evil speaking against the Lord, and slandering his Providence. In this view, the Conformity between the Sin and the Punishment is very visible, and the Justness of our Author's Observation, ch. xi. 16. further proved. Σκολιός, likewise, the Epithet here given to the Serpent,

will equally suit the Slanderer; for he is crooked through Artifice, as the other is by Nature; is alike mischievous and designing, and, to serve his own Purposes, can turn himself into as many odious Shapes. *Solomon* makes the same Comparison, *Eccles.* x. 11. The Serpent was a known Hieroglyphick among the *Egyptians* and other Nations; and, perhaps, its Crookedness and Perfection in turning, was one Reason of its being made the Symbol of their Year.

Ver. 6. Having a Sign of Salvation, to put them in remembrance of the Commandment of thy Law.] The Sign of Salvation here mentioned was the brazen Serpent, erected, by God's Command, upon a Pole or Standard, like the *Roman Eagle*, for the Cure of the People. It was, in the Opinion of many learned Men, the Image of a *Saraph*, or glorious winged Serpent. *Arias Mont.* reads *Numb.* xxi. 8 *fac tibi Saraph*. It was a Symbol of a good ministering Angel, which executeth God's Will on Earth, whilst a secret Virtue, from the unseen God, perfected the Cure, by whose supernatural Power it was effected, whose Mercy worked in, and by that Emblem. It is properly therefore called a Sign of Salvation, as it was the Instrument only through which the Cure was conveyed. But it was *salutare signum*, or the Means of Recovery, to such only as looked up to it with Faith, and its saving Effect depended upon their Reliance on God, and Belief of his Power to heal them in, and by that Instrument. It had also this further Use implied in it, to admonish the *Jews* how to conduct themselves upon other Occasions, where a like mysterious Trial should occur, viz. to comply with all God's positive Appointments without any Reluctance, even tho' the Reason of such an Injunction should not be discoverable by them. For the chusing this Image, which had no inherent Virtue in it, rather than any other, was the mere Will of God, who can make Things evidently of no Importance in themselves, effectual to what Purposes he pleases, as might be proved from many other Instances in Scripture.

Ver. 7. For he that turned himself towards it, was not saved by the thing that he saw.] The mere beholding it did not alone confer the Benefit of a Cure; nor could it, though fixed in public View, effect a single Recovery by any natural Operation: God did not order it to be erected on any such Account; nor was *Moses* induced to make this Image from any occult Skill, or Persuasion that he had, that the Effigies of this brazen Serpent could heal the *Israelites* by any Power of Art or Nature; for the very Matter of this Serpent has been thought rather inconvenient and improper for such an Effect. Nor can we find, says a learned Writer, an Instance or Example of any *Telesthe* that was ever known to cure a Disease by only looking upon it; but, in all Wounds by venomous Serpents, the Cure was effected by a local Application of some proper Remedy to the Part affected. *Mor's Mystery of Godliness*, p. 430. What therefore was the Intent of elevating this Image upon a Pole, and why must the diseased look towards it, and the heal-



ing Virtue be conveyed through their Eyes? Undoubtedly this Appointment, besides the exercising the Faith of the Beholder upon this Occasion, had a Reference to the Mystery of *Christ*, whose Victory over the old Serpent, the grand Enemy of Mankind, was hereby typified and represented. Many of the Ancients are of the same Opinion, and imagine this Serpent to be an Emblem of the *Cross*, and a Symbol, or Sign of that Salvation afterwards to be effected by it: But *Justin Martyr* is more particular, for he adds, that this Serpent was likewise made in the very Form of a Cross, *Apol. 2.* 'Tis certain our Saviour, in his Discourse with *Nicodemus*, explains it of himself, and his Cross, *John iii. 14.* and chose this Figure for the Instruction and Information of the *Jews*, who always acknowledged a Mystery couched under this Serpent.

*Ibid. But by thee that art the Saviour of all.* Τὸν πάντων σωτήρα. This, I think, relates to the λόγος, see Note on \* 12. and comprises more than his bare healing the *Israelites* of this Plague. The Word *σωτήρ*, or Saviour, here used, admits of several Acceptations, 1. He may be called a Saviour, that saves the Life of his Enemy in the Field; but he that thus saveth another, commonly doth it upon a Prospect of some advantage to himself, either of selling the poor captive, or of making him his Slave, which something abates his Glory. 2. The Word *σωτήρ* not only signifies one that preserves the Life of another, but also one that is the Restorer of some happy Condition which was lost; and thus the *Roman Orator* explains it, *qui amissam salutem dat.* In *Verrem*, lib. ii. Now all the Happiness which such a Saviour, or Deliverer, could confer, was but a temporal Happiness, which is likewise a lessening of it. 3. The Judges of *Israel*, who delivered their Country from the Yoke of *Midian*, the *Syrians*, or the *Philistines*, are, by *Nehemiah*, called *σωτήρες*, ch. ix. 27. But then these Saviours saved but one Country, or perhaps City, as *Camillus* did *Rome*, for which he was styled *σωτήρ*, a Saviour. But all these Characters come very short of ὁ σωτήρ πάντων, which is a Title too great to be applied to any less than a divine Person; for the Person here meant was far more glorious than any single Hero, or all those Judges of old together. He it was that smote all the first born of the *Egyptians*, that brought the *Israelites* out of *Egypt*, that rescued them from their greatest Bondage, that overthrew *Pharaoh* and his Host in the *Red-Sea*, that led them in the Wilderness, protected and sustained them there, and at last gave them Possession of *Canaan*. But even this Deliverance was but a Type of a greater designed for them by him, and that *Canaan*, but an earnest of a better Country, intended for all true *Israelites*. See *Dr. Gale's Serm. Disc. 14.* With great Propriety therefore this Saviour is described, in the next Verse, as an Almighty Redeemer, ὁ φύμιμος ἐν παντί καὶ πάντοτε. Which Expression of our Author is agreeable to the Sentiments of the ancient Jewish Writers, and is founded on the very high Notions which the *Jews* entertained of their Great *Goel*, or Deliverer.

Ver. 9. For them the Bitings of Grasshoppers and Flies killed.] This Writer seems to intimate that the Locusts, for so I understand Grasshoppers, and so they are called *Judges vii. 12.* *Psal. lxxviii. 46.* killed Numbers of the *Egyptians*. This, if it be not strictly according to Truth, very probably arose from too literal an Acceptation of *Exod. x. 17.* *Entreat the Lord that he may take away from me this Death only*, which may admit of another and fair Interpretation, without supposing that the Locusts killed any Persons directly, as the Hail did: For the Locusts destroying the Supports of Life, by eating up the Corn when ready for the Sickle, and consuming all before them within the Space of a few Hours, may, by consequence, in bringing a Famine, be said to kill the People, in which respect *Pharaoh* might properly call them, *Deadly Locusts*. And thus *Bochart*, *Locustæ homines & bruta occidunt, saltem ex consequenti, quod aiunt, quia consumptis illis quæ fuissent vitæ subsidio, sic ad mortem eos adigunt*, vol. iii. p. 463. *Pliny's* Account of them is really dreadful, *In India trium pedum longitudine esse traduntur, Deorum Iræ pestis ea intelligitur. Namque grandiores cernuntur, & tanto volant pennarum stridore, ut aliæ alites credantur; solemque obumbrant, sollicitè suspectantibus populis ne suas operiant terras, sufficiunt quippe vires. Et tanquam parum sit maria transisse, immensos tractus permeant, diræque messibus contegunt nube, multa contactu adurentes, omnia verò morfu erodentes.* *Nat. Hist. lib. xi. De Locust. c. 29.* See also *Aristot. Hist. Anim. lib. v. c. 23.* *Boch. Hieroz. lib. iv. c. 5.* *Bacon's Natural History, Century x.* Agreeable to this Account of *Pliny*, is that of a learned modern Writer, who says, "That the Number of Locusts he saw in *Barbary*, in the Years 1724 and 1725, is beyond Expression; that in the Heat of the Day they formed themselves into large Bodies, appeared like a Succession of Clouds, and darkened the Sun; that they marched directly forward, climbed over Trees, Walls, Houses, eat up every Plant in their Way, and let nothing escape them.—That the Inhabitants, to stop their Progress, made Trenches all over their Fields and Gardens, and filled them with Water, or else placing in a Row great Quantities of Heath, Stubble, and such like combustible Matter, they set them on Fire upon the Approach of the Locusts, but all to no purpose." *Shaw's Travels*, p. 256, 257. In the Description of this Plague, *Exod. x. 5.* it is said, that they shall cover the Face of the Earth, where the *Chaldee Paraphrase* reads, they shall hide the Face of the Sun from the Earth. But I should deservedly be thought wanting, in the Respect due to the Canonical Scriptures, if I should pass over, in Silence, that beautiful Description of the Plague of Locusts in the second Chapter of *Joel*, for there cannot be a greater, or more lively Instance of the *Hypotyposis*: The Prophet, in the Chapter referred to, represents the Desolation occasioned by these Creatures, whose Teeth he calls the Teeth of Lions, like the ravaging of a Country, or the storming of a City by an Army; which Description is the more remarkable, because the Analogy is carried on throughout so properly



properly and naturally, "In the Regularity of their March, eating up the Provision, burning the Country, scaling of the Walls, running about through the conquered City, breaking into Houses, and the general Horror of the Inhabitants, that, says a learned Author, if one would have described the Outrages of an Army without a Metaphor, it could hardly have been done in more proper Terms." See *Nicols Confer.* Part IV. p. 152.

Ibid. *And Flies killed . . . for they were worthy to be punished by such.* i. e. says Bochart, they sorely wounded them, and then sucked their Blood till they killed them. And, in this Sense, many Commentators understand those Words, *Exod. viii. 24. The Land was corrupted, or, as the Margin has it, was destroyed by Reason of the Swarm of Flies,* to signify, that many of the People were poisoned, or stung to Death by them. See *Pool's Annot. in loc.* and *Psal. lxxviii. 45.* where the LXX read ἐξαπέσειλεν εἰς αὐτοὺς κυνόμυαν, ἡ καὶ φάγεν αὐτοὺς, as if a particular Sort of Fly was meant; but the true Reading, as I have observed, on ch. xii. 25. is, κοινόμυαν, which includes Flies of all Sorts, which through their Number devoured them. We read of Creatures of this Nature so mischievous and deadly, that the Greeks thought fit to have a particular God to deliver them from them, under the Title of *Myiagros.* or *Myiodes.* *Pliny, lib. x. c. 28. Selden De Dis Syris syntag. 2. de Baal-zehub.* One cannot but perceive, in this Punishment of the Egyptians, a Conformity of it to the Sin of that People; for the Noise, Tumult, and Stinging of these vengeful Animals, answered to the passionate Language, and severe Blows of the Egyptian Taskmasters, and might be designed to revenge that hard Treatment. Nor is the Justice of God less to be admired in this Particular also, that this Plague was specially calculated for the Punishment of a nice, effeminate, and luxurious People, no less indulgent to themselves than inhuman to others: For what could be more proper or effectual for humbling the Pride and Vanity of Egypt, or what a greater Mortification to their Niceness than to be thus tormented, and beset every where with Shoals of Frogs, and Swarms of Flies and Locusts?

[Ver. 10. Τὸ ἐλεός σου ἀντιπαρήλας, is translated, *Thy Mercy was ever by them:* Much beneath the Original, which implies, *Thy Mercy came forth as against an Adversary.* The Word is used in a far different Sense in *Luke x. 31, 32.* Our Translators, 'tis observable, insert the Word *ever,* not confining God's Mercy, to save and heal his faithful Children, to this Instance only of his Goodness. And indeed the Idea of God's Philanthropy is greatly enlarged by understanding these Expressions; and that, in ver. 12. in a more comprehensive Sense, than a mere Deliverance from the Venom of Serpents.

Ver. 12. *But it was thy Word, O Lord, which healeth all things.* This seems to be spoken of the very Person of the Λόγος, and is, undoubtedly, taken from *Psal. cvii. 20. Ἀπέστειλε τὸν Λόγον αὐτοῦ, ἡ ἰάσατο αὐτοὺς, He sent his Word and healed them, and they were saved from their*

*Destruction.* That the Λόγος is here meant, seems reasonable to suppose, because it is certain he inflicted the Punishment referred to; For in *Numb xxi. 5, 6.* where it is said that the People murmured against God, the Chaldee Paraphrase reads, *They murmured against the Word of the Lord;* and afterwards it follows, that the Word of the Lord sent fiery Serpents among the People. But we learn still more expressly who that Divine Person was, whom the Israelites tempted, or spoke against, from those Words of St. Paul, *1 Cor. x. 9. Neither tempted ye Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of Serpents.* It is certain then, that the Λόγος was the Person murmured against, and that punished them for it. And it seems very probable, from the Passage of the Psalmist before quoted, that it was he that likewise cured all them that were rightly disposed for a Cure; and that the Brazen Serpent was a Symbol of the Presence of the Λόγος in particular, and of his Divine Power and Goodness to heal all that truly turned to him. The Chaldee Paraphrase on *Num. xx. 8.* thus understands it, *Erit quemcunque momorderit serpens, & intuitus fuerit ipsum, tum vivet, modo cor ejus directum fuerit ad nomen verbi Domini. Et fuit quando mordebatur serpens virum, & contemplaretur serpentem aneum, & cor ejus intentum erat in nomen verbi Domini, vivebat, i. e. Whomsoever a Serpent shall bite, he shall be healed, if he directs his Heart to the Name of the Word of the Lord: And it came to pass, that when a Serpent bit any Man, and he directed his Heart to the Name of the Word of the Lord, he accordingly recovered, and lived.* The like Presence of the Λόγος upon this Occasion of Healing, has been inferred, by some learned Men, from *John iii. 14.* see *Temison of Idol. p. 359.* It may also, according to *Calmet,* be understood in this farther Sense, viz. of a Word of God's Mouth, or of his holy Word: Of the Power of the former to heal all bodily Diseases, the Centurion in the Gospel seems to have been convinced, *Matt. viii. 8.* for, instead of troubling our Saviour to come to his House, he says, out of a Principle of great Faith, *Speak the Word only, and thy Servant shall be healed.* Of the Power of the latter to heal all the Diseases of the Soul, to cure those that are broken in Heart, and as containing a Medicine to heal every Infirmary and Sickness, St. Austin is to be understood, when he says, *Omnis morbus animæ habet in Scriptura medicamentum suum.* In *Psal. xxxvii.*

Ver. 13. *Thou leadest to the Gates of Hell, and bringest up again.* We meet with the same Thought, and almost the same Expression, *Tob. xiii. 2. He doth scourge, and bath Mercy; he leadeth down to Hell, and bringeth up again; neither is there any that can avoid his Hand.* The Expression in both Places seems to be taken either from *1 Sam. ii. 6.* or *Deut. xxxii. 39.* see also *Apoc. i. 18.* where Christ is said to have the Keys of Hell and of Death. By the Ancients, the Place or Receptacle of the Dead is represented as an House, that has its Doors and Gates; and Death, in their Language, as the Gate or Entrance into Hades; and to die, or to descend into the Grave, is to



go down to Hades, or to be brought to the Gates of Death: Accordingly, to live again, is to leave Hades, or to open the Gates of Death. Agreeably to this Notion and Periphrasis, so frequent to be met with in Homer, Virgil, Theocritus, Euripides, Hesiod, Theognis, &c. is the constant Usage of this Phrase in the Old Testament, and Jewish Writers. In the xxxviii<sup>th</sup> of Job, v. 17. the Expression is very observable, and occurs twice in the same Verse; *Have the Gates of Death been opened unto thee, or hast thou seen the Doors of the Shadow of Death?* By the like Phrase the Psalmist describes the afflicted States of such as had been in Captivity, and groaned under the severest Hardships, Psal. cvii. 18. where the Expression of our Version is again remarkable, and close to the present Purpose, *They were even hard at Death's Door*, which the LXX render, *ἦσαν εὐς τὰν πυλῶν τῆ θανάτου*. And when God shews his Power in restoring Men from such an afflicted State, he is then said in Scripture, to lift them up from the Gates of Death, Psal. ix. 13.

Ver. 14. *A Man indeed killeth through his Malice; and the Spirit, when it is gone forth, returneth not; neither the Soul received up, cometh again.* St. Jerom's Bible, as it is called, reads, *Homo autem occidit quidem per maliciam animam suam*, which Coverdale's Version follows, *Man thowow Wickednes slayeth his owne Soule*: But the Rendering of the Geneva Bible seems preferable. *A Man indeed by his Wickedness may slay another, but when the Spirit is gone forth, it turneth not again; neither can be call again the Soul that is taken away.* And in this Sense almost all the Commentators understand the Words, *ὅτε ἀναλύνει ψυχὴν παρεληλυθῆσαν*. [But when the Geneva Translators render it, *call again*, one would think they read *ἀνακαλεῖ* for *ἀναλύνει*.] Our Version seems to follow a Copy, which read, *ὅτε ἀναλύνει ψυχὴν παρεληλυθῆσαν* and so indeed the Syriac and Arab. Interpreters do expressly render the former, *Spiritus egressus non revertitur, nec redit anima quæ aufertur*; and the latter, *Egressusque spiritus non revertitur; neque redit anima assumpta*. According to Grotius, the Sense is, that a wicked Man may indeed kill another, but he cannot hurt or destroy the Soul; which, after its Separation from the Body, being lodged in its proper Receptacle, is out of the Power of Man to injure; making the Sense to be the same with Matt. x. 28. *Calmet* understands it in the same Manner, *L'homme n'aneantira pas l'ame lorsque Dieu l'aura reprise à lui*; i. e. *Man shall not be able to destroy, or annihilate the Soul, when God has taken it again to himself*; its Substance is inaccessible, and beyond the Reach of Malice and Violence. *Comm. in loc.* That after Death, and before the Day of Judgment, the Souls of Men are reserved in a separate State or Region, a Paradise of Comfort and Rest, or a Prison of Misery and Despair, according to Men's respective Behaviour, was the received Doctrine of the Synagogue, or ancient Jews. But this Passage of our Author not only favours such an Opinion, but seems likewise to point out the Place of this Receptacle. [If this Remark is founded upon our

Version, *received up*, it is mistake, for *παρεληλυθῆσαν* does not signify *received up*, but, *received FROM* the Person who had it.] It is remarkable, that those Words of the Psalmist, *O take me not away in the midst of my Days*, Psal. ciii. 24. are, by Arias Mont. rendered from the Hebrew, *Ne facias me ascendere*, i. e. *Make me not to ascend*, or to go upwards to the invisible Region of separate and departed Souls. It seems also probable, that human Souls, after their Separation from the Body, are carried by Angels *eis ἀἴθρας αὐτῶν τόπων*, Luke xvi. 22. into Regions of Bliss or Misery, as they have respectively deserved; and in that intermediate State have either a ravishing Foretaste, and pleasing Hope of future Happiness, or wait their Doom, and final Sentence with sad Forebodings, and dreadful Apprehensions. [Ver. 15. At the End of this Verse something is to be supplied, which is easily understood, viz. *However, the Malice of Man may easily be avoided; but (v. 16.) it is not possible to escape thy Hand or Power.*]

Ver. 16. *For the Ungodly that denied to know thee, were scourged by the Strength of thine Arm: With strange Rains, Hails, and Showers were they persecuted, &c.]* That proud Pharaoh, who could say to Moses, *Who is the Lord, that I should obey his Voice; I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go*, at length experienced the Severity of thy Judgments, being persecuted with Storms and Tempests beyond all Precedent and Example. For Hail, and particularly such dreadful Storms of it as are described in the sacred History, was quite unusual and miraculous in those Parts of Egypt, where, according to Josephus, Philo, and Pliny, there was no Rain. Hence, with great Judgment, they are said by this Writer, to be *persecuted with strange Rains, novis aquis*, according to the Vulgate, i. e. Rains falling at Times, or in Places where it was not usual and customary. Hence, that Lash and Sarcasm in the Psalmist, *He gave them Hail for Rain*, Psal. cv. 32. But this Observation of new and strange Rain is not to be extended to all Parts of Egypt, for in the Maritime Parts, and those towards Ethiopia, Instances of this Sort of Weather sometimes happen, and where it happened but seldom, or not at all, that Want was supplied by the Overflowing of the Nile. Thus Philo. *Ἀἰγύπτιος δὲ παρεδεχέσθαι, κ. τ. λ. Ægyptus biemem nescit, biemalesque tempestates. Hæc circa brumam irroratur parvis rarisque pluviis in locis duntaxat maritimis, supra Memphim autem nullas omnino sentit — restagnationes Nili arva satis fecundant, ut Naturæ de Imbribus Ægypto providere non sit opus.* De Mose, lib. i.

Ibid. *With Hails and Showers were they persecuted, that they could not avoid.* Καὶ χαλάζαις καὶ ὀμβροῖς διωκόμενοι ἀπαραιήτοις. [With Hails and Storms of Rain.] If we retain ἀπαραιήτοις, which is the Reading in most Editions, I think it should be rendered, *severe*, or *extreme* (see Note on v. 4.) rather than *inevitable*; for if the Egyptians could not avoid this Plague of Hail, but through it, and the Fire mingled with it, were unavoidably to be destroyed, why did God, according to Moses's Account, Exod. ix. 19. direct the Servants of Pharaoh to gather their



their Cattle, and all that they had in the Field into their Houses, or what need of this Caution and Warning, if their Doom was fixed, and they could not avoid it? I think therefore this does not relate to all the *Egyptians*, but to such obstinate and careless ones among them, as regarded not the Word of the Lord, but left their Servants and Cattle in the Field, and these perished by the extreme Violence of the Hail; which is no wonder, since the Hail was of an uncommon Bigness. The *Complut.* Edition reads, χαλαραὶ καὶ ὀμβροὶ διακόμονται ἀπαραιήτως, i. e. they were severely, and without Mercy, persecuted by these, and at length consumed by them and the Lightning intermixed. The *Vulgate* and *Coverdale* omit this Word in their Version, and *Calmet*, in his Comment. *Philo's* Account of this Plague agrees with our Author, φοεραὶ ὕδατος, χαλαραὶ πολλὰ καὶ βαθεῖαν, κ. τ. λ. *Pluviae vebementes, plurima & altè exaggerata grando, ventorum confligentium & obrepentium procellae* (Storms of Wind, Showers, as it is rendered in our Version, diminish the Terror of the Idea, and is too mild a Term) *nubium fragores, fulgetra & tonitrua alterna crebraque, assidua fulmina, longe prodigiosissima specie.* And a little after, he describes the Consequence of this Storm in much the same Terms, *Non paucis animantibus simul exitio fuit, tum frigoris rigore, tum gravi lapidatione cadentis vulgo grandinis, tum etiam ignis consumptione.* De Mose, lib. i. It is observable here, that three of the Elements, though contrary and repugnant in their Powers and Qualities, were in Confederacy, and united against this obstinate People, the Air in the Thunder, the Water in the Hail, and the Fire in the Lightning, which contrast *Milton* thus beautifully expresses in a few Words,

*Fierce Rain, with Lightning mixt, Water with Fire  
In Ruin reconciled.* Parad. Reg. B. IV.

and this God did to shew that he was Lord of Universal Nature.

Ver. 17, 18, 19. *For, which is most to be wondered at, the Fire had more Force in the Water that quenbeth all Things—Sometimes the Flame was mitigated that it might not burn up the Beasts that were sent against the Ungodly—At another time it burneth even in the midst of Water, above the Power of Fire, that it might destroy the Fruits of an unjust Land.* One cannot help observing many marvellous Qualities and Effects in the Fire sent from Heaven to punish the *Egyptians*. 1. That it kept burning, though mixt with Rains and Hail; and, instead of being quenched by the Quantity of Rain which fell, as might be expected, it became the more violent for it, as if the Water nourished it, and helped to inflame it; not unlike, says *Calmet*, that Fire which fell from the Lord, and consumed the burnt Sacrifice, and licked up the Water in the Trench, which the Prophet *Elijah* had ordered to be poured upon the Altar, and the Wood in great Abundance, to make the Miracle more Glorious and Unquestionable, 1 Kings xviii. 39, 40. 2. That this Fire, Hail, &c. happened in *Egypt*, where such Storms were unusual, and spread over the whole Country, except the Land of *Goshen*,

whereas other Storms of Lightning and Hail generally reach but a little Way in Comparison, and fall within a small Compass. 3. It melted not the Hail with which it was mixed. *Philo* gives the same Account of the Lightnings, θεοὶ δὲ τῆς χαλαρῆς, κ. τ. λ. *Vulgo per Grandinem in tanta Naturæ repugnantia grassantia, tamen nec eam liquabant, nec ab ea extinguiebantur, sed eadem usque durantia, & sursum deorsum cursitantia, grandinem incolumem conservabant.* De Mose, lib. i. 4. The Lightning and Hail spared all the Cattle and Fruits of the *Israelites*, but destroyed both Man and Beast, and every Herb of the Field among the *Egyptians*. Lastly, It never burnt, or hurt any of those Beasts that were sent to plague the *Egyptians*, as if it had Sense and Reason to know and distinguish them. *Cappellus* objects against our Author for supposing that the Animals, which were sent in the former Plagues, still subsisted in *Egypt*; for, says he, before the sending of the Lightning and Hail, *Ranae, καρόμυα, & omnia animalcula prius in Ægyptios immissa pridem fuerant abducta & extincta.* Cens. in lib. Sap. Sol. i. e. the Frogs, and Flies, and such other Animals as infested the *Egyptians*, before the Hail, were gone and extinct, which indeed is agreeable to *Moses's* Account, Exod. viii. 11. 31. *Calmet* endeavours to account for this Difficulty two Ways. 1. That by *Beasts* are meant the Lice, which still might remain upon Man and Beast untouched by the Fire, there being no mention of their ceasing, or being destroyed, in the History of *Moses*, as there is of the Frogs and Flies. 2. That by *Fire*, may be meant those occasional Fires, which the *Egyptians* kindled to drive away the Flies, &c. which had no effect upon them, and seemed to have lost all Power over them. But, I think, the first Solution agrees not with the Account of the same Animals, ch. xix. 21. where they are described, by this Writer, to be such as *walked in the Flames*, which suits not with a diminutive and almost invisible Animalcule. Nor does the Second remove the Objection; for artificial Fires, or such as are usually made to disperse noxious Animals, seem not here spoken of, for the Context shews that Lightning is here meant, or the Fire of God from Heaven to take Vengeance upon the Ungodly. Instead of offering any forced Interpretation, I must ingenuously acknowledge that our Author, in this Particular, seems to have exceeded historical Truth, and to have used a rhetorical Exaggeration, to make God's Dealing with the *Egyptians* appear more terrible, which may be observed also in his Account of Manna, and the *Egyptian* Darkness, in the next Chapter, where many additional Circumstances are inserted purposely designed to raise Terror and Surprise, and to heighten the Description, which are not to be met with in the Account of *Moses*, or the *Psalmist*.

*Ibid.* *For the World fighteth for the Righteous.* This is true, whether applied to particular Persons, as *Moses*, *David*, &c. or to whole Nations. It is particularly visible in the History of the *Jewish* Nation, which may be considered



sidered as a Theocracy, and God their King and Leader: At different Times, he commands the several Elements in their Favour. The Air thunders, and his Arrows go abroad, to assist *Joshua*, the Conductor of his People; the Sun stands still to prolong their Victory; the Fire consumes *Korah* and his rebellious Accomplices; the Waters stand on a Heap to make a Way for his Chosen; the Earth at one time opens her Mouth for Vengeance, and at another, her Bosom for Mercy; *Egypt*, at his Command, becomes a Desolation, and *Goshen* another Paradise. This discretionary Power (if I may be allowed the Expression) in the Elements, that are vague and insensible, and a Sort of Wisdom to determine when, where, and how to act, and with what Degree of Violence to discharge themselves, is finely represented in the Original, *Job xxxviii. 36.* which, according to the late accurate Translation, runs thus, *Quis posuit in jactibus vagis sapientiam, aut quis dedit Phænomeno distinctam intelligentiam?* This fine Thought, perfectly agreeable to the Context, is wholly lost in our Version, nor do the LXX succeed better in their Translation, *τίς ἐδωκε γυναιξὶν ὑψίστου σοφίαν, ἢ πομπὴν ἐπισήμην.* *Grey's lib. Job. p. 272.* See also *Mercer in loc.*

Ver. 20. *Instead whereof thou feddest thine own People with Angel's Food.* Called also *Ambrosia*, γυνὴ ἀμβροσίας τροφῆς, ch. xix. 21. See Note on that Place. We are not hence to imagine, that Angels eat this Sort of Food, but it is so called, either to signify its Excellency above common Food, or because God gave them *Manna* from the Habitation of Angels; and thus the *Chaldee Paraphrase*, on *Psal. lxxviii.* understands it; or by the Ministry of Angels, an Instance of singular Honour, and special Dignity to the *Israelites* to be attended by such Messengers: On either, or all these Accounts, it is in the next Words, properly called, *Bread from Heaven*, and so it is styled *Exod. xvi. 4.* See *Theodoret* on *Psal. lxxviii. 25.* By *St. Paul* it is called, *Spiritual Meat*, *1 Cor. x. 3.* and in this Sense it is taken, by many of the Fathers, as an Emblem of God's Word, and by others, of the *Eucharist* in particular, whose saving Virtue the manner of Nourishment, by *Manna*, has been thought mystically to represent: For whereas *Manna* was, in Substance, very small, but yet gave great Strength and Vigour to the Body, it was a proper Image of the Power of spiritual Food, which being invisible, yet gives Life and Nourishment more truly and perfectly, than gross and solid Meats. And thus they interpret the Words of *Moses*, *Deut. viii. 3.* *Therefore he fed thee with Manna—that he might teach thee that Man liveth not by Bread alone, but by every Word that proceedeth out of the Mouth of the Lord doth Man live.*

*Ibid.* *And didst send them from Heaven Bread prepared without their Labour.* By Heaven we are not here to understand that very Place, where the great and glorious Presence of God is more immediately manifested; for 'tis certain, the *Manna* descended only from the Clouds, and therefore our Saviour tells the

*Jews*, *Moses gave you not that Bread from Heaven*, *John vi. 32.* [But this, I believe, was not spoken by our Blessed Saviour to that Intent, viz. lest the *Jews* should mistake in thinking that the *Manna* came from Heaven, whereas it came only from the Clouds; but the Meaning of it I take to be this: *The Bread which Moses gave you (formerly) was not the Heavenly Bread; but my Father (now) giveth you the Heavenly Bread, the true Heavenly Bread, of which Moses's Bread was only a Type.*] It is said to be Bread prepared without their Labour, because it fell every Night round about the Habitations of the *Israelites*, and was ready every Morning for their Use. Instead of Labour to subdue the Earth, and Rain to make it fruitful, God sent Showers of *Manna*, which supplied the Place of Corn, and was ready prepared for them. And this made their Ingratitude the greater, because they, at length, despised this heavenly Nourishment, which they were at no Labour or Expence about. Hence, or from its being thus always ready, says *De Muis*, and with him agrees *Dr. Hammond* (See *Comment. on Psal. lxxiii.*) it was called *Manna*, from the Hebrew Verb, מנח *Manah*, which signifies to prepare, or make ready. The common Etymology of *Manna* he condemns, as if it was so called from the *Israelites* doubting about, and examining, what it was; for though מן *Man*, in the *Chaldee* and *Syriac*, may have such a Sense, yet it has not in the Hebrew, which was the Language of the *Israelites*: And therefore he blames *Josephus*, who was a *Jew*, for so understanding and explaining it. The LXX use the same *Periphrasis*, and render τί ἐστὶ τῆτο; ἢ ὅς τις ἵδεναι τί ἐν, to which agrees our English Version of the Place.

*Ibid.* *Able to content every Man's Delight, and agreeing to every Taste.* *Dr. Grabe* thinks ἱκανοῦσα, as the common Editions have it, should be ἱκανοῦσα, habentem, which is confirmed by the old Latin Translations. *Proleg. tom. ult. cap. 4.* [Which is explained by the next Sentence, adapted to every Taste. Query, whether ἱκανοῦσα may not here signify Taste, Relish, as, I think, it does somewhere in *Job.*] The Jewish Doctors, from ancient Tradition, maintain, that *Manna* had in it all manner of pleasant and agreeable Tastes, according to Men's different Palates, and all the Relish that could be desired in any Food, being a complete Epitome of every thing nice and delicate. The *Syriac* renders it, *Panam omni dulcedine suaviorum, cunctisque saporibus jucundiorum.* But the Scripture does not seem to represent *Manna* as having any high Gout, nor have we any Hint from *Moses's* Writings of its being so variously delightful to the Palate, as the Author of this Book seems to suggest. See *Shuckford's Connec. vol. iii. p. 10.* This Notion of *Manna* accommodating itself in so great a Variety to the several Palates of those that eat it, is most probably a Rabbinical Conceit, lest the *Israelites* being confined to one sort of Food always of the same Taste, for so many Years together, should seem to be treated with Hardship. It plainly appears from the Books of *Exodus* and *Numbers*, that *Manna*, however delicious, was

but



but of one Taste, like Wafers made with Honey, *Exod. xvi. 31.* and it appears yet more fully from their bold and presumptuous Complaint about it, calling it in Scorn, *Dry Meat*, *Numb. xi. 16.* for which no Pretence or Ground can be conceived, if *Manna* had all that Variety of agreeable Tastes, which has been ascribed to it by some Jewish Writers. Or what Occasion was there for their still requiring *Βρώματα τὰς ψυχὰς αὐτῶν*, as the LXX render *Psal. lxxviii. 18.* Meat for their Souls, i. e. to feed their Fancies and Lusts, if this alone was so complete, as to include every Relish, and satisfy every Desire.

Ver. 21. *For thy Sustenance declared thy Sweetness unto thy Children.* i. e. The *Manna*, the Sustenance which thou providest for thy People, as it tasted when newly fallen like Honey, so was it both an Instance, and an Emblem of thy tender Love and Kindness for them. Some of the ancient Fathers read here, *Thy Substance*, instead of *thy Sustenance*, understanding by it the λόγος. Thus *Fulgentius*, *Substantiam enim tuam, & dulcedinem tuam quam in filios habes, ostendebas*, which is the very Reading of *St. Jerom's Bible*, as 'tis called, and urges this Passage to prove the *Consubstantiality* of the λόγος, who was that living Bread that came down from Heaven. *Arrian. Object. Discuf. Nazianz. Orat. 49.* and in this Sense *Philo* expounds *Manna*, calling it *τὸν πρῶτον λόγον*. *Huetius* also understands it in the same Manner, *Demonst. Evang. p. 624. Edit. Paris.* And it must be confessed that they are countenanced herein by the *Vulgate*, which renders, *Substantia enim tua dulcedinem tuam ostendebat*; and by the *Greek*, which reads, *ὑποτάσσας αὐτῷ*, and by the *Arabic Version*, which has, *Figura tua dulcedinem tuam præbuit liberis tuis*, thy Image communicated thy Sweetness to thy Children. The Commentators in general understand it in the first Sense, of that Nourishment which came down from Heaven, which was a repeated Evidence, and a Proof always new of God's Goodness to his Chosen. *Dr. Grabe* places *ἀποτάσσας* in the Text, to denote, I suppose, the manner of the falling, or dropping of the *Manna*.

*Ibid.* And serving to the Appetite of the Eater, tempered itself to every Man's liking. *τῇ δὲ τῷ πρῶτον φερόμενῃ ἐπιθυμίᾳ ὑπακούων, πρὸς ὃ τῆς ἐκείνου μελετησάτο.* *Calmet* says, that the literal rendering of the *Greek* is, "Obeying the Will of him that gave it," *De celui qui la donnoit*, it changed itself into that which every Man desired. *Comm. in loc.* [But this is quite wrong. Our Version is very good. *Calmet* seems not to have understood this Signification of *πρὸς φερόμενῃ.*] The joining of *ὑπακούων* to *ὑπότασσας*, or *ἀποτάσσας*, as *Grabe* has it, may seem harsh and unusual, but this is according to the *Attick Dialect*, which joins sometimes a feminine Substantive, and masculine Adjective. [*ὑπακούων* is not to be joined to *ὑπότασσας*, but agrees with *ἀφ' οὗ*, 20. The Place should be distinguished thus: *Ἀκούων ὑπότασσας* (*ἡμῶν δὲ ὑπότασσας—ὑπακούων*) τῇ δὲ τῷ—ὑπακούων, πρὸς, &c. This Author is not an *Attick* Writer, but a downright *Alexandrian*. He seems to

have been a much more pious and good Man, than a skilful Writer or good *Grecian*.] There may be three Senses given of this Place; the first Opinion is, that the *Manna* changed its Taste according to the Will and Desire of those that used it, which is the common Acceptation, and is the Sense of the *Syr.* and *Arab.* Versions, the latter reads, *Ejusque sapor immutabatur apud eum cui offerebatur, & subministrabat ei summum appetitum sui, in qualibuscunque saporibus exoptasset.* But this being mentioned in the foregoing Verse, seems needless to be repeated by the Author. The second Sense therefore is, that the Quantity of it served, or was according to the Appetite of the Eater, being ordered and appointed to be gathered by every Man according to his eating, and in Proportion to the Largeness of his Family. Or the Meaning may be, according to others, that the *Manna* suited itself only to the Appetite and Taste of every good and thankful Eater, but had none of that agreeable Variety in it to a wicked and profane One. And this is thought, by learned Men, to be the Meaning of *St. Austin*, where he says, *In primo populo unicuique Manna secundum propriam voluntatem in ore sapiebat*, *Epist. 118. i. e.* as *Mr. Mede* expounds it, the *Manna* was unto every Man's Taste, according unto his Will, or as he was inclined and disposed. *B. I. Disc. 46. Fagius in Num. c. xi. Lyra*, from Rabbinical Tradition says, That it had the Taste of any Sort of Fish or Fowl according to the Wish of him that eat it, but then with *St. Austin*, he restrains the Privilege of finding in the *Manna* the Taste of what they most loved to the Righteous, or God's faithful Servants only; with respect to all others it admitted of no Alteration, and some have asserted that to a wicked, as being a vitious Taste, it was quite insipid. The Reasoning of the same learned Father against *Manna* having all Sorts of Tastes indifferently to all is very strong: "To what Purpose did the *Israelites* murmur against God, and his Servant *Moses*, for want of Meat, and their Egyptian Food in the Wilderness? Might they not have found the Taste of what they wanted and desired in the *Manna*, if indeed it changed its Nature according to the Wish and Liking of the Eater?" And therefore he confines this miraculous Alteration to the Good and Obedient only. *Retractat. lib. ii. c. 9. & 20.* From this supposed Quality in the *Manna*, *Mr. Mede* runs the Parallel between it and the *Eucharist*, which may be considered as *Spiritual Manna*, that as there were unworthy Receivers of the *Manna* in the Wilderness, to whom the *Manna* was merely such, without any Alteration, so this acts differently upon the Souls of Men; in wicked ones, it produces no Change for the better, no Improvement or Addition of good Qualities, but upon the well-disposed it has most excellent Effects, administers great Comfort to them, and an inward Satisfaction, far beyond any sensible Sweetness, according as the Holy Spirit, which is the Dispenser of all Graces, sees it most needful for Men's spiritual Exigencies, either to strengthen them in their Weakness, or to enlighten



lighten them in their Doubts, or to forward their Progress in the Ways of Godliness, in *loc. citat.* Messieurs du Port Royal, have the same Reflexion. *Commet. in loc.*

Ver. 22, 23. *But Snow and Ice endured the Fire, and melted not, that they might know that Fire burning in the Hail, and sparkling [blazing] in the Rain, did destroy the Fruits of the Enemies — But this again did even forget his own Strength, that the Righteous might be nourished.* Manna is here called Snow and Ice, from its Likeness, says *Calmet*, to the hoar Frost, or Drops of Dew frozen, to which *Moses* compares it, *Exod. xvi. 14.* and from its soluble Quality of melting in the Sun, and turning to Water, as Snow and Ice does, hence called an icy kind of heavenly Meat, *ch. xix. 21. of a Nature apt to melt*, which the *Vulgate* renders, *Quæ facile dissolvatur sicut Glacies.* A Comparison is carried on here between the Effect of the Lightning mixed with Hail upon the Fruits of the *Egyptians*, and that of the Fire upon the Manna of the *Israelites*; that as the former burnt intensely and unusually for the Destruction of their Trees and Plants, so the latter lost, or, as the Author elegantly expresses it, purposely forgot its own Strength, for the others Preservation and Nourishment. Hence the *Israelites* might easily perceive the Hand of God against their Enemies, and his Interposition in their Favour, when Lightning, even under all the Disadvantage of being mixed with Rain and Hail, could occasion such a Desolation, as if its Violence was rather increased than abated, and the Fire itself, though in its full Strength, could not dissolve the Food appointed for their Nourishment, though naturally disposed to melt.

[Ver. 23. *Again.* Πάλιν, on the contrary, on the other side, as ἀναπαλιν is rightly translated, *ch. xix. 21.* See upon *xiii. 8.* It would have been clearer thus: Ταῦτα (for τὸ το) ὃ πάλιν, ἵνα τραφῶσι δίκαιοι, τῆς ἰδίας ἐπιλέλησαι (not ἐπιλέλησαι, which the Construction will not admit of) δυνάμει. Which is the Reading of the best Copies, except ταῦτα for τὸ το. Translated thus — of the Enemies; and that the same Fire, on the other hand, did forget even its own Power, &c.]

Ver. 24. *For the Creature that serveth thee, who art the Maker, increaseth his Strength against the unrighteous for their Punishment, and abateh his Strength for the Benefit of such as put their Trust in thee.* [Ἐπιείκειται καὶ ἀνιέται: properly, is stretched and slackened. The Metaphor is taken from the Strings of a Musical Instrument or Bow, which are screwed up, or let down, as there is Occasion.] The Author here speaks of the same Creature which he treated of in the precedent Verses, viz. the Element of Fire, which was fiercer and more powerful in the Water, when it was ordered to afflict the *Egyptians*, but abated its Fury to contribute to the Good and Advantage of the *Israelites*. This Obedience of Fire to the Will of its Maker, appeared remarkably in the double Effect of the fiery Furnace, which lost its Power over those Saints that were in it to such a Degree, that even the Smell of the Fire had not passed upon them; and yet, through its

exceeding Fierceness, flew those that were without it, as if it acted where it was not, increasing its Strength against the unrighteous for their Punishment and abating its Strength for the Benefit of such as put their Trust in God, *Dan. iii.* We may also understand this Place in a larger Sense, viz. that the whole Creation serveth its Maker, and thus *Alcis* is used, *Rom. viii. 22.* In which Sense it should be likewise taken in the three foregoing Verses; see *Wall in loc.* And indeed some of the old Versions plainly favour this general Meaning; the *Syriac* in particular renders here, *Tibi enim tota Creatura tua subiecta est*; and *St. Jerom's Bible*, as it is called, renders, *Omnia transfigurata gratiæ tuæ deserviebant*, which *Coverdale's Translation* follows. And indeed the Observation is equally true of the other Elements, all of which do wait upon God, and follow his Appointment, either for Mercy or Judgment; and when the Creatures do exceed their natural Powers, 'tis by the Will and particular Direction of their Creator, for inanimate Beings have certain fixed and general Laws of their Creation, which of themselves they cannot pass. Hence the *Psalmist* speaking of those Things which are often the Causes of great Calamities in the World, says, *Fire and Hail, Snow and Vapours, Winds and Storms fulfil his Word, or Pleasure*, *Psal. cxlviii. 8.* *Philo*, in his Description of the *Egyptian Plagues*, observes of all the Elements, what our Author does of Fire in particular, that God makes use of them occasionally, as his Instruments, to destroy a guilty Land; at one time he employs them for the Production of Things, or the Preservation of Persons; and at another, the very same are made Scourges and Messengers of Vengeance, *Τὰ στοιχεῖα τῷ πονηρῷ, καὶ τῷ ὀδυνῷ, καὶ αἰνῷ, καὶ πῦρ ἐπιλέλειται, κ. τ. λ. Elementa universi, Terra, Aqua, Aer, Ignis, ex quibus mundus constat, de sententia Dei opt. max. infesta ad evastandam impiorum regionem inferuntur, imperium, potentiamque qua Deus utitur, ostendentia; qui quidem eadem salutariter ad rerum procreationem temperet, Et cum commodum est, ad impiorum exitium convertat.* *De Vita Moysis, lib. i.*

Ver. 25. *Therefore even then was it altered into all Fashions, and was obedient to thy Grace that nourisheth all things, according to the Desire of them that had need.* i. e. says *Calmet*, the Fire to obey the Orders of its Maker, and to fulfil the Designs of his Providence, was variously altered, and acted not only in a different, but contrary manner. It destroyed the Fruits of the *Egyptians*, and it spared those of the *Hebrews*, in *Egypt*; it burnt even in Water; in the Wilderness it seemed to have little or no Power at all, and affected not even that which was of a Nature apt to melt. And herein it acted in Obedience to God's Mercy, for so he understands *Grace* here, as *Vatablus* likewise does, rendering here *benignitati tuæ*, which, as it takes care of Mankind in general, so in particular it provides for the Wants and Necessities of the good and faithful, according as they ask or need it, *πρὸς τὴν τῶν δεομένων θέλησιν, pro indigentium voto*, says the *Arabic*. *Junius* renders very unaccountably, *ad voluptatem gentium*; but, undoubtedly, this is a Mistake,



Mistake, the true Reading there I suppose was, but corrupted by some Accident, *ad voluntatem indigentium*. According to other Expositors, Manna is here meant, which was altered into all Fashions or Tastes, agreeably to the Desire of the Users in general, or such in particular who eat it with Faith and Thanksgiving, in which Sense they understand τὸν δωμένον in the Original, and the marginal Reading seems to favour it. This, though exactly the Sense of the 20th and 21st Verses, and so seemingly not necessary to be repeated here, is yet countenanced by the ancient Versions, particularly the *Arabic*, which reads, *Propterea donum tuum in rem quamlibet tunc immutabatur, & in omni cibo pro indigentium voto subserviebat*. It is observable, first, that δωρεά, in the Original, is here rendered Gift, and not Grace, as our Translators have it, i. e. the Gift of Manna, called here, by way of Excellence, and its extensive Use, πάντοτε. 2dly, 'Tis probable, that the *Syriac* and *Arabic* Interpreters followed different Copies from the present, or however differently pointed, for both of them have δωρεά in the Nominative Case. If this, indeed, was the true Reading, it would answer to the same Thought and Expression a little above, § 21. Τῇ ἐπιθυμίᾳ ὑπηρεσίων, but there seems no Necessity to alter the present Reading of the *Greek*, for αἰεὶς may be understood of Fire, and δωρεά of Manna. And Fire, which in one Verse serveth the Maker, may, in another, be properly enough said to be subservient to the Gift, i. e. to the Preparation of the Manna, by God's Appointment, and be seemingly altered in its Qualities with regard to it. I take the whole from the 19th Verse to the End of the Chapter, to be one continued Reflexion on the Circumstance mentioned § 27. that Manna endured the Fire in all Methods of preparing and dressing it by Fire, and yet evaporated with the Heat of the Morning Sun only: If indeed, by αἰεὶς, § 24. we understand the Creation, we may then take this Place too in a more general Sense, viz. that, because the *Egyptians*, *Greeks*, and other Nations had a Conceit that there were some Gods of the Earth, others of the Air, some that ruled the Fire, and others the Water, therefore the true God altered the Elements into all Fashions; for he chastised the *Egyptians*, not only by the Earth, and the Sea, but the Air thundered, and his Lightnings went abroad, that so he might teach them, that he was the sovereign Ruler of the Elements, and that the God of *Israel*, was the supreme Lord of universal Nature.

[Ibid. Τῇ πανόλκῳ σου δωρεᾷ ὑπηρεσίων. The ancient Versions, and the Sense suggest a much better Reading, Διὰ τὸτο καὶ πότε εἰς πάντα μεταλλευσμένη (or μεταποιεμένη) ἡ πανόλκῳ σου δωρεᾷ ὑπηρετεῖ, πρὸς τὴν, &c. Therefore then also thy all nourishing Gift (Manna) was altered into all Fashions, and was subservient, according to the Desire of those who had need.]

Ver. 26. That thy Children might know that it is not the growing of Fruits that nourisheth Man: but that it is thy Word, which preserveth them that put their Trust in thee. Αἱ γενέσεις, the Creations, i. e. the Creatures.] Thy People *Israel* were hereby taught, that it was not the

Nature of Manna, as such, that sustained them, but thy Will, or Command, or Blessing, which, by that Provision, supported them; for of itself it was of no Subsistence or Continuance, but was corrupted and good for nothing, if kept contrary to God's Command. It was the Observance, therefore, of God's Word, or Direction in all its Particulars, and his Blessing upon the Supply, that was their Support so long in the Wilderness. Or it may be taken in the same Sense with *Deut. viii. 3.* which *Calmet* thinks it an Imitation of, viz. that as Man doth not live by Bread alone, so neither does he by any of the Sorts of the Fruits of the Earth only (for so I understand γενέσεις τῶν καρπῶν) but by any thing else that God is pleased to appoint for his Nourishment, and will favour with his Blessing. For though the Fields should yield no Meat, and the Earth prove barren and unfruitful, yet can the Lord supply Means, as he did Manna to his chosen, to feed such as rely and depend upon him. The Question, therefore, of the murmuring *Israelites*, Can God prepare a Table in the Wilderness, or can he give Bread, or provide Flesh for his people? *Psal. lxxviii. 20, 21.* was a wicked Distrust of God's Power and Providence. The Comment of *Messieurs du Port Royal* raises another very useful Reflexion from hence, viz. not to depend on any of the Creatures, but, to rely upon God alone, who uses and governs them, who is so intimately concerned in every material Occurrence, that it is neither Marriage that introduces Persons into the World, nor Bread that nourishes them, nor Diseases that kill them, nor Medicines that cure them, i. e. indently, and of themselves, but the Order and Will of God only, who makes use of the Creatures, in all these Cases, as his Instruments, to fulfil his own wise Decrees and Purposes. *Comm. in loc.*

Ver. 28. That it might be known that we must prevent the Sun to give thee Thanks, and at the Day-spring pray unto thee.] The literal Meaning of this, as it relates to the Manna, is, that such among the *Israelites* as would gather this Blessing vouchsafed them from Heaven, were obliged to prevent the Sun rising, lest the Heat of it should melt it; but there is, likewise, a beautiful Moral couched under it, and a very useful Reflexion to be drawn from it. For did Almighty God give the *Israelites*, in his Mercy, every Night a Supply of Manna, and appoint it to be gathered very early for the Comfort and Sustainance of the whole Day, and were they, in Duty and Gratitude, obliged to be as early in their Return of Thanks, and to shew forth his Glory before the Sun rising? we are hence instructed to be each Morning as early at our Devotions, to bless God, as for his other Benefits, so particularly for the Safety of the Night past, and the sweet Refreshment of beloved Sleep, and with the *Psalmist*, Prevent the Night Watches to be occupied in God's Word. But there is another very obvious Reflexion to be made from God's appointing a particular Time to gather his Manna, viz. That God's Blessings are not at our Election, or in our Choice to have them when we will, but then only may we hope to find them, when



we seek for them at the Time and in the Manner which he appoints. His Manna is ready, if we come in time, but, if we delay till the Sun arises, it melteth away and is gone.—God is very gracious, he giveth to all a gathering Time, and expecteth we should use it as he intendeth; he would have the Morning of our Lives devoted to his Service, that so we may eat the Labour of our Hands, when the Evening of Age cometh. See Bishop Babington on Exodus. God's forbidding Manna to be kept till the next Morning, had also this useful Design or Meaning under it, to teach the Jews not to extend their Care of necessary Supplies beyond the present Day, but to leave the Provision for the Morrow to the divine Providence.

Ver. 29. *For the Hope of the unthankful shall melt away as the Winter's hoar Frost, and shall run away as unprofitable Water.*] i. e. Such careless Israelites as deferred gathering the Manna before Sun-rising, found it melted away as the hoar Frost, and to be as useless, as corrupted Water. This Comparison is used here rather than any other, because Manna in Scripture is likened to it, *Exod. xvi. 14.* which it resembled not only in Appearance, but in its short Duration. And such other ungrateful Persons as are unmindful of God's Favours, or are in no Concern or haste to return Thanks for them, will see their Hopes vanish in like manner. For though God gives his Blessings with great Readiness, yet it is only to the humble, he loves a grateful Receiver, and would have us acknowledge his Mercies, in order that he may continue them to us, or increase them in some greater Degree and Proportion.

## CHAP. XVII.

### THE ARGUMENT.

**A** Further Account of the Egyptian Plagues for their ill Usage of the Israelites, particularly the thick Darkness which was spread over all the Land of Egypt for three Days, excepting the Land of Goshen, where the Israelites were, which enjoyed the Blessing of Light as usual.—A Description of the Terrors of an evil Conscience, that the Egyptians were continually haunted with imaginary Spectres and Apparitions, and had no inward Quiet, from an Apprehension of Danger, and Mischief from hissing Serpents, and fierce Beasts, which seemingly passed before them.

Ver. 1. *For great are thy Judgments, and cannot be expressed: Therefore unnurtured Souls have erred.*] i. e. For want of knowing and considering them, they have erred and miscarried; for the Knowledge of them keeps Men in their Duty. According to Calmet the Meaning is, "Dreadful are the Judgments which thou pourest out upon the Wicked that oppose thy Will." The History of the Egyptian Plagues manifestly evinces this, and therefore that People were greatly mistaken, when, by offending God, and injuring his chosen People, they exposed themselves to them, and brought the Fierceness of his Wrath upon them. Coverdale's, and the other ancient English Versions render, *Therefore Men do erre that wyl not be*

*reformed with thy Wysdom.* And the Marginal Reading is to the same Effect.

Ver. 2. *For when unrighteous Men thought to oppress the holy Nation, they being shut up in their Houses, the Prisoners of Darkness.*] This Plague of Darkness is mentioned first, *Psal. cv. 28.* where the rest are enumerated, though the ninth in order, according to the Mosaiical Account, where the Succession of them is strictly preserved, as carrying in it, says *De Muis*, a greater Degree of Terror than any of the rest, as it startled and awaked their guilty Consciences, and filled their Minds with Melancholy and Despair. This Darkness was purposely sent at a time when it might be most perceived, some time after the Close of the Night, about Sun-rising. This is intimated, *Exod. x. 23.* where the LXX read, *Ὁν ἐξάνεσθ' ἰδεῖς ἐν τῇς κοίτης αὐτῶν τρεῖς ἡμέρας*, i. e. no body rose from his Bed for three Days, as if it had been a continued Night all that time, which our Translators do not fully explain, when they render *καὶ τὴν* by *Place*. And the like seems intended here by *ἐκείνῳ*, *καταλειθεῖς ἀπόφους*. The Chaldee Paraphrase on the Passage above, fixes the precise Time when the Darkness commenced, *Erunt tenebrae super terram Egypti in aurora, at recedent prius tenebrae noctis.* Philo's Account is more particular and circumstantial, *λαμπρῶς ἡμέρας ὄντος, ἐξαπινάως ἀνάχεται σκότος*, κ. τ. λ. "When the Day was bright and clear, on a sudden came a thick Darkness, occasioned, perhaps, by an Eclipse of the Sun, which lasted longer than usual, or by a Collection of very dark Clouds, which, by their Closeness and Thickness, hindered the Rays of the Sun from breaking out, so that the Day differed nothing from the Night—or rather it might seem to be a continued Night, for the Space of three usual Days and Nights, insomuch that the People durst not rise from their Beds, and such as upon any Necessity were called abroad, like blind Persons, taking hold of the Wall, or something else for their Support, they, with Difficulty, found their way out." *De Mose*, lib. i.

*Ibid.* And fettered with the Bonds of a long Night.] It might well seem to be a very long Night from the unusual Time of its Continuance. A Darkness of three Days, without any Intermission, exceeds any Account in profane History, upon the most extraordinary Occasion. Tully, indeed, speaks of a Darkness somewhat resembling this in Sicily, occasioned by very extraordinary Eruptions of Mount *Aetna*; he tells us, it lasted two whole Days, and that it was so gross and thick, that *nemo hominem homo agnosceret.* *De Nat. Deor.* lib. ii. The Metaphor of Bonds and Fetters applied to Darkness, is not improper, as it incapacitates Men from stirring and acting, nor is it unusual either in profane or sacred Writings. Thus *Isaiab lxi. 1.* The opening of the Prison to them that are bound, is by St. Luke, who quotes that Prophecy, rendered *τυφλοῖς ἀνάχεται*, recovering of Sight to the blind, *Luke iv. 18.* So again, *Isaiab xlii. 7.* The opening the Eyes of the blind, is immediately after explained, by bringing out the Prisoners from the Prison, *ἐκ δεσμῶν*, and them that sit in Darkness out of the Prison-house,



house, which this Passage of our Author resembles, especially in the Version of the LXX. We meet also with the like Expression, 2 Pet. ii. 4. where, speaking of the fallen Angels, the Apostle says, God delivered them into Chains of Darkness. See also Jude 6.

Ibid. Lay (there) exiled from the eternal Providence.] According to the fixed and established Order of Nature, the Sun each Day enlightens the World, but, at this time, that Order seemed to be reversed, at least with respect to Egypt, where the Sun shone not, or was not visible for a long time, and one tedious continued Night succeeded in its Place, so that they were deprived of Light and Heat, the chief Benefits and Blessings of God's Providence, which, indeed, are common to all Mankind, and their seasonable Influence is equally shed upon the just and the unjust. 'Tis a figurative Expression, and, by a Metonymy, the Cause is put for the Effect. Coverdale renders, Shut under the Rose, thinking to escape the everlasting Wysedome, as if the Meaning was, that, conscious of their Wickedness, they fled from God's Providence, and concealed and hid themselves, hoping to escape the divine Notice, which seems to be the Sense likewise of the Geneva Version, and has indeed some countenance from the Beginning of Verse the fourth.

Ver. 3. For while they supposed to lie hid in their secret Sins, they were scattered under a dark Veil of Forgetfulness.] This may either mean, that as they committed κρυφαῖα ἀμαρτήματα, Sins of Darkness, or secret Wickedness, under the dark Veil of Night and Secrecy, so were they, in return, punished with this gross Darkness: Or the Meaning may be, that they supposed and hoped their secret Sins committed in the dark, and under the Cover of Night, would have laid concealed, and buried, as it were, in Oblivion; for so I chuse to understand the Place, induced hereto by the Authority of the Arabic Version, which reads, Quod in occultis perpetrarunt, oblivionis velamine lucis experte latitatum arbitrati; and Junius renders in like manner. Our Version seems faulty here, as it is in many Parts of this Chapter; the true rendering seems to be, "While they thought or flattered themselves, that they lay hid in their secret Sins, under a dark Veil of Forgetfulness, ἐσκοτίσθησαν, they themselves were darkened, or overtaken with this Plague of Darkness." For I think this to be the true Reading, instead of ἐσκορπίσθησαν, as the common Editions have it; and I have the Pleasure to find this Conjecture confirmed by the Alexandrian Copy, and from thence Dr. Græbe thus points the Greek, Λαθάνειν ὅτι ποιῶντες ἐπὶ κρυφαῖοις ἀμαρτήμασιν ἀφ' ἑσθ' λήθης παρακαλύμματι, ἐσκοτίσθησαν, δαμνόμενοι δεινῶς. But in either Sense, the Sin is clearly discerned and exemplified in the Punishment. The Observation of St. Austin too is very just, whether we understand it of the Egyptian, or moral Darkness, Spargit Deus panales cecitates super illicitas cupiditates. Aug. Confess.

Ibid. Being horribly astonished, and troubled with (strange) Apparitions.] But what was more terrible than Darkness, or rather increased the Terrors of it, was, that they were haunted and

tormented with monstrous Spectres, and frightful Apparitions. Commentators differ about these Spectres, whether they were real, or only the Effects of a disturbed Imagination; those that suppose the former, say, they were either the Ghosts of the Hebrew Infants which they drowned in the River, or of their own departed Friends and Relations that died by some of the former Plagues, or lastly, the Forms of some of their Deities, which appeared to them in different Shapes. See Calmet in loc. But these are mere Conjectures, nor is it of any great Moment to determine them. The Psalmist seems to suppose them real, for 'tis observable, Psal. lxxviii. 50. that instead of the Plague of Darkness which he there omits, he lays great Stress upon God's sending evil Angels among them, as if the Furiousefness of his Wrath, Anger, and Displeasure, was chiefly shewn in this particular, which is the learned Lightfoot's Opinion, and that it had more Effect upon Pharaoh than all the foregoing Plagues. If, indeed, these were real, it may seem a just Judgment of God, and, agreeable to his usual Proceedings, to punish the Egyptians by such evil Angels as they, perhaps, had made the Objects of their Worship, or their Magicians, in their Enchantments, had had Recourse to. The Writer of the Book of Ecclesiasticus intimates, as if God, for the Punishment of the wicked, sometimes makes use of Cacodæmons, as his Instruments of Vengeance, for so many Interpreters understand his Words, There be Spirits that are created for Vengeance, which, in their Fury, lay on sore Strokes; in the time of Destruction they pour out their Force, and appease the Wrath of him that made them, ch. xxxix. 28. This was likewise the Opinion of some of the ancient Heathens; thus Plutarch, An illud verius est, quod a quibusdam Romanis dicitur, & Chrysippus opinatur, dæmonia quædam mala circuire, quibus Dii quasi carnificibus & scelerum ultoribus adversus injustos & impios utuntur? Plut. in Problemat.

Ver. 4. But Noises (as of Waters) falling down, sounded about them.] Ἦχοι καὶ ἀράωνες, by which we may either understand great and terrible Noises, for so the Comparison, which is included in the Parenthesis, as not being in the Original, is frequently understood. Ezek. xliii. 2. Rev. i. 15.—xiv. 2.—xix. 6. Or screaming and ill-boding Noises may be meant, which, probably, is the Meaning of Vox Maledictionis, in the Syriac Version of this Place. [He either found in his Copy καλέας, imprecationis, or some Participle from the Verb καλεᾶσθαι, imprecor; or else he mistook it for such.] Or lastly, that they were frightened even at the Sound of their own Voices, for so the Arabic renders, Proprie ipsorum voces continuo cum strepitu conjunctæ perterrebant eos.

Ibid. And sad Visions appeared unto them with heavy Countenances.] Φασμάτα ἀμείδ' τοῖς καλῇ προσώποις ἐνεφανίσθη. Does not this seem to be Tautology? For what are καλῇ φασμάτα, or sad Visions, but Visions with sad or heavy Countenances? The Arabic Interpreters, as if sensible of this, render, Phantasmata nequaquam bilaria eum, cujus tristis erat vultus, consumebant, applying the Words to the Egyptians themselves, that they, through Fright, had heavy



or melancholy and dejected Countenances, [They read, *Φαλασμα αμειδι τον καλυφα προσωπου* or *προσωπου*. And instead of *εισφαινετο*, which is rendered *consumebant*, they seem to have found or made something from the Verb *εισφαινω*.] The *Vulgate* reads in like manner, *Personae tristes illis apparentes pavorem illis praestabant*. *Calmet* understands it in the same Sense, *Ils voyoient paroître des spectres affreux, qui les remplissoient encore d'epouvante*. *Badwell's* reading of the Greek, *Φαλασμα αμειδι τοις καλυφαι προσωποις εισφαινετο*, seems preferable to that in the common Editions, is clearer, and may suit either Sense. *Comm. in loc.* [Tois, I think, cannot stand here (it is the Reading of *Aldus's* Edition) unless *αυτων* is to be understood.]

Ver. 5. *No Power of the Fire might give them Light, neither could the bright Flames of the Stars endure to lighten that horrible Night.* i. e. The Darkness was so thick, that they could not see one another, nor attempt any Business for want of the necessary Help from Fire, Candle, and the other usual Means to convey Light, which, upon this Occasion, were useless, and lost their Power: For the Darkness which encompassed *Egypt*, was not like the common and ordinary Darkness, which disappears at the Approach of the Sun; this began about that time, and hindered its shining, and was so gross with Fogs and Vapours, that it extinguished the Light of the heavenly Bodies, which were not to be discerned in the midst of it. *Philo's* Account agrees with our Author's, and is equally as surprizing and extraordinary, *Και το χειμωδον πυρος το φως, κ. τ. λ. Ignis quo utimur quotidie, vel aere turbato extinguebatur, vel vincebatur a crassissimis tenebris — videndi sensu adempto, ceterorum nullus erat usus; nam nec loqui, nec audire, nec cibis frui licebat, sed triduo illo vehementer fame cruciabantur, nulli vacantes sensui.* *De vita Mosi*, lib. i. The Hebrew expresses the Greatness of this Darkness by a remarkable Pleonasm, calling it *Darkness of Obscurity*; but the Exaggeration of the LXX is still more observable, who describe it by three Words immediately following one another in the same Verse, *σκοτος, γνόφος, θυελλα*, Darkness, thick Obscurity, tempestuous Darkness: If then the Force of the Sun could not penetrate or overcome that Darkness, much less can we imagine the feeble Light of the Stars to have any Effect upon it, which were naturally either lost as it were in that thick Medium, or, by God's Appointment, they might withdraw their Shining; for even these in their Courses attend upon, and fulfil the Will of their Creator, *Judg. v. 20*. Thus *Job xxxviii. 15*. it is said in general, that from the Wicked their Light is withdrawn, and the same Reflexion occurs often in this ancient Writer, but in ch. ix. 7. he particularly mentions, among the Judgments of God, the withdrawing of the Light of the Stars, *He commandeth the Sun, and it riseth not, and sealeth up the Stars*; a Metaphor inexpressibly Beautiful, which, though spoken upon another Occasion, and thought to allude to a much more ancient Piece of History (see *Bishop Sherlock's Discours. II.*) is very applicable to the Egyptian Darkness; when, to pursue the

Metaphor, God sealed up the Firmament with the Signer of the Almighty, and rendered its Glories invisible for a determined Time. But, if the Egyptians had really no Light, it may be asked, How they could then discern the Apparitions and Spectres, which are mentioned in the preceding Verses? To this, *Calmet* answers, That it was by Means of those sudden Flashes, which sometimes darted upon them, and are described in the next Verse.

Ver. 6. *Only there appeared unto them a Fire kindled of itself very dreadful.* [*Διεφαινετο η αυτοις μονον αυτοματη πυρ φος πληρης.* The usual Sense given of this Place is, that they had no other Light but what was occasioned by sudden Flashes of Lightning, which added greatly to their Terror, for that faint Light served to make the Apparitions visible to them, though nothing else could be distinguished to any Purpose. Or the Meaning may rather be, and the Words of the Original seem to favour it, and the Sense likewise is improved by it, that sudden Flashes of Fire or Lightning appeared to the Egyptians only, and not to the Israelites, who were free from this Darkness, and the surprizing Phænomena attending it. See *21.* where the like is said of the Darkness, that over them only was spread an heavy Night. In this Sense, *Junius* understands the Words, who renders *apparebat ipsis solum pyra timore plena, &c.* There seems to be the like Mistake in our Version, *Philip. i. 27.* *Only let your Conversation be such*, where the rendering would be better, *Let your Conversation be only such, as becometh the Gospel of Christ*. But besides this Sense, that the Fire appeared *μονον αυτοις*, to the Egyptians only, there is another Sense of the Words, which will very well suit with the Context, and I am inclined to prefer, *viz.* that this Fire was in Appearance only, *μονον διεφαινετο*, was not real, but imaginary, arising from, and suggested by their Fears; which is the rendering of the *Bishops Bible*, *a Blaze of Fire on a sudden appeared only*. *Μονον*, taken in either of these Senses, is preferable to that in our Version; but the latter Sense I like best, for I think this, and what follows, to be not so much a Description of any real Incident, as of Fear, arising from the Apprehensions of a bad Conscience, which suggested imaginary Noises and Apparitions; or may we not understand, in a metaphorical Sense, by *αυτοματη πυρ φος πληρης*, an alarmed Conscience itself, which accuses, condemns, and punishes? And *πυρ* here used, comes nearer this Sense, and is more proper than *φως*, inasmuch as it signifies both Fire and Fuel; and where it is *αυτοματη*, self-raised, self-kindled, it expresses more still, something like that of our Saviour, a Fire that is not quenched; which is very applicable also to an evil Conscience. [*Μονον διεφαινετο* is not the Position of the Words in the Greek, but *Διεφαινετο η αυτοις μονον αυτοματη πυρ*. But if the Author had intended this Sense, in Appearance only, he would, indeed, have placed *μονον* before the Verb; but then he would not have made use of the Word *Διεφαινετο*, which expresseth too much for that Sense. *Μονον*, in this Place, signifies nothing but. I think you are



are mistaken as to the Passage in *Phil.* i. 27. For *μόνον*, in the Beginning of a Sentence, has a very different Signification from what belongs to it in the Middle of one. So *Galat.* ii. 10. *Μόνον, τῶν πτωχῶν ἵνα μνημονεύωμεν*, would be wrong translated by, that we should remember *the poor only*: Which would have been right, had it been placed in the Original, *τῶν πτωχῶν μόνον*. And so, in this Place to the *Philippians*; and again, *Galat.* v. 13. *Μόνον, μὴ τὴν ἐλευθερίαν, &c.* in all which Places, *μόνον* is Elliptical, and is designed to express something of great Consequence which follows, in Exception to something which went before. Thus in the Passage of *Galat.* v. 13. *For, Brethren, ye have been called unto Liberty: Μόνον, μὴ τὴν ἐλευθερίαν, &c.* only (take care of one thing) make not this Liberty an occasion to the Flesh, &c. And so it is in profane Writers too: *Arrian. Dissert. Epict.* ii. 1. *Μόνον, σκέψαι πᾶσα παλῆς τὴν σαυτῆ προαίρεσιν, &c.* *Jos. Ant. Jud.* lib. iv. c. 8. p. 159. Edit. *Huds.* *Μόνον, οἷς ὑμεῖς, &c.*] This whole Chapter is, undoubtedly, very obscure and difficult; and, if it be taken as a Description only of the State of the *Egyptians* during the Plague of Darkness, I think it inexplicable in several Places. But the Author seems to intend (taking Occasion from the literal Darkness in *Egypt*) a Description of spiritual Darkness, or the State of a bad Conscience in general, both invaded with real and reasonable Fears, and creating to itself imaginary Horrors: In this View, a new Light is struck out amidst the thick Darkness, though hitherto unobserved by any of the Interpreters; nor is the Exposition any ways harsh or forced; and if there was no Foundation in the Context for understanding it of spiritual Darkness, as there certainly is, *ῥ 11, 12, 13. 21.* yet such Allegories are very frequent, especially in *Origen* and *Philo*; nor does the Writer of this Book seem to be unacquainted with this manner of writing. See ch. xviii. 24. which is a remarkable Instance, among others, of the allegorical Strain.

*Ibid.* For being much terrified, they thought the Things which they saw to be worse than the Sight they saw not.] *Ἐνδεμαλίμφοι ὃ τὸ μὴ θεωρημῆς ἐκείνης ὄψεως, ἡγνῦτο χεῖρω τὰ βλέπομενα.* Our Version seems again faulty here, for is this any Argument of their being much terrified? Is it not natural for People to think those Dangers or Evils which they actually see and feel, worse than those which are at a Distance, and they see or know nothing at all of? People that are much terrified, are apt to imagine, and be afraid of every thing, not only what they actually see, but of their own Shadows and Phantoms of their own raising; they are apprehensive that something worse and worse will still happen to them, and frighten themselves most with imaginary Dangers: This seems to be a more just Description of Fear, which always forecasth grievous Things, *ῥ 11.* especially when it proceeds from a bad Conscience. I think therefore the present Rendering not right. The true Sense of the Place depends very much upon the right Pointing of the Greek. If the Comma be placed after *ὄψεως*, as all the Editions I have seen have it, though

otherwise, I suppose, in the Copy followed by our Translators; the Sense then seems to be, that being frightened at what they had only an accidental Glimpse of (for the Flashes were not strong enough, nor of a Continuance sufficient to view and discern Things distinctly) they were more afraid of the Objects that passed before them, and thought them worse than they were: And thus *Calmet*, *Etant epouvantez par ces fantomes qu'ils ne faisoient qu'entrevoir, tous ces objets leur en paroissent encore plus affroyables*; for a sudden Glimpse, a broken and interrupted View, instead of encouraging them, and raising their Spirits, rather increased their Terror, and made them imagine these Objects still more frightful. *Comm. in loc.* But, I think, this Passage would be clearer still, and the Sense more agreeable to the Context, if Conjecture might supply the Place of Authority here, in inserting *μὴ* before *βλεπόμενα*; thus, *ἡγνῦτο χεῖρω τὰ μὴ βλέπομενα*, which may either mean, that being so much terrified at that imaginary Appearance (*sc. πνεύματος*) which an evil Conscience had raised, they thought such inward unseen Disturbances, which passed within their own Breasts, and occasioned such dreadful Appearances before them, to be worse than any outward Calamities they had experienced; or, that being frightened at such a phantastical an Appearance, they apprehended that something more dreadful, though unseen and unknown, might still happen, and that worse was yet to come. Such an Apprehension is the natural and common Effect of Fear, which *Pliny* makes to be more grievous than actual and positive Pain, *Parvulum differt patiaris adversa, an expectes: nisi quod tamen est dolendi modus, non est timendi*, lib. viii. epist. 18. And *Servius* is of the same Opinion: *Expectatio pœnæ gravior est, nam in expectatione & præsens metus est, & dolor futurus; in ipsa autem pœna solus dolor.* *Ad Æneid.* vi. *ῥ 614.* [The Passage above, I believe, should be distinguished thus: *Ἐνδεμαλίμφοι ὃ, τῆς θεωρημῆς ἐκείνης ὄψεως ἡγνῦτο χεῖρω τὰ μὴ βλέπομενα.*]

Ver. 7. As for the Illusions of Art Magick they were put down.] [*Κατέκλιτο, they lay useless: i. e. were of no use to them.*] The Magicians themselves were not able to assist them, nor to remove this Plague of Darkness. Those Tricks and cheating Artifices, by which they used to impose upon the Simple, were, at this time, of no Service to themselves, or others. Learned Men are not generally agreed, whether the Wonders wrought by these Magicians were real Miracles, or in Appearance only: That they were only so in Appearance seems to have been the Sentiment of the ancient Jewish Synagogue, and of the Author of this Book, who calls them here *ἑμπαισμάτα*, or Illusions; which was also the Sentiment of *Josephus*, *Tertullian*, *Justin Martyr*, *St. Ambrose*, and *St. Jerom.* The Magicians of *Egypt* always tried, by their Enchantments, to imitate the real Miracles of *Moses*; but herein God sufficiently distinguished between them, that whereas he did indeed enable them to produce some Effects of a wonderful Nature, they were such as contributed rather to the Calamities of *Egypt*; nor did he give them Power afterwards to remove them; they



they turned the Waters into Blood, but they could not restore them; they brought up Frogs, but they could not take them away. That the chief of these Magicians were *Jannes* and *Jambres* is not only the Opinion of the Jews, but even of some of the Heathens. *Numenius*, a Pythagorean Philosopher, cited by *Eusebius*, lib. ix. *Prepar. Evang.* cap. 8. gives the following History of them, *Jannes & Jambres, scribæ rerum sacrarum Egyptii, quo tempore Egypti finibus ejecti Judæi sunt, clarruerunt; viri omnium judicio rerum magicarum scientia nemini concedentes: quippe ambo quidem communi Egyptiorum consensu delecti sunt, qui Museo duci Judæorum, cujus apud Deum potentissime preces erant, sese opponerent.* See *Usher's Annals ad Ann. Mund. 2513.* But we have a more sure Evidence; for *St. Paul* not only says, that *Jannes and Jambres resisted Moses*, 2 *Tim.* iii. 8. but that their Folly was manifest unto all Men, which is equivalent to the Expression which follows here, *Their vaunting in Wisdom was reprov'd with Disgrace.*

*Ibid.* *Their vaunting in Wisdom was reprov'd with Disgrace, for they that promised to drive away Terrors and Troubles from a sick Soul, were sick themselves of Fear worthy to be laughed at.* The wise Men of Egypt, and the Magicians are joined together, *Gen.* xli. 8. as if they were synonymous, and they are here deservedly ridiculed, because notwithstanding their Pretences to Wisdom from a Knowledge of the magical Art, and their Skill in the Mysteries of Divination, to foresee impending Evils, they could not prevent those Calamities which they pretended to remove from others, from falling upon themselves: For as in some of the former Plagues which befel the Egyptians, they could neither preserve their own Cattle from the Murrain, nor themselves from Boils; so neither could they at this time, by any Spell or Sorcery, by any Power over the Air, or Interest with the Demons in it, escape the common Calamity of the Darkness, and the Miseries attending it, which God (who had permitted these Magicians to exert an extraordinary Power in some few Instances, to shew the World, that the Devil, with his Permission, can do great Things) now equally involved them in, to convince *Pharaoh* and his People of their Vanity in trusting to such impotent Magicians, and of their Folly in opposing that God, who could controul and confound their Power when he pleased.

*Ver. 9.* *For though no terrible Thing did fear them, yet being scared with Beasts that passed by, and hissing of Serpents, they died for Fear.* The Verb *Fear* is here taken in a very unusual and improper Sense; one would imagine, according to our Version, that the Spectres and Apparitions were so bold and courageous, as not to be afraid of the Egyptians, instead of their being so much terrified by them, as is above represented: But should we allow that it here signifies *to make afraid*, as indeed it ought to be rendered, we may next enquire with what Propriety it can be said, that no terrible Thing did make them afraid, when it follows in the very next Words, that they were

so scared with Beasts and Hissings of Serpents, that they died for Fear. *Grotius*, sensible of this seeming Contradiction, expounds the Passage thus: "That if no such terrible Things, as sudden Flashes of Lightning, ghastly Spectres, and strange Apparitions had before affrighted them," *ἡ δὲ μὲν αὐτὴς τὰ ἐγγύθεν ἐφάει* (where *αὐτὴς*, he observes, has the Force of the Potential Mood, and *τὰ ἐγγύθεν* is the very Word used before, *ἡ δὲ* concerning the Apparitions, though other Copies read *τὰ ἐγγύθεν*, which is still more expressive [and, I think, absolutely necessary]) "yet were there other Plagues now to disquiet them; they were alarmed and persecuted with the Hissings of Serpents, and the Noise of furious Beasts, which so affected them, that they were ready to die through Fear." And in this Sense it must be confessed the Arabic Interpreters take it, who render, *Etsi nihil eos turbulentum territasset, vitiosarum tamen belluarum stipitationes* [reading probably *περὶ ὁδοῦ*, or *περὶ ὁδοῦ*] *& insectorum sibili propulsatos illos pavidosque profligarunt.* And *Junius* in like manner, *Etenim si nihil ipsos turbulentum conterruerat bestiarum transvectionibus, & reptilium sibilis peribant tremebundi.* *Calmet* too understands the Place of real Animals, "That God, at this time, permitted Serpents, whom they kept in their Houses, out of their very great Regard to them. *Herod.* lib. i. c. 36. *Ælian. Hist. Anim.* lib. xvii. c. 5. "Or which came into them, pressed with Hunger thro' the Tedioufness and long Continuance of the Darkness, to make Assaults upon them, and attempt to devour them, as a just Judgment for paying divine Honours to such venomous Animals." *Comm. in loc.* This Difficulty, or seeming Contradiction, may be also avoided, by supposing these Hissings of Serpents, and Noise of Beasts, to be the Effect only of a disturbed Imagination, and that these imaginary Dangers, suggested by an evil Conscience, though no terrible Thing, no real Animal, no dreadful Monster from without at this time actually frightened them, had such an Effect upon them, that they almost died through Fear and Apprehension. These Hissings of Serpents in particular, and the Noises of other Animals, God might permit to haunt them, as they had probably offended him by the Worship of them, and the Sense of their Guilt might now lie heavy upon their Consciences, who, in their sad State of Darkness, and under an Incapacity of attending to, or executing any Business, had little else to reflect upon but their own Wickedness. Such Descriptions of phantastical Visions and imaginary Frights, expressed in Terms of Nature and Reality, and exhibited, as it were, present to the Senses, are very common to be met with in the best Writers, especially the Poets. *Euripides* abounds with Representations of this sort, some beautiful Instances, of which *Longinus* produces from thence in his Chapter, *Dei Phantasiae, Sect. 15.* *Eurip. in Orest. passim.* Nor are lively Strokes of this Nature wanting in some celebrated Pieces of the modern Drama. But though such Representations are very common among the Poets, yet I cannot agree with *Cappellus*,



that this and some other Instances in this Chapter, are mere poetical Fictions, invented, at random, by this Writer, the Sport of his Fancy only; for there is nothing in this Description so improbable, but what may be supposed to have happened to a wicked and disturbed Imagination; or, why may we not, lastly, understand this Place metaphorically, of an evil Conscience itself; for *κνώδαλον*, which is here rendered *Beast*, signifies also an *Insect*, or *Reptile*, and particularly *Vermes*, a *Worm*; may it not then mean here the *σκώληξ* in *Isaiah*, and *Mark ix. that dieth not*? And why may not the Hissings of the Serpents allude to dreadful Apprehensions of Devils, and the Powers of Darkness? The Heathens themselves could describe the Remorses of the Mind by Animals gnawing the Liver, and by Furies armed with hissing Snakes, &c. and may not these be considered as Figures of the same Import in this Place?

Ver. 10. *They died for Fear.*] If we should understand these Words strictly, there are Instances in History to justify the Observation. *Vopiscus*, speaking of unusual Thunders, says, *Negari non potest eo tempore — tantum fuisse tonitruum, ut multi terrore ipso exanimati esse dicantur. In Vit. Cari.* And *Pliny*, *Crescente formidine mors sequebatur*, lib. vii. epist. 27. But I rather incline to think this an hyperbolical Expression, meaning only, that they were ready to die; not unlike that of *St. Luke*, *δοκίμους ὡς νεκροὺς*, xxi. 26. and that of *St. Matthew*, *ὡς νεκροὺς ὡσεὶ νεκροὶ ἐξήνυστο*, became as it were dead Men, ch. xxviii. 4. not that they actually died for Fear, but were ready to do so; like that too in *Homer*,

ὅπου ἡ ψυχὴν ἐκείνουσεν. Il. 22.

where an ancient Scholiast remarks, *παρεβόλι- κως, ἀλλ' ὅτι, ἐξέπνυσεν.*

*Ibid.* Denying that they saw the Air, which could of no side be avoided.] Here again our Translation seems faulty; for is this any Proof of their Consternation, that they denied they saw the Air? Is it not rather a Proof of their want of Veracity? That they denied they saw that, which they could not, as is here expressed, avoid seeing; but neither is this true, that they could not avoid seeing the Air: For do People in a Fright see it only, or best; or is a thick Darkness, the proper Medium to see the Air in, which at Mid-day we only discern by its Effects? Do not some learned Grammarians and Etymologists tell us, that it is called *ἀήρ*, quod aer per se sit obscurus; and does it not often signify Darkness, being synonymous to *ἀσπείρια*, especially in the Feminine Gender? which I take to be the Sense and true Acceptation of it in this Place; for I conceive the Author's Meaning to be, that they “durst not, or “would not look up to, or view the Darkness, “which could not escape their Notice, as it was “on all Sides of them.” Their inward Terrors were so great, that they refused to mind, or take notice of the outward Darkness which surrounded them, as bearing no Comparison, or Proportion to their Fright within. [The marginal Reading is better, *refusing to look upon.* He means, keeping their Eyes shut, for

fear of seeing the real *κνώδαλα*, which were in their Houses. To these real and natural *κνώδαλα* and *ἐκείνα*, are opposed the *τὰ τεράστια*, the prodigious Things, viz. the *ἤχοι*, *φασματά*, and *αὐτομάτη πνεύματα*.] The three following Verses manifestly relating to an evil Conscience, greatly confirm the Sense which I have before given of the Context.

Ver. 11. *For Wickedness condemned by her own Witness, is very timorous; and, being pressed with Conscience, always forecasteth grievous Things.*] Instead of *προέειλε*, Dr. Grabe puts *προέειλε*, *presumit*, which seems properer. *Badwell* agrees in this Conjecture. *Proleg. tom. cap. 4.* That this Observation is true, the History of the Lives of the most abandoned Sinners and most wicked Tyrants sufficiently evinces; for none have been more subject to this Fear, which an evil Conscience inwardly suggests, than such as have been placed seemingly in the Height of the greatest temporal Security, and for their Greatness and Tyranny have been most terrible to others; and yet even these have trembled in Company only with themselves, and have been observed to shun Retirement, as the Reproof of Conscience is then most sensible, and its Lashes most powerful and affecting. See the Account of *Dionysius* in particular, and the Conference between him and *Democles*, *Tuscul. Quæst. lib. v.* And in another Place the same Orator finely observes, *Sua quemque fraus, suum facinus, suum scelus, sua audacia de mente ac sanitate deturbat: Hæ sunt impiorum furia, hæ flammæ, hæ faces. In Pison.* And thus when *Orestes* was much disturbed and agonized for having killed his Mother, he acknowledges the Cause of his Misery to be, *ἡ συνείσκεις, ὅτι σιωπῶντα δὲν εἰργασ- μῶν*, i. e. Conscience torments me, for I am convinced I have done very wickedly, *Eurip. in Orest.* *Plutarch* supposes, that an evil Conscience erects, as it were, a Tribunal in a wicked Man's Breast; that Fright and Remorse are his Accusers which accuse him; his Judges which condemn him, and his Executioners which torment him. *De Tranquil. Animi.* See *Juv. Sat. xiii.* *Hor. Epist. lib. i. Epist. 1.* But nothing can exceed *Job's* Description of the Uneasiness of wicked Men, *The wicked Man travel- leth with Pain all his Days: and the Number of the Years of his Tyranny is uncertain;* for so *St. Jerom's Bible*, as 'tis called, reads this Sentence, *Et numerus annorum incertus est tyrannidis ejus. A dreadful Sound is in his Ears, in Prosperity the Destroyer shall come upon him: He believeth not that he shall return out of Dark- ness, and he is waited for of the Sword,* ch. xv. 20, 21, 22. But the Version before referred to, expresses the Terrors of the Wicked in this Place more strongly, by the Mention of his inward Disquiet, and a Suspicion of Dangers continually falling upon him: *Sonus terroris semper in auribus illius, & cum pax sit, ille semper insidias suspicatur; non credit quod reverti possit de tenebris ad lucem, circumspiciens undique gla- dium.* But the Power of an evil Conscience, and its dreadful Self-reflexion upon every Accident and Misfortune, is not any where so finely displayed, I think, as in the History of *Joseph's*



Joseph's Brethren, who, even at twenty-three Years Distance, could not help crying out, when they were imprisoned in Egypt, by Joseph, for Spies, *Truly we are guilty concerning our Brother—therefore is this Evil come upon us*, Gen. xlii. 21.

Ver. 12. *For Fear is nothing else but a betraying of the Succours which Reason offereth.* Fear in general, especially any great degree of it, for 'tis that which is here spoken of, may be defined to be a Despair of Succour, when a Man sees his Affairs desperate, and that Reason suggests no Expedients to him, nor Application or Industry any probable means of a Recovery, and emerging from a calamitous Estate, he abandons himself to Despondency, and sinks into the deepest Melancholy; but such a Fear as arises from an evil Conscience may be defined to be, a great Concern of the Soul, upon a View of its inward Guilt, and an Apprehension that it is deserted of all Succour, is sinking into Misery, in Despair of Help, and has not one comfortable Glimpse of Hope to speak any Peace to it. Upon which Account it has been wisely observed by some Moralists, that there is not such a true Coward as a wicked Man; that he is suspicious of every thing, but afraid of himself most: That Fear in general has the Effect ascribed to it by this Writer, that it betrays and indisposes a Man from following the wholesome Advice which Reason offers, that it often deprives Men of those Helps and Succours which might keep Dangers off, and hinders them from guarding against many Evils, which, by a prudent and timely Application, might have been prevented, seems evident, because Fear, when it is sudden and violent, suspends, as it were, for a Time, the Use of a Man's Reason, puts all Things in Confusion about him; he judges not truly of his present State, and has not Resolution or Forecast to amend it. The Historian, speaking of the Persians, who, in their Flight, flung away their Weapons of Defence, adds this very pertinent Observation, *Adeo timor ipsa auxilia reformidat*. And Seneca, mentioning how People's Senses are affected with Fear upon great Occasions, such as Earthquakes, &c. has the following Reflexion, *Quid mirum est animos inter dolorem & metum destitutos aberrasse?* But I cannot explain this in stronger Terms, than by setting down the Description of the Fear of the Canaanites, as it occurs Josh. v. 1. according to the Reading of the LXX, *Ἐτάκησαν αὐτῶν αἱ ψαῖνοι, καὶ κατεπλάγησαν, καὶ οὐκ ἦν ἐν αὐτοῖς φρόνησις οὐδεμία ὁπὸ προσώπου, κ. τ. λ.*

Ver. 13. *And the Expectation from within being less, counteth the Ignorance more than the Cause which bringeth the Torment.* This Passage is more obscure than any in this Chapter, or perhaps in the whole Book. None of the Oriental or English Versions give any Light to it, and the Commentators either pass it over, or leave it in the same Obscurity: Our Version in particular, is so far from delivering the true Sense, that it seems to have none at all. The common Reading of the Greek, in most Editions is, *Ἐνδοθεν ὅσα ἤτιον ἢ προσδοκία, πλείονα*

*λογίζεσθαι ἢ ἀγνοίαν τῆς παρεχόμενης τῶν βασάνων αἰτίας*, which our Translators manifestly follow, but give no determinate Sense of the Place: According to this Reading I take the Meaning to be, "The less the Expectation of Help, or Means to escape is, the more largely it computes, i. e. magnifies the Danger, or imagines greater Evils will happen through Ignorance of the Cause that brings the Uneasiness, or Torment." St. Chrysostom has a like Reflexion upon the Sufferings of Job, *Ignorantia causæ quæ pœnam affert, valde auget calamitatem*. —If we read τῇ ἀσχυνσίᾳ with the Alexandrian MS. instead of τῇ ἀγνοίᾳ, the Sense, perhaps, may be, "That the smallest Expectation or Apprehension arising from Fear, computes more largely upon future Dangers and Mischiefs than any just Reasoning, or well informed Understanding." Or thus: "That a less Degree of Fear reasons more, and determines better about the Nature and true Cause of any Calamity than a greater, which is attended with less Presence of Mind;" which seems to be Grotius's Sense of this Place, *Metus remissior patitur rationem discernere*, &c. According to Calmet the Sense is, "That a State between Hope and Fear, creates to itself more Uneasiness, because the Ignorance and Uncertainty the Mind is in of the Evils and Misfortunes which may happen, keep it in a continued State of Inquietude, and it is apt, in such a Situation, to imagine and represent Dangers to itself, other and greater than they really are, through Ignorance of its true State, and for want of knowing distinctly what to fear or rely on." *Comm. in loc.* St. Jerom's Bible, as 'tis called, renders, *Et dum ab intro minor est expectatio, majorem putat potentiam causæ*, &c. And Vatablus, *Magis reputat implacabilitatem causæ* (in the Margin, *Numinis*) *intus residens exigua spes*; i. e. The less Hope the Mind has, the greater does it suppose the Power to be of the Cause that inflicts the Evil, and, if it approaches to Despair, it represents the Deity as implacable. In the midst of such a Variety of Renderings and Interpretations, it will be a Pleasure if the Reader can find any Satisfaction, or some new Light to clear up the Obscurity.

[*Ibid.* This Verse, in the Translation and in the Original, is perfectly unintelligible. By a very small and usual Change, I think it may be restored, by reading ἡτρίων for ἡτίων, and τῇ ἀγνοίᾳ for τῇ ἀσυνίᾳ: And the Expectation of lesser Evils, when it is from within (i. e. when it cometh from the Mind or Imagination) looketh upon them as greater, through Ignorance of the Cause which occasioneth the Torment. *Ἐνδοθεν ὅσα, coming from within*, i. e. from the Imagination: In Opposition to *ἐξωθεν, from without*, or from external and sensible Objects. *Πλείονα* (which confirms the Plural ἡτρίων) is greater, of greater Weight and Consequence; which Signification of the Word is frequent. So *Matth. xii. 41. Καὶ ἰδοὺ, πλεῖον Ἰωνᾶ ὧδε. And behold, a greater than Jonas is here.* And *vi. 25. Οὐχὶ ἡ ψυχὴ πλεον ἐστὶ τῆς τροφῆς; Is not the Life of greater Value than the Meat which sustains that Life?* And so, I believe, it is to be



be understood in that noted Line of *Hesiod*, Πλέον ἡμῶν πᾶντος, half is greater (of greater worth; not more) than the whole.]

Ver. 14. But they sleeping the same Sleep that Night, which was indeed intolerable. Οἱ δὲ τὴν ἀδύατον ὄντως νύκτα. If νύξ ἀδύατος be indeed the true Reading, it must be either taken in the Sense of our Version, or in that of the Margin; in the former Sense the *Arabic* Interpreters understand it, rendering *cum occupasset eos nox illa quæ vere tolerari non potest*. And thus *impotens* is used, it must be confessed, as signifying intolerable, by good and approved classick Writers. *Tully* has *principatus impotentissimus* to the same Sense, *Philip. V.* and *Livy*, and *Quintilian* use it in like manner. Or νύξ ἀδύατος may be used in the Sense of the Margin, to signify a Night, wherein they could do nothing. To apply ἀδύατος in this manner, is a Metonymy not unusual; for as is no Impropriety to say *impotent Poverty*, meaning a Person that is poor, and by that means disabled; *impotent Sicknes*, or *Sleep*, meaning Persons in those Circumstances; so neither is there any Absurdity in applying it to Night or Death. In either of these Senses may ἀδύατος be understood, if it be the genuine Reading. But *Grotius* is of a different Opinion, and corrects the Place thus: Οἱ δὲ τὴν ἀδύτον νύκτα, κ. τ. λ. i. e. that impenetrable Night, meaning that thick and continued Darkness which the Sight could not penetrate. But if the Passage is thought still to want Emendation, and I might offer a Conjecture among others, I would read, τὴν ἀδανάαν ὄντως νύκτα, i. e. a Night truly infernal, which agrees well with the Context. 'Tis observable that the Author here mentions the *Egyptians* as sleeping, and sleeping the same Sleep; not that they were really so, for their Fears would not permit that, but because, like Persons asleep, they were in a like State of Darkness, could transact and execute nothing, and had like disturbed Fancies and wild Imaginations.

Ibid. Which came upon them out of the Bottom of inevitable Hell. Ἐξ ἀδύατος ἄδυ μυχῶν ἐπελθούσαν. 'Tis as difficult to say what ἀδύατος ἄδυ is in the Greek, as what inevitable Hell is in our Version. For are we to understand by Hell, the Place strictly so called, and by the Darkness which came out of the Bottom of it, the Darkness of Hell beneath, or utter Darkness, as the Scripture expresses it? This surely might have been better rendered, intolerable, as ἀδύατος is translated above, than inevitable, which carries too harsh an Idea with it, expressed so laxly; and indeed the *Arabic* Interpreters render it so, *Ex intolerabilis Inferni crypta adveniens*; and the *Bishops*, and *Geneva Bible*, by the *Dungeon of Hell which is insupportable*. Or does ἄδυ here mean the Region of the dead, which is indeed an invisible Region of Darkness, and may justly be said to be inevitable? *Job* very emphatically calls it a Land of Darkness, as Darkness itself, a Land of the Shadow of Death, where the Light is as Darkness, ch. x. 22. Ἀδύατος applied to ἄδυ, in this Sense, may have here again the Signification which the Margin gives of it before. For ἄδυ is confessedly a State or Region wherein

Men can do nothing; it is that Night, according to the Language of the New Testament, wherein no Man can work, *John ix. 4*. And thus the true *Solomon*, There is no working in the Grave whither thou goest, *Eccles. ix. 10*. *Grotius* here again dislikes ἀδύατος ἄδυ, and reads ἐξ ἀδύτου ἄδυ μυχῶν. But besides that the same Epithet being repeated so very soon looks suspicious, and which holds equally strong against ἀδύατος, is not as much implied in ἄδυ itself? which, according to the Etymology of many learned Men, is αἰδης contracted [see *H. Steph. Gr. Lexic. Leigh's Crit. Sac. in voce*] the same with the *Hebrew Sheol*, which signifies a Place which is dark and obscure, where nothing can be seen. Probably therefore the true Reading may be either, ἀδύατος ἄδυ μυχῶν, or rather, as *Tartarus* seems here referred to, ἐνδολάτης ἄδυ μυχῶν, according to *Homer's* Description upon the same Occasion:

ἦχι βάθειον ὑπὸ χθονὸς ἐστὶ βέρεθον.

For as Night, in the Mythology of the Heathens, is fabled to be the Daughter of *Orcus*, and *Tartarus*, and is described by them to be a Place of Darkness and Misery, the Seat or Kingdom of Fear, Grief, and Despair, the Author here, by a Metaphor or Figure, accommodates and applies the Notion of infernal Darkness to this *Egyptian* Plague, upon Account of its Thickness, the Horror occasioned by it, the Despair accompanying it, and the Ghosts and Spectres haunting and disturbing it. [The Place is, undoubtedly, faulty in the Greek. If instead of τὴν ἀδύατον νύκτα, it had been written τὴν ἀδύατον, and ἐν βαθυλάτῃ ἄδυ for ἐξ ἀδύατος, it would have been intelligible. The Word πᾶντες too seems to be wanting before τὴν αὐτὴν, as in *ψ. 17*. I do not think that either ἀδύατος or ἀδύατος can be explained from the known Use of the Word in the Greek Tongue.]

Ver. 16. So then, whosoever there fell down, was straitly kept, shut up in a Prison without Iron Bars. Εἰς ἄρας, ὅς ἐστιν ἔν τῃ αὐτῇ καλαπίνῳ, ἐφ' ἧς εἰς τὴν αἰδῆον εἰσέλῳ καὶ ἀνελθεῖς. The Meaning, according to the Commentators, is, that such of the *Egyptians*, as were overtaken by this Darkness, were made Prisoners, though there were no other Chains that held them than αἰδῆς ἡσυχία, 2 *Pet. ii. 4*. the Obscurity and Darkness which surrounded them. But I think more is included in the Original than our Version expresses, viz. that such among the *Egyptians*, as, during that Darkness, through Fear, or by any Misfortune, fell down, were disabled from helping themselves; they either could not, or durst not rise, but continued, ἄρας, in the same Place and Condition, as if they had been detained in a Prison, or a deep Abyss, from whence there was no returning. I would therefore point the Greek thus: Εἰς ἄρας ὅς ἐστιν ἔν τῃ αὐτῇ καλαπίνῳ ἐφ' ἧς εἰς τὴν αἰδῆον εἰσέλῳ καὶ ἀνελθεῖς. And the Version should be, "Then, whosoever it was that there fell, he so continued, i. e. was, in the same State, kept bound, &c." Thus *Vatablus*, *Hoc diinde modo, quicunque tandem fuisset illic collapsus, in angustias citra ferrum conclusus, custodiebatur*; and so *Tirinus*, *In eodem vestigio, quasi in carcere conclusus*.



*clusus, habebat.* Calmet too understands it in this Sense, *Tous ceux qui y tomberent, qui s'y rencontrerent, &c. furent obligez de demeurer au même endroit où la nuit les surprit.* Comm. in loc. This Sense seems confirmed too by what is mentioned in the next Verse, that such as were overtaken by this Darkness, wheresoever they were, or whatsoever they were about, there were they obliged to continue, being laid under an unavoidable Necessity or Confinement, *δυσάλυντον ἀνάγκη*; where the Particle *δύ*, invigorates the Expression, and denotes a greater Intensity of the Darkness. And in this Sense some Interpreters understand the Words in *Exodus*, ch. x. 23. that none rose from his Place for three Days, viz. that the Darkness was so shocking, and the Horror occasioned by it so great, that, like Persons quite disabled and confounded, they durst not stir from the Place where they were first surprized with it, but stood, or sat, or lay just as the Darkness at its coming found them, for the whole time of its Continuance.

[Ver. 17, 18. *Apleasing Fall.* *ῥυθμός.* I believe it should be *ῥυσμός*, *trahus*, a course or current, for *παρανομήναι βίβλ.* running violently, seems not so well consistent with *ῥυθμός*, a pleasing Fall. Just before, instead of *Εἶτα*, it should be *Εἶτα*, *deinde*, then, as *16.* And *ἀπὸ ἡχῆς λίθων*, an absonous or disagreeable Sound, not *ἀπὸ ἡχῆς*. The Alexandrian MS. places *ἡ* before *ἀπὸ ἡχῆς*. Which shews that it should be read thus: *Εἶτα πνεῦμα ἐνέεισεν ἀπὸ ἀμφιλαφῆς κλάδων, ἢ ἀπὸ ἡχῆς λίθων, &c.* The whole in English thus: *Then a whistling Wind among the spreading Branches, or a melodious Singing of Birds, or a course of Water running violently, or a disagreeable Sound of Rocks cast (or falling) down—made them swoon with fear.*

Ver. 18, 19. *Whether it were a whistling Wind, or a melodious Noise of Birds among the spreading Branches, or a pleasing Fall of Water running violently, or a terrible Sound of Stones cast down, or a Running that could not be seen of skipping Beasts, or a roaring Voice of most savage wild Beasts, or a rebounding Echo from the hollow Mountains: These things made them to swoon for fear.* This is a fine Description of the Panick of the Egyptians, which was so excessive, that nothing could stir but it frightened them. Not only Noises which were really terrible in themselves, such as of falling Rocks, and the howling of wild and savage Beasts, whose very Echo must increase their Fears, but even such Things as had a Tendency to lull Pain, and soothe Uneasiness, such as gentle whispering Breezes, purling, murmuring Streams, and the sweet ravishing Musick of the Groves; even these, though agreeable Entertainments, and which, at another time, would have delighted and charmed the Ear, not only lost all their relish, but proved a Punishment, and created new Torment to them. Had the Almighty at this time indeed sent forth his glorious Voice in Thunder, no wonder that conscious Guilt should shrink; according to that of *Seneca*, *Pavescis ad cæli fragorem, & quousque aliquid effulsit, expiras.* *Nat. Quæst.* 2. 59. But that harmless Sounds, or such as usually charm the Fancy; that

Noises merely imaginary, for of such chiefly must we understand this Description, should have such an uncommon Effect, displays the Power of an evil Conscience, which takes away the Poignancy of every Enjoyment, and sits brooding Mischief and Misery to itself. This Sort of Panick is beautifully described, *Levit.* xxvi. 36. by God's sending a Faintness into their Hearts, so that the Sound even of a shaken Leaf could chase them. That of *Lucan* by no means equals it,

*Pavet ille fragorem*

*Motorum ventis nemorum.*

but that of the Psalmist is inimitable, *Ἐν τῇ ἐκείνῃ φέρον, & ὅτι ἡ φέρον, Psal.* liii. 5. so tormenting is Wickedness, and so timorous an evil Conscience.

Ver. 21. *Over them only was spread an heavy Night, an Image of that Darkness which should afterwards receive them.* i. e. the Egyptians only were Sufferers by this Darkness, all without Egypt was Light and Sunshine.—But something further is here meant; for the Author, under the Idea of Darkness and a heavy Night, intimates that Doom and Misery which awaited the Egyptians after Death. Many of the Fathers make this Egyptian Darkness to be an Emblem of Sin, and its final Misery in another Life. For the Sinner is a voluntary Prisoner, and has as many Chains about him as he has wilful Sins. He is deprived of the Light of God's Countenance, and given up by him to a judicial Blindness in this Life, which is an Anticipation, says *St. Austin*, of that Darkness to which he shall afterwards be consigned; his Wretchedness begins in this Life, and is completed in the next. In *Psalm*. To the same Purpose *St. Bernard*, *Deus tantas tenebras Egyptiis immisit, ut ex hac quasi imagine discerent primò tenebras sive conscientie; secundo, tenebras inferni sibi imminentes.* *Serm.* 72. in *Cant.* *Origen* likewise allegorizes this Plague of Darkness, and says, "It signified the Darkness of Mind which the Devil had blinded." "Pharaoh and his Subjects with, who, though they had experienced so many Plagues, would not open their Eyes to see their lamentable State, nor believe in God to prevent more." We find the Term *Darkness*, which is mentioned here, often made use of by the sacred Writers to represent *Hell*, or the Place of Punishment. See *Matth.* viii. 12. *xxii.* 13. *xxv.* 30. *2 Pet.* ii. 4. 17. *Jude* 6. 13. In this last Place the State reserved for the Wicked is said to be, *ὁ ἔσθλο τῷ ἐκείνῳ*, Blackness of Darkness, where the Pleonasm expresses the great Intensity of it. *Philo* calls it, *Τὸ ἀπὸ τοῦ βυθοῦ σκότος.* *De Excerptis.* And the Rabbins speak of it in like Terms. What our Author mentions here of the future miserable State of the Egyptians after Death, is, according to an ancient received Notion among the Jews, who accounted such as enjoyed great outward Prosperity, God's special Favourites; and that spiritual Blessings likewise were wrapped up in, and conveyed with their temporal ones. On the contrary, they reckoned those accursed, who were overwhelmed with worldly Adversities, and that spiritual and everlasting Plagues were hidden under temporal Judgments,



ments, which were to those upon whom they fell, so many Pledges of their Condemnation. See *Mede, B. I. Disc. 46.* This Opinion our Author seems to have imbibed, and it is an Instance, according to the very judicious Dr. *Jackson*, of that radical Tincture which infected all his Countrymen, who looked upon the many glorious Tokens of God's extraordinary Mercy and loving Kindness to their Fathers, as sure and irrevocable Earnests of their absolute Predestination to Acceptance, Glory, and Happiness. And that the *Egyptians, Canaanites*, and such other of their Enemies whom God had scourged, were so many Vessels of Wrath fitted for perpetual Destruction.

*Ibid.* But yet were they unto themselves more grievous than the Darkeness.] "Men can never efface, says a fine modern Writer, the Sense which God has imprinted in their Hearts of his Presence and Justice. They can never succeed in persuading themselves that Sin is in its Nature indifferent, or will remain unpunished. Hence their inward Fears, which are as so many Witnesses ready to accuse and confound them: And when Vengeance at length comes to shew itself, they shall be the first to own that they have deserved it." *Rollin*, vol. iii. p. 148. Many beautiful Passages might be produced from ancient Authors, to shew the melancholy State of a guilty Conscience, what a Bosom Plague and inseparable Tormentor it is, how tired and afraid of its own Reflexions, and how gladly it would fly from its very self, but self continually pursues it. *St. Austin* most beautifully represents this Uneasiness, and includes the Case of all other Sinners, in the following Description of himself, *Ego mihi remanseram infelix locus, ubi nec esse possem, nec inde recedere.* Quod enim cor meum fugeret a corde meo? Quod a meipso fugerem? Quod me non sequeretur? *Confess. lib. iv. c. 7.*

## C H A P. XVIII.

## THE ARGUMENT.

TO the Darkeness, with which the Egyptians were oppressed, the Author opposes, by way of Antithesis or Contrast, the great Light which the Israelites were favoured with at the same time, and the great Benefit of the fiery Pillar, which afterwards conducted them in the Wilderness. The Death of all the first born of the Egyptians, in one Moment, without any Distinction, by the destroying Angel, is described in a very affecting manner; and, on the other hand, God's great Mercy to the Israelites is shewn, by a particular Instance in the Desert, when, through the Intercession of Aaron, and the Power of his Incense, God was prevailed upon to stop the sweeping Progress of the Plague, and to hinder its spreading any further.

Ver. 1. Nevertheless thy Saints had a very great Light.] All the Children of Israel, called here the Saints according to the conceited Notion of that People, had Light in their Dwellings, whereby they were enabled to do their Business, and get all Things ready for their Departure, without the Notice of the Egyptians;

much less could they hinder their Designs, who were involved in such a thick Mist, that they were incapable of seeing what the *Israelites* were doing. The *Chaldee Paraphrase* upon *Exod. x. 23.* adds other Reasons for this Light, *Erat lux omnibus filiis Israel ad sepeliendum improbos qui inter eos mortui erant, & ut justis posset in preceptis occupari in habitationibus suis.* This Difference and Distinction between them, must be looked upon as the more wonderful and extraordinary; if, as many learned Men suppose, the Houses of the *Israelites* and the *Egyptians* were contiguous and close to one another, as seems probable from the Blood sprinkled upon the Door-posts of the *Israelites* by way of Distinction, because they were mingled with the *Egyptians.* *Philo* and *Josephus* both intimate that, in the same Place or Dwelling, the *Hebrews* had Light, and the *Egyptians* were without it: This made the Miracle so great, says *Gregory Nyssen*, that while the *Israelites* and the *Egyptians* dwelt promiscuously together, the former, at the same time, had Light, and the latter Darkeness. From this strange Work of God, and singular Interposition in Favour of his Chosen, we are instructed how able our heavenly Father is to make not only a Distinction, but a real Separation between his own Children, and the Wicked, when he executeth his Wrath and Vengeance; for such is his providential Care, that though they be in one Field, in one House, or Bed together, one shall be taken, and the other left; one shall be afflicted with his Judgments, and the other escape them. And we may hence, as another pious Writer observes, profitably learn, not to ascribe our Preservation to our own Merit or Policy, when we ourselves are free from any grievous Calamity which happens to others, but to look up to the Almighty Author of our Deliverance, and at his Footstool to return our Tribute for such a signal Instance of his Mercy.

*Ibid.* Whose Voice they hearing, and not seeing their Shape, because they also had not suffered the same Things, they counted them happy.] *Origen* μὲν δὲ καὶ αὐτοὶ ἐπεπόνθεισαν, ἐμακάριζον, thus the *Alexand. and Complut. Copies* read. The Sense of this Passage is very different, according as it is applied to the *Israelites*, or the *Egyptians*, in which the Interpreters are greatly divided; they that apply it to the former, make the Sense to be, that the *Israelites* heard the Cries of the *Egyptians* without seeing them; and thanked God that they did not suffer the same Things, and were not like the *Egyptians* in the midst of Darkeness and Obscurity; and thus the *Vulgate* renders ἐμακάριζον, & quia non & ipsi eadem passi erant, magnificabant te, [as if he had read ἐμακάριζον σε] which *Coverdale's* Version follows: Others, still applying the Words to the same Persons, render ἐμακάριζον, that the *Israelites* blessed themselves, or counted themselves happy, because they also had not suffered the same Things: But if this Passage be applied to the *Israelites*, should not the Reading rather be αὐτοὶ, than καὶ αὐτοὶ? The *Vatican Edition* reads, *Ὅτι μὲν δὲ καὶ αὐτοὶ ἐπεπόνθεισαν, ἐμακάριζον*, which furnishes another Sense, "That the *Israelites* thanked God, or glorified  
" the



"the Justice of God, that the Egyptians were now afflicted in their Turns, who had before so much afflicted them." They that apply the Place to the Egyptians understand it in this Manner, "That the Egyptians heard the Voices of the Israelites, though they could not see them, and thought the Israelites happy that they also did not suffer like them." This seems to be the Sense of our Version, as it is of the Geneva and Bishops Bible, and seems indeed more agreeable to the Context.

Ver. 2. *But for that they did not hurt them now, of whom they had been wronged before, they thanked them.* [Ὅτι ὅς ἐβλάπτεται προηδικημένοι, ἠνυχαρίσαν.] Here again the Sense has been mistaken by some Interpreters, as if the Israelites thanked the Egyptians for not hurting them now, who before had much oppressed and injured them; but there seems no Reason or Occasion for the Israelites to thank the Egyptians for not doing what at that Time, however inclined, they were incapacitated to do. There is also another Sense, which has no better Foundation, that the Israelites ἠνυχαρίσαν, thanked God, that the Egyptians, who before had so much wronged them, were now not in a Capacity to hurt them. And thus Coverdale, *And they that were vexed afore (because they were not hurte now) thanked them,* and so the Vulgate, *Et qui ante lesi erant, quia non ladebantur, gratias agebant*; St. Jerom's Bible, as it is called, supplies, *tibi*. But, I think, the true Sense of the Place to be rather, "That the Egyptians thanked the Israelites, for not revenging themselves upon them in their State of Darkness and Impotence, who had Provocations enough, and had been so long injured and oppressed by them;" and that the Passage might be rendered more intelligibly thus, "That because they (the Israelites) did not hurt them now, whom they (the Egyptians) had before hurt or wronged, they thanked them." This seems to be the Sense of our Version, though obscurely expressed, and the Geneva Bible understands the Passage in the same Manner.

Ibid. *And besought them Pardon, for that they had been Enemies.* [Καὶ τὴ διενεχθῆναι χάριν ἰδεῖν.] This is capable of two Senses, and may either mean, that the Egyptians asked Forgiveness of the Israelites for the many Injuries they had formerly done them, which is the Sense of our Version, and of the Geneva Bible, and so διαφέρεσθαι is used, 2 Maccab. iii. 4. Such a Submission in the Egyptians, arising rather from Fear, than a real Contrition, is natural enough to be supposed at this melancholy Juncture, and might indeed be expected from People in their sad and helpless Condition, entirely at the Mercy of those, who had been so inhumanly treated by them. In this Sense, χάριν must be taken adverbially, as it is sometimes, and may be considered here the same as ἐνεκα. And thus it is used, Gal. iii. 19. ὁ νόμος τῶν παροργιστῶν χάριν προσέτεθη, i. e. according to our Version, *the Law was added because of Transgressions*, which seems not much unlike the Expression here, τὴ διενεχθῆναι χάριν ἰδεῖν.]

they beseeched or entreated them, because of their former Transgressions and Differences.— There is also another Meaning of this Passage, "That the Israelites beseeched God, that there always might be such a Difference made between his own People and the Egyptians, or between them and their other Enemies, as there was in this particular Instance of the Darkness." See Exod. xi. 7. where the like Sense is used. Coverdale renders, according to this latter Interpretation, *And besought the (O God) that there myght be a Dyfference*; and so does the Vulgate, *Et ut esset differentia, donum* (χάριν) petebant.

Ver. 3. *Instead whereof thou gavest them a burning Pillar of Fire.* [Ἀντὶ ὧν πυρραφλεγῆ σῦλον.] The Sense of this Place, according to most Interpreters, is, that, instead of an Egyptian Darkness, God favoured his People with a Light of Fire, as it is described by the Psalmist, Psal. lxxviii. 15. for their Assistance in the Night Season. It is called here a burning Pillar of Fire, because in the Night Flames are more visible, by reason of the Darkness, whereas in the Day-time they appear rather like Smoke at any considerable Distance. See Note on ch. x. v. 17. Ἀντὶ ὧν, in the Original, does not so properly signify, *instead whereof*, as our Version has it, as *quamobrem*, or *propter quod*, as the Vulgate renders, which Coverdale's and the old English Versions follow, *therefore had they a burnynge Pylar*; or we may understand ἀντὶ ὧν to signify, *for whose Sake*, or *upon whose Account*; and thus Badwell understands it, rendering, *quorum causa*, referring it probably to the Israelites, who, in the preceding Verse, had requested that God would make some Difference in their Favour; and so the Syriac Interpreters seem to take it.

Ibid. *Both to be a Guide in the unknown Journey, and an harmless Sun to entertain them honourably.* [Ἡλιον ὃ ἀβλαβῆ φιλότιμον ἐξενίστας, i. e. It was as a harmless and inoffensive Sun, which, without incommoding them, rendered their Journey safe and prosperous by affording them Light in it. And thus Calmet, *La Colonne de Seigneur leur servoit comme de soleil, qui sans les incommoder rendoit leur voyage heureux.* Our Version is very faulty in the rendering of the latter Part of this Verse; there is nothing in the Original to authorize, or justify what is here mentioned about *entertaining them honourably*; the true Rendering of the Greek is, "God gave them an inoffensive Sun in their glorious and honourable March through a strange Country." And, indeed, this March of the Israelites may be said to be truly honourable and magnificent, being under the Guidance and Direction of Almighty God, who was himself their Leader. In this View, it had rather the Appearance of a grand and superb Triumph, than a tedious and painful Journey. And, in such august Terms, the Prophets describe it, Psal. lxxviii. 7, 8. Habak. iii. 3. and I have the Pleasure to find the Version which, I have given of this Place, confirmed by the Geneva Bible, which renders, *And made the Sun that it hurted them not in their honourable Journey*, which is the Sense of ἐξενίστα here; and so Junius expounds



pounds it, *Præbuiſti columnam . . . quæ & dux eſſet profeſſionis ignotæ, & ſol innocuus magnificæ peregrinationis.*

Ver. 4. *For they were worthy to be deprived of Light, and imprisoned in Darkneſs, who had kept thy Sons ſhut up by whom the uncorrupt Light of the Law was to be given unto the World.]* Though God communicated his Will to the Patriarchs, and particularly to *Abraham*, when he entered into Covenant with him; yet had not the *Israelites*, when in *Egypt*, any expreſs Knowledge of the Law, as ſuch: This they received after their going out from thence at *Mount Sinai*, where God himſelf promulged it to them in form; *Which he commanded them to teach their Children, that their Poſterity might know it, and the Children which were yet unborn, to the Intent, that, when they came up, they might ſhew their Children the ſame,* *Pſal. lxxviii. 5, 6, 7. Deut. iv. 9.—vi. 7.* But this Revelation was not deſigned to be confined to that People only, God, by their Means, and through their Hands, intended to give to other Nations the Knowledge of his Laws: *To them pertained the Adoption, and the Glory, and the Covenants, and the giving of the Law, and the Service of God, and the Promiſes,* *Rom. ix. 4.* But the lively Oracles which they received were likewiſe to be delivered to others, and they were the appointed Channels; an Appointment, which this Author here dwells upon and magnifies as a Mark of particular Diſtinction and Favour to his Chofen. And indeed from them, other Nations did receive the uncorrupt Light of the Law, and the excellent and ſacred Records of ancient Times, and the ſeveral Prophecies of thoſe Holy Men, whom God raiſed up and inſpired, from time to time, among them: By their Means, in Fact, we now converſe with thoſe great Perſons, *Mofes, David, Solomon*, and others, and underſtand and reap the Fruits of their Wiſdom and Piety, by the Writings conveyed to us from them, through the Providence of God; for the *Jews*, by their numberleſs Diſperſions, were undeſignedly made a kind of Preachers of Righteouſneſs to as many as they lived amongſt, and converſed with. *Judea* was from the Beginning, as is evident from the *Jewiſh* Hiſtory, the Fountain head of the true Religion; *Jeruſalem*, in particular, was the Seat of *Melchizedec*, the High Priest of the Living God in the Days of *Abraham*; the Almighty had his Court and Dwelling in *Sion*, *Pſal. lxxvi. 1.* and in *David's* Time was known in her Palaces as a ſure Refuge, *Pſal. xlviii. 2.* From hence he ſent out his Ambaſſadors the Prophets, to publiſh his Laws and Decrees to the World, which learned Men have obſerved could be done with more Eaſe and ſpeedier Conveyance from hence, than from any other Region of the habitable World.—And from hence accordingly, as from a central Point, the Light of the Law firſt, and the Goſpel afterwards, ſhone out to the ſurrounding Nations. *Life of King David, vol. ii. p. 92.*

Ver. 5. *And when they had determined to ſlay the Babes of the Saints, one Child being caſt forth, and ſaved to reprove them, thou tookſt away the Multitude of their Children, and deſtroyedſt them altogether in a mighty Water.]* Βελάſαμνους δ' αὐ-

τὰς τὰ τὸ ὅſιων ſοφικεῖναι νήπια, καὶ ἐνός ἐκλεθέντος τέκνου, καὶ ſωθέντος, εἰς ἑλεſχον τὸ αὐτῶν ἀφείλες πλῆθος τέκνων. This was particularly true of *Mofes*, who, as he was caſt into the River, with the reſt of the *Hebrew* Children, ſo was he ſaved from thence to be the Inſtrument, by God's Appointment, to drown the *Egyptians* in the *Red-Sea*, by ſtretching forth his Hand over it: The Wiſdom and Providence of God is herein very obſervable, for the very expoſing of *Mofes* was the firſt Step to his Greatneſs, and the Means of his being introduced into *Pharaoh's* own Palace. And God ſaved him from perishing in the River, to make him the Inſtrument of drowning the Son of that Prince, who had deſigned him the like Fate, and with him were overwhelmed the chiefſt of his Subjects, whom he had obliged occaſionally to execute his inhuman and cruel Commands. The *Fathers*, upon this Occaſion, obſerve, that *Mofes*, who was the Miniſter of the old Law, as *Jeſus Chriſt* of the New, was a lively Figure of him from his very Birth, both of them, through the Divine Protection, being preſerved from a Maſſacre, which involved ſo many Infants. The preſent Reading of the Greek Text here, ſeems faulty in all the Copies, and probably may, by a ſmall Alteration, be thus reſtored, Βελάſαμνους δ' αὐτὰς τὰς τὸ ὅſιων ſοφικεῖναι νήπια, δι' ἐνός ἐκλεθέντος τέκνου, καὶ ſωθέντος εἰς ἑλεſχον, τὸ αὐτῶν ἀφείλες πλῆθος τέκνων. I am encouraged to offer this Emendation from the Authority of the Oriental Verſions; the *Arabic* reads, *Per unum expoſitum puerulum, & ad redargutionem eorum ſervatum, perdidisti ſine clementia multitudinem filiorum eorum;* and the *Syriac*, *Sed filius unus ſanctus, qui ad eos caſtigandos, & multitudinem filiorum eorum exterminandam aſſervatus eſt, omnes ſimul in aquis immanibus perdidit.* The *Geneva* Verſion renders in like Manner, *By one Child that was caſt out and preſerved to reprove them. thou haſt taken away the Multitude of their Children;* and the *Doway Bible* is to the ſame Effect.

Ver. 6. *Of that Night were our Fathers certified, that aſſuredly knowing unto what Oaths they had given Credence, they might afterwards be of good Cheer.]* God had foretold their Bondage in *Egypt*, and promiſed their Forefathers that he would be with them, and bring them up thence, and put them in Poſſeſſion of the Land of *Canaan*. This Oath or Promiſe was made to *Abraham*; *Know*, ſays God to him in Viſion, *that thy Seed ſhall be a Stranger in a Land that is not theirs, and ſhall ſerve them, and they ſhall afflict them four hundred Years; and alſo that Nation, whom they ſhall ſerve, will I judge, i. e. pour out my Judgments upon, and afterwards ſhall they come out with great Subſtance,* *Gen. xv. 13.* This future Condition of his Seed in both theſe Reſpects, was repreſented to him at the ſame Time by a *Smoking Furnace*, which ſignified the *Israelites* Miſery in the Iron Furnace of *Egypt*, as 'tis called, *Jer. xi. 4.* and by a *Burning Lamp*, or a Light ſhining out of Darkneſs, which denoted their Deliverance from thence, *Gen. xv. 17.* *Mofes* had likewiſe acquainted them with the particular Time of their going out of *Egypt*, and that it ſhould be immediately preceded



with the Death of all the First-born of the Egyptians, Exod. xi. 4, 5. xii. 2. Our Author adds, that God revealed this great Event to his People, that they might depend upon its Certainty, and when they saw the actual fulfilling of this Promise, and the First-born destroyed in the Manner, and at the Time he had foretold, they might have the stronger Faith, and a more firm Reliance upon his Word. *Ἐκδομήσασθαι*, be of good Cheer, according to our Translators; but it might more properly be rendered, be of good Confidence, or more assured, both at the present and hereafter; for that Night confirmed the Truth of God's Promises, and encouraged them to hope and trust in God the more for the future. And thus the Phrase is used in many Parts of the Gospel, particularly *Matth. ix. 2.* where the *Vulgate* reads, *Confide, fili*, and so do *Beza* and *Junius in loc.* See also *ch. xiv. 27. Mar. vi. 50. John xvi. 33.*

Ver. 7. *So of thy People was accepted both the Salvation of the Righteous, and Destruction of the Enemies.* This is obscurely expressed. I take the Sense to be, "That the Israelites, called here, and in many Places of this Book, the Righteous, received a very signal Deliverance at the same Time that they saw the Destruction of the Egyptians, or the Wicked, as the *Vulgate* renders." The same Night, which was the Beginning or Commencement of the Freedom and Happiness of the Hebrews, brought upon the Egyptians the most terrible of all the Plagues they had been afflicted with; the first saw themselves at Liberty on a sudden, and the latter had all their Hopes blasted by the surprizing Death of all their First-born in the same Instant. [*Προσδέχθη* should be translated *was expected*, as *xiv. 29.* The Deponent *δέχομαι*, with the passive Form of the Aor. 1. often has a passive Signification, and in the Future, *Ecclus xxxii. 16.* See *Acts xv. 4.*]

Ver. 8. *For wherewith thou didst punish our Adversaries, by the same thou didst glorify us whom thou hadst called.* [*ὃ ᾧ ἐτιμωρήσω τὰς ἐναντίας, τὴν αὐτὴν ἡμᾶς προκαλεσάμενος ἰδοῦσας.* Some Copies read *ὡς*, and change *τὴν αὐτὴν* into *ὡς* to answer it. And so the *Vulgate* renders, *Sicut enim lesisti adversarios, sic et nos provocans magnificasti*, [reading *προκαλεσάμενος*.] The Arabic, and the old English Versions read in like manner; and so does *Junius* and *St. Jerom's Bible*. If we retain *ὃ* and *τὴν αὐτὴν* in the Sense of our Translators, then the Meaning is, that by the Death of their First-born thou didst punish our Enemies, and by a Freedom from the same Destruction thou didst glorify thy chosen; for God shewed his Love to them, and the very great Regard he had for them, in that terrible Vengeance which he took of their Oppressors, in order to their final Release: For we may understand *προκαλεσάμενος*, says *Calmet*, to mean *recal*, that God, by this decisive Act of Vengeance, recalled or fetched back his People to him, as a Father does a Son whom he had long banished from him at a great Distance. *Comm. in loc.* See Note on *ch. xi. 26.* But we may also by *ὃ* and *τὴν αὐτὴν* here not only understand the Fact itself, but also the Person by whom that great Event was brought to pass, thus, "For by whom thou didst punish our Adversaries, by the same Person passing us

"over thou didst glorify us." This Interpretation is countenanced by the *Chaldee Paraphrase* on *Exod. xii. 42.* *Apparuit Sermo Domini in media nocte contra Aegyptios, dextra ejus interficiebat primogenitos Aegyptiorum, et dextra ejus liberabat primogenitos Israelitarum, ad stabilendum quod dicit Scriptura, Filius meus primogenitus sunt Israelitae.* This Difference or Separation between his own People and the Egyptians, was visible in all the other Plagues, but here it was most remarkably displayed. And the like gracious Distinction, we may observe almost every where in Scripture, with respect to the Righteous and Wicked, whether we consider whole Nations or particular Persons: Thus God preserved righteous *Noah*, when the old World perished by Water; nor was *Lot* less distinguished and favoured, when *Sodom*, with the neighbouring Cities, were destroyed by Fire.

Ver. 9. *For the righteous Children of good Men did sacrifice secretly.* [*i. e.* The Children of Israel slew the Paschal Lamb at the time, and in the manner God appointed them, called the Sacrifice of the Lord's Passover, *Exod. xii. 27.* and frequently by the Name of Sacrifice only, *Exod. xxiii. 18. xxxiv. 25.* It appears to have been properly a Sacrifice by the Rites belonging to it; for in it there was a shedding of Blood, and a sprinkling of it by the Priests, *2 Chron. xxx. 15, 16. xxxv. 11. 13.* And thus the Writer to the Hebrews, speaking of *Moses*, makes mention of, and assigns the original Reason for, *By Faith he kept the Passover, and the sprinkling of Blood, lest he that destroyed the First-born, should touch them.* *ch. xi. 28.* This Lamb at that time the Israelites sacrificed secretly, or within their own Houses, marking the Posts of their Doors with the Blood of the Victim, that the destroying Angel might not enter them to slay their First-born, as he had done in the Houses of the Egyptians; and engaged to observe this Rite, throughout their Generations, of sacrificing the Paschal Lamb in Memory of their Deliverance. Which mystical Repast, says *Calmet*, was a Symbol of their Covenant with God, and likewise of a strict Union among themselves.

*Ibid.* *And with one Consent made a holy Law that the Saints should be like Partakers of the same Good and Evil.* [*i. e.* At the same Time that they sacrificed the Passover, they unanimously made a holy Agreement, and entered into Covenant, confirmed by the Sacrifice to have but one common Interest, that they would share alike the Good and the Bad which should happen to them; that as they went out of Egypt with one willing Mind, so they would equally partake in the common Dangers in their March towards the Holy Land, and afterwards divide the promised Inheritance fairly and impartially among them. The *Vulgate* accordingly reads, *Justitiae legem in concordia disposuerunt, similiter et bona et mala recepturos.*

*Ibid.* *The Fathers now singing out the Songs of Praise.* There are two Senses of this Passage, according to the different Reading of the Greek. The *Vatican Copy* has, *πατέρων ἡδὴ προαναμελπόντων αἶνους*, which is followed by our Version, *i. e.* the Fathers now sang Songs of Praise and Thanksgiving to God for their Deliverance,



liverance, as if accomplished: According to *Jansenius*, προαναμελόντων means, That the Fathers begun the Chorus, and the rest followed or joined in it. The *Alexand. MS.* and *Complut. Edition* read, πατέρων ἡδὲ προαναμελόντες αἶνες, which the *Vulgate* and *Junius* follow, i. e. the Children of Israel sang the Praises, or Hymns in honour of their great Forefathers, *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*, to whom their Deliverance from Bondage was revealed, and the Promise of the Land of *Canaan* was made, which they now looked upon themselves as almost in Possession of; and being confident of Success, and a speedy Departure from *Egypt*, they now, even beforehand, sang Hymns and Songs of Triumph, as if they were actually delivered from it. And thus *Calmet*, *Ils chantoient déjà par avance ces Cantiques. Ils les chantoient comme étant déjà délivrés de la servitude d'Egypte. Comm. in loc.* In after times, the *Jews*, at the Celebration of the Passover, sang the cxxiii<sup>th</sup> Psalm, with the five next following, which the *Hebrews* call by the Name of *Hallel*, or the Hymn, which they recited at the Table in the Paschal Night when they had eaten the Lamb, concluding always with *Hallelujah*. *Maimonides* says the following Doxology was never omitted, "Therefore are we bound to confess, to praise, to laud, to celebrate, to glorify, to honour, to extol, to magnify, and to ascribe Victory unto him, that did unto our Fathers and unto us all these Signs, and brought us forth from Servitude to Freedom, from Sorrow to Joy, and from Darkness to great Light." See *Ainsworth* on *Exod. xii. 8.* [By what follows in the next Verse of Parents bewailing their Children, it is probable that πατέρων προαναμελόντων, in *v. 9.* is the true Reading, not προαναμελόντες, as the *Alexand.* and *Complut.* read it: The Fathers on one Side singing Praises to God; on the other, bewailing their Children.]

Ver. 10. But on the other side there sounded an ill-according Cry of the Enemies, and a lamentable Noise was carried abroad for Children that were bewailed.] i. e. There was a great Outcry of the Parents, like *Rachel*, weeping for their Children because they were not. How great this Cry was, may be conceived from the Scriptures, comparing any very extraordinary Affliction to the Death of a First-born. But when all the First-born, the noblest Offspring of them, were in one Moment destroyed together, what Comparison can equal such a Grief, or what Words strong enough to express it? The Words here seem too faint, and the Affliction would be better expressed in those vigorous mournful Terms, by which the *LXX* express the Lamentation of *Esau* for the Loss of his Blessing, Ἀνεβόησε φωνὴν μεγάλην, ἡ πικρὴν σφόδρα, *Gen. xxvii. 34.* Or of the *Egyptians*, and all the House of *Joseph* and his Brethren, for the Death of *Jacob*, Ἐκώφαντο αὐτὸν νοστήον μέγαν ἡ ἰσχυρὸν σφόδρα, *Gen. l. 10.* The *Chaldee Paraphrase* upon *Exod. xii. 30.* where the great Cry of the *Egyptians* is mentioned, observes, that though *Goshen* was in the midst of the Land of *Egypt*, and *Pharaoh's* Palace at the Entrance of it, yet when *Pharaoh* called to

*Moses* and *Aaron* upon this melancholy Occasion, *Audita est ejus vox in nocte Paschatis usque ad terram Gosen, deprecabatur enim Pharaon voce amara.* There is also another Sense of the Place given by some Interpreters, "That there was a great Cry of the Children themselves, making Lamentation." This is favoured by the *Arabic*, which renders, *Vox puerorum plorantium miserabilis immiscebatur*; [he seems to have read, διεφύετο] and *Junius* takes it in the same Sense, *Miserabilis hic illuc ferebatur vox lamentantium puerorum.* [In the *Greek* it is Passive, θρηνησάντων, plorantium, not lamentantium. Our Version is right.] But, I think, the Sense of our Version far preferable, for as the Death of the First-born was a sudden Stroke of God, as they were all cut off in one Moment, the Cry of the Children themselves seems not so probable, as that of their Parents lamenting for them; which is the Sense of the *Greek*, the *Vulgate*, *St. Jerom's Bible*, as 'tis called, and of all the old *English* Versions. [See *v. 18.* where the Author seems to write otherwise. Πρὸς μίαν ῥοπήν does not necessarily signify in one Moment of Time; but at one Stroke: Which allows a greater Latitude, and makes the Author consistent with himself.]

Ver. 12. So they all together had innumerable dead with one kind of Death.] Ἐν ἑνὶ ὀνόματι θανάτου. Ὀνομα is used in the same Sense, *ch. xix. 18.* And so *Nomen* is often to be understood in the *Classic* Writers. Thus *Virgil*, Omnia panarum percurrere nomina possem.

*Æneid. vi.* Would not the Sense of our Version be somewhat improved, if the rendering was, "So they all had innumerable dead together, i. e. at the same time, with one kind of Death." To this sudden Calamity of the *Egyptians*, the *Chaldee Paraphrase* applies those Words of *Job*, *ch. xxxiv. 20.* In a Moment shall they die, and the People shall be troubled at Midnight, and pass away (suddenly) and the Mighty shall be taken away without Hand. The *Psalmist* accordingly calls the First-born, the chiefest of all their Strength, *Psal. cv. 36.* [Ibid. Οὐδὲ γὰρ πρὸς τὸ θάψαι οἱ ζῶντες ἦσαν ἱκανοί, must be put in a Parenthesis: Otherwise there will be no Connexion; and even then this will seem to be an incredible and unnatural Exaggeration, that the Living were not sufficient to bury the Dead, when, by his own Confession, only the First-born, one in each House was destroyed, *Exod. xii. 30.* Unless under νεκρὸς he meant to comprehend the First-born of the Beasts likewise: Of which, however, there is not the least Hint given by him: For in this whole Account he seems to speak of Men only.]

Ver. 13. For whereas they would not believe any thing by reason of their Enchantments.] Πάντα γὰρ ἀπιστεῖντες, which would be better rendered, "Though they disbelieved the rest of the Miracles, and were not persuaded by all their other Calamities." And thus *Calmet*, *Ils n'avoient point cru tous les autres prodiges, à cause de leurs Magiciens.* And so the *Arabic* Version expressly reads, *Non credentes omnibus calamitatibus quæ sibi acciderant.* And the *Syriac*, *His autem omnibus, propter magiam, non credentes.*



*credentes.* The Magicians, *Jannes* and *Jambres*, contributed much to this Insensibility, and Disbelief of the *Egyptians*; for they would not acknowledge God's Power manifested in their former Plagues, because the Magicians, by their Enchantments, had imitated some of the Wonders performed by *Moses* and *Aaron*: When they cast down every Man his Rod, they became Serpents, as *Aaron's* Rod did, *Exod.* vii. 12. With their Enchantments also they brought up Frogs upon the Land of *Egypt*, as *Aaron* had done, *Exod.* viii. 7. and therefore they had a specious Pretext to look upon such Wonders as an Effect of Art Magick, and not as any certain Proof of the divine Omnipotence. But supposing these to be real Miracles performed by the Magicians, which some have thought to be *εμπόματα*, or in Appearance only; yet this Resemblance, in some Particulars, was not sufficient to render their Obstinacy excusable, because though the Enchanters could do Mischief, yet it was not in their Power afterwards to remove and remedy it: And the Plague of Darkness in particular was such, that the Magicians, upon account of it, were *sick themselves of Fear worthy to be laughed at*, ch. xvii. 8. The Degrees, or rather the Method of God's Punishment in the several Plagues of *Egypt*, is curious and worth observing; first, he smote their Water; then sent Frogs, Flies, and Lice, and such other Things as were grievous indeed, but not so affecting to them as the Loss of their Goods. 2dly, Therefore God smote their Cattle, a greater Plague than the former, yet not so near them as their own Bodies. 3dly, Therefore God smites their Bodies with painful Sores and Boils, very grievous and loathsome, yet he spared their Lives. But now, when all the former Plagues were ineffectual, he taketh away Life itself, not a single Life, or a number of them in particular Families, but he smiteth, at once, all the First-born throughout the whole Land of *Egypt*. We may observe, says a very learned Critic, a kind Method of Providence in punishing, whereby it sends some previous Afflictions to warn Men in time, so as to make them shun the greater Evils by Repentance. *Dacier's Not. on Aristot. Art of Poetry.* And then he instances in the *Egyptian* Plagues, which he compares to *Homer's* Account of the Plague, supposed to be sent from Heaven by way of Punishment, and seizing first on Mules and Dogs, before it affected Men:

Οὐρανὸς μὲν πρῶτον ἐπὶ ἄλλοις, καὶ κυνῶν δόγας  
Αὐτὰρ ἔπειτ' αὐτοῖσι βέλῃ. *Iliad.* i.

On Mules and Dogs the Infection first began,  
And last the vengeful Arrows fix'd in Man.

*Ibid.* They acknowledged this People to be the Sons of God.] This last Plague, viz. the Death of their First-born, at length subdued the Stubbornness and Hardness of their Heart, and made them confess not only the superior Power of God, but that this People, in whose Behalf he so signally interposed, were his Sons or Chosen. The *Greek* reads, Θεὸς υἱόν in the Singular Number, alluding, probably, to God's styling *Israel* his Son, even his First-born, *Exod.* iv. 22.

[*Ver.* 14. Instead of *ἡ νύξ ἐν ἰδίῳ TAXEI παραζώνε*, it should be *λάχνη, sorte, portione, officio*: And Night was in the Middle of her proper Office. The other, I think, is not Sense. The Poet expresses it thus: *Torquet medios non humida cursus* and, *Et medios cursus non intempesta tenebat*. The Night is here spoken of as a Person or Goddess, who is feigned by the ancients to be drawn over our Hemisphere in a Chariot, as the Sun is by Day. Our Translators have rendered it as if *idē* were no more than *autē*. They were more exact in *γ 21*. where *ἡ ἰδία ἀεὶ ἀεὶ* is rendered, *his proper Ministry*: And again *xix. 6*. The Night has her *ἰδίον λάχον*, her proper Office, her Business assigned to her. But what *ἰδίον λάχον*, proper or peculiar Swiftnefs, may be, I know not.]

*Ver.* 15. *Thine Almighty Word leapt down from Heaven, out of (thy) Royal Throne.*] [In the *Greek* it should be written either *ἐκ τοῦ βασιλείου* (not *βασιλείου*, as in *Bos*) or *βασιλικῶν*.] *Grotius* applies this Description, which is very grand and magnificent, to an Angel commissioned by God for the Punishment and Destruction of the First-born of the *Egyptians*: Other learned Men have imagined, from the Titles and Attributes of the Divinity here mentioned, that God inflicted this last and most sensible Plague upon the *Egyptians* immediately himself, for *Exod.* xi. 4. he says, *At Midnight will I go out into the midst of Egypt, and all the First-born in the Land of Egypt shall die*: *Bishop Bull*, who condemns *Grotius* for applying these Words to a created Angel, says, they must necessarily be understood of a divine Person, and he assigns for his Opinion the three following Reasons: 1. That the *Word* is here called *Almighty*. 2. That it is described as having a *Royal Throne in Heaven*, and descending from thence in dreadful Majesty, commissioned by God to execute Vengeance upon this Occasion. 3. That its Figure and Appearance was so extraordinary, that, while it stood upon Earth, it touched the Heavens; denoting hereby its Greatness and Power in both. This divine Person he conceives to be the very *Λόγος*, and that the Description and Character are most applicable to him. *Defens. Fid. Nic.* lib. i. To the Reasons produced by this learned Prelate, in Favour of the *Λόγος*, we may add, that the Angel so often spoken of in the *Old Testament*, both before and under the Law, by the Title of *Jehovah*, the Angel of *Jehovah*, the Angel of God's Presence, the Angel of the Covenant, &c. who appeared so frequently about Matters relating to the Government, Protection, and Preservation of the Church of God, unto *Adam*, *Abraham*, the Patriarchs, *Moses*, and other holy Men of old, who brought *Israel* out of *Egypt*, conducted them through the Wilderness, gave them the Law on Mount *Sinai*, and afterwards resided in a wonderful Manner amongst them in the Tabernacle and Temple, having the incommunicable Name and Attributes of God ascribed to him, and divine Worship and Adoration paid to him, was the *ὁ πᾶσι δόναμις Θεὸς Λόγος*, the Almighty Word of *Jehovah*, *1 Cor.* x. 9. *Exod.* xxiii. 20. *Philo de Agricult.* and so may well be supposed to be the Agent in slaying the First-born,



born, in Defence and Vindication of his own *Peculium*. But we need not suppose this only, there is yet a stronger Evidence, the *Chaldee Paraphrase* on *Exod. xii. 29.* where mention is made of the Death of the First-born, expressly makes the *Logos* to be the Agent, and renders, *Et fuit in media nocte decimi quinti, & Sermo Domini interfecit omnem primogenitum in terra Egypti.* Lastly, There is a Description not unlike this, *Rev. xix. 15.* and, to particularize the Person, it is said, *13. Καὶ καλεῖται τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ, ὁ λόγος τοῦ Θεοῦ,* which Mr. Mede observes to be the same as *Ipsē est Verbum illud Dei,* B. v. c. 11. That the *Λόγος* should be mentioned, by this Writer, in Terms not only of Grandeur and Magnificence, but Divinity itself; that Omnipotence and Immensity should be ascribed to him, and a Royal Throne assigned him, probably the Throne of his own Glory; see *Rev. iii. 21.* and Mr. Mede, B. v. c. 10. (for though our *English* Translations have *thy* Throne, yet no Copies of the *Greek* do warrant this, nor insert *ἐν* or *ἐπὶ* here, nor do the *Oriental*, or any ancient Versions take notice of it:) This so exalted a Notion of the *Logos*, I say, our Author probably took from the Traditions at that Time among the *Jews*, or from some Hints in the Old Testament, or from some authentic Paraphrases of it, or from some ancient Writers, the *LXX* in particular, who, in many Places of their Version, speak of the *Logos* as a divine Person, and sufficiently shew their Sentiments on this Head.

*Ibid.* As a fierce Man of War into the midst of a Land of Destruction, and brought thine unfeigned Commandment as a sharp Sword, and standing up filled all things with Death. [By Land of Destruction, τῆς ἀλαθείας γῆς, I suppose is meant, the Land destined to Destruction, viz. Egypt.] A fierce Man of War. Thus in *Moses's* Song, the Lord, or *Jehovah*, is represented as a Man of War, *Exod. xv. 3.* which the *Vulgate* translates, *quasi vir pugnator*, and the *LXX* more strongly *κύριος ἐνεδύσων πολέμους*. But the Description here is more like that of the Person who appeared to *Joshua*, in the Form of a Man with a drawn Sword in his Hand, who called himself, *The Prince or Captain of the Host of the Lord*, *Jos. v. 14.* but was himself a divine Person, as appears from the Worship which *Joshua* paid him, and the Title of *Jehovah* given to him, and was, according to the best Interpreters, the Word of the Lord, or the very *Logos*. And thus the very learned *Usher*: *Iesus Dominus noster, princeps militiæ Patris sui, Iesu typico ad Jerichuntem stricto gladio apparens, promittit se populum defensurum.* Ad ann. M. 2553. The same divine Person, who conducted his People out of *Egypt*, and afterwards their chief Leader and Commander, was likewise the *ὁ ἀλοθροῦν τὰ πρωτότοκα*, victorious over that People by slaying their First-born. The *Chaldee Paraphrase* on *Exod. xii. 12.* to express the Greatness of this Destruction, says, that almost an infinite Number of destroying Angels attended him, *Nonaginta mille myriades Angelorum perdentium*. It has been objected against this Interpretation, that the Title of a destroying Angel is an unworthy Appellation of the *Logos*; but to this the Answer is easy,

viz. that the divine Person, called the Lord, *Gen. xix. 24.* who rained down from Heaven Fire and Brimstone from the Lord upon *Sodom and Gomorrah*, is by *Philo*, the ancient Fathers, and the best Interpreters, understood to be the *Logos*, who, as he assists and succours such as are *Israelites* indeed, so upon his Enemies, says *Philo*, he sends, *ἀλεθρον καὶ φθορὴν ἀνίατον*, inevitable Ruin and Destruction, *De Somn.* The *Logos* may therefore, without any Imputation, be said to be the Executioner of this Vengeance.—The Comparison of the Word of God to a sharp Sword, which this Writer uses, occurs in Scripture, *Ephes. vi. 17.* *Heb. iv. 12.* See also *Philo de Cherub.*

Some have thought that the Author of the Book of *Wisdom*, did not mean here the Person, emphatically called the Word, nor intended to express the Action itself of the destroying Angel, but only figuratively the divine Command issued out from the Throne of God to execute his Vengeance upon the Enemies of his People. And the Description is thought to agree very well with this Supposition, "From his Royal Throne God's Authority was shewn." His unfeigned Commandment of Destruction was the Law of his Mouth; and the Equity of it consisted in that supreme Dominion which God has over universal Nature, presiding over both the Heaven and the Earth, signified by that sublime Picture, "it touched the Heaven, but it stood upon the Earth." *Grotius* accordingly applies these Words to a created Angel; and if the Expressions, *Almighty, Royal Throne in Heaven, and while it stood upon Earth, it touched the Heaven*, be applied to universal Providence, which supports and governs all Things by his Word, and is often, in Scripture, represented as sitting on a Throne, and commanding the Instruments of his Power from thence, it has been thought by some that we need not introduce the Mediator of the New Covenant, in this Action, nor leave room for a Conjecture, that he may be one of those created Angels, who were often employed in the Administration of the Affairs of the *Jews* under the Old Testament. Bishop *Patrick's* Exposition of *Exod. xxiii. 21.* may seem to confirm this Sense of the Apocryphal Writer, "obey his voice," i. e. because he did but report what God himself commanded, who was there present with them, as long as they obliged him—"for my Name is in him," i. e. he acts by my Authority and Power. *Maimonides* expounds it, "my Word is in him," i. e. says he, God's Will and Pleasure was declared by the Angel. In which he seems to follow the *Chaldee*, who translates it, "for his Word is in my Name," i. e. what he speaks is by my Authority. *Patrick's Comment.* If we lay any Stress upon *David's* Account of this Matter, we shall rather be inclined to believe that it was an evil Angel who performed this Work. In *Psal. lxxviii. 49.* it is said, that God cast upon the *Egyptians* the Fierceness of his Wrath, Indignation, and Trouble, by sending evil Angels among them. And *Moses* seems to have determined the Passage to this Sense by the following Words: "The Lord



"Lord will pass over the Door, and will not suffer the Destroyer to come into your Houses to smite you." Intimating, that this Work was done by an evil Angel, since he would have made no Distinction between the Innocent and the Guilty, had not the Destruction of the former been peremptorily forbidden by God. And if it be thus far probable that it was an evil Angel, who was employed upon this Occasion, as the Instrument of God's Providence, how dangerous must it be to imagine, that the spotless Lamb of God was the immediate Agent of taking away Life, when his proper Business upon Earth was rather to give Life? *Knowles's Answer to Essay on Spirit*, p. 37. 40.

*Ibid.* And it touched the Heaven, but it stood upon the Earth.] The Description here very much resembles that of the destroying Angel, mentioned 1 Chron. xxi. 16. who, when he brought that great Plague, which slew seventy thousand Men, from Dan to Beersheba, is represented as visibly standing between the Heavens and the Earth, having a drawn Sword in his Hand, stretched out over Jerusalem. Our Author is to be understood of the same divine Person, who is so magnificently described in the former Verse, who, though equal with God, and partaking of the Fulness of the Godhead, was his holy Father's Agent in his Communications with Mankind, particularly with regard to the Children of Israel, his *Peculium*; and is expressly called *the Angel of the divine Counsel*, not only as being the Herald and Publisher of his Will upon Earth, but as Minister to execute his Orders, sometimes to preserve good Men, or a chosen Nation, and sometimes to inflict Destruction upon a wicked People; and fills both Heaven and Earth with his immense Presence. Upon all these Accounts, he may, with great Propriety, be said to *touch the Heaven, and stand upon the Earth*. How much more properly and beautifully is this Expression applied to the *Logos*, than to the Person of *Fame*, as *Virgil* has used it?

*Parva metu primo, mox sese attollit in auras, Ingrediturque solo, & caput inter nubila condit.*

*Æn.* lib. iv.

Or to *Discord*, as *Homer* has applied it?

*Discord!* dire Sister of the slaughtering Pow'r,  
Small at her Birth, but rising ev'ry Hour,  
While scarce the Skies her horrid Head can bound,  
She stalks in Earth, and shakes the World around.

*Pope's Hom.* B. iv. v. 902.

This last Description, however it may be extolled by the Critics as a *just Allegory*, and a noble Instance of *the Sublime*, and as such is quoted and commended by *Longinus*, yet can be regarded only as an Idea, the Creature of a fine Fancy, and not as a real Person, like that in the Description before us, who has not only a Being in, but an Almighty Power over Nature. The Expression of touching Heaven, and yet standing upon the Earth, when applied to the *Logos*, seems equivalent to that which God uses of himself, *Heaven is my Throne, and the Earth my Footstool*, *Isai.* lxvi. 1. To which agrees that Description of *Orpheus*, speaking of the Deity,

*Αὐτὸς δ' αὖ μέγαν αὐτὸς ἐν ἡγεμονίᾳ θεῶν  
Χορεύων δέοντα, γαῖαν δ' ὑπὸ ποσσὶ βίβνυται.*

*Ver.* 17. *Then suddenly Visions of horrible Dreams troubled them sore.*] Visions of horrible Dreams is an unusual Expression, and scarce to be justified. The Greek is, *φαιάσματα ἐνὶ ὕπνῳ*, i. e. Visions or Apparitions in Dreams. And thus the Arabic understands it, *seva somniorum spectra exagitarunt eos*, or Visions and horrible Dreams, which is *Calmet's* Sense, *Ils furent troublés par des Songes, & des Visions horribles*. The Scripture makes no mention of these terrible Dreams and Visions preceding the Destruction of the First-born. It may not improperly be asked, to whom these Dreams and Visions happened, whether the Parents or the First-born, and for what End or Design. To suppose them sent to the First-born themselves, to advertise them of the Reason of their Deaths, would be of little Satisfaction, and less Use; for what Effect could such a Notice have upon Persons immediately to die, especially such of the First-born as, through their Infancy and tender Age, could not have transgressed and given Offence, and were incapable of shewing any Repentance? Such a Scene indeed, laid open to the Parents, of the sad approaching Fate of all their First-born, their dearest Pledges, and growing Hopes, and as inflicted upon them for their Obstinacy and Wickedness, must greatly add to their Misery, as it affected them so nearly, and might be of future Service to the Parents to prevent their sinning against God, in the like daring Manner. But did not *Moses* give them Notice and Warning of this imminent Calamity very expressly, *Exod.* xi. 45. And was not this more to be depended upon than uncertain Dreams, and airy Visions? This Account seems to me to be grounded upon some Rabbinical Tradition, or to be a designed Exaggeration, such as we meet with in profane Story, where Instances of dreadful Apparitions, warning Persons of some grievous approaching Misfortune, are not uncommon. Thus, before the Destruction of *Troy*, *Hector*, according to the Poet, appears to *Aeneas*;

*In somnis ecce ante oculos maestissimus Hector  
Visus adesse mihi, largosque effundere fletus;  
Heu fuge, nate Dea, teque his, ait, eripe flammis:  
Hostis habet muros.* *Æn.* lib. ii.

*Ver.* 18. *And one thrown here, and another there, half dead, shewed the Cause of his Death.*] This, at first Sight, seems a little inconsistent, as our Translators have rendered it: Is not sudden Death always understood to be an utter Deprivation of all Sense and Life? Can they then who are represented, v. 12. as destroyed in one Moment suddenly, be with Propriety said to be *cast here and there half dead*, suffering, as it were, a lingering Death? Or can a Person *half dead* (*ἡμιθνήσκων*) shew the Cause why he died? I once therefore thought the true Reading here to be *ἡμιθνήσκων*, i. e. that one thrown here and another there (*ἡμιθνήσκων*) destroyed at the same time, and in the same manner, declared the Cause of this common Death, and general Calamity, viz. that it was the just Judgment of God, who inflicted it, and not the



the Power of evil Angels, nor the Force of Magic, nor any thing natural that beset them; which affords a good Sense, and very applicable to so sudden a Stroke, which destroyed such Numbers in an Instant. [But is this Word *ἡμιθνήσκω* any where found? If it is, it would signify *simul mortalis*, not *simul perditus*, or destroyed at the same time.] But as the Sense of this Place may seem confined to that of the immediate Context, and the preceding and following Verses refer both to Dreams and Apparitions, the Meaning of this Passage is generally taken to be, that the First-born of the Egyptians were apprized of their imminent Danger, and acquainted with the true Cause of it, by Apparitions and Notices given them in Dreams; and being half dead through the Apprehension of it, declared to their Relations and Friends, the true Reason upon which they should suffer, and why all of them were at once sentenced to die. According to this Interpretation, *Junius* renders very properly, *ἔθνησκον*, by *moreretur*, which makes the Sense much clearer, and the Syriac and Arabic both express it by the same Mood. [*ἔθνησκον* is *moriturus erat* or *esset*: Which is very different from *ἔθανον*. See the Notes upon *Max. Tyrius*, p. 698. Edit. *Lond.* Instead of *ἡμιθνήσκω*, I should have thought *ἡμιθνήσκων* the true Reading: for *ἡμιθνήσκων* (or *ἡμιθανής*, *Luke* x. 30.) is *half dead*: *ἡμιθνήσκω*, *half-mortal*. But as the *Alexand. MS.* has *ἔθνησκον* and *ἐνεφάνισον*, in the Plural; there can be no doubt but the Author wrote, *Καὶ ἄλλος ἀπαχθὲν ἴφους, ἡμιθνήσκοντες δὲ ἡμιθνήσκον αἰτίαν ἐνεφάνισον.*]

Ver. 20. *Yea, the tasting of Death touched the Righteous also, and there was a Destruction of the Multitude in the Wilderness, but the Wrath endured not long.* From the Destruction of the First-born, the Author takes occasion to mention the Overthrow of the Israelites in the Wilderness; and, by a Comparison of God's Dealing with the Egyptians, and his own People, it appears that the former were punished without Mercy, the Sentence of Death against their First-born being executed without any Mitigation, Reserve, or Exception; but *Aaron* no sooner appears in favour of the offending Israelites; but, through his Intercession, the Plague ceases, and the Wrath of God is appeased. The Expressions used by this Writer, to describe their Destruction, seem too mild and favourable for so great an Overthrow. The Scripture History informs us, that no less than fourteen thousand and seven hundred were slain by the Plague inflicted on them for murmuring against *Moses* and *Aaron*, *Numb.* xvi. 49. when the Dead thus fell down by Heaps one upon another, as it follows, *y 23.* Death may rather be said to have made Havock of the Israelites, but it is described here as a small Calamity, and an inconsiderable Loss, in Comparison of what happened to the Egyptians. It is observable, that *ἔθνησκον*, by which this Destruction is expressed, both here and in the Book of *Numbers*, signifies likewise a Tumult or Commotion; and so it includes elegantly, the Cause and the Effect, the Sin and its Punishment.

Ver. 21. *For then the blameless Man made haste, and stood forth to defend them; and bringing the Shield of his proper Ministry, even Prayer, and the Propitiation of Incense, set himself against the Wrath, and so brought the Calamity to an End.* That is, in the Scripture Language, *Aaron* interceded, and put on Incense, and made an Atonement for the People, and the Wrath of God was instantly turned away; whereby he shewed the great Power of the ministerial Function with God. And thus *St. Jerom.* *Currens ira Dei sacerdotii voce prohibebatur*, i. e. "The Wrath of God coming, as it were, full speed upon them, was stopped by the Voice and Power of the Priesthood." It is worth observing, that *Aaron*, who undertakes to intercede for the People, is here described by the great Character of the blameless Man: Upon which the *Fathers* remark, that such, and so blameless ought all those Priests of God to be, who stand forth to defend others by their Prayers and Ministry, and would do true Service to their People, and render their Labours effectual to the great Purpose of Reconciliation. *St. Gregory*, in particular, thus happily enforces a blameless Conduct in such as minister about Holy Things: "If a Man is ashamed to present himself before an equal for Pardon, whom he has offended, and with Difficulty obtains Forgiveness, how shall one that is conscious of his own bad Life, and must conclude the God of Purity and Holiness to be his Enemy on that Account, dare to take upon himself the high Dignity of an Intercessor for others? How shall he, to any Purpose, implore God's Mercy for his Brethren, who stands in so much need of it himself, and has Reason to doubt of his own Acceptance?" *Greg. Pastor.* P. I. c. 11.

Ver. 22. *So he overcame the Destroyer, not with Strength of Body, nor Force of Arms, but with a Word subdued he him that punished.* As the Blood of the Paschal Lamb stayed the Angel which destroyed the Egyptians, from touching the Israelites, *Exod.* xii. 23. *Heb.* xi. 28. so the Smoak of *Aaron's* Incense (figuring the Mediation of Christ) stayed the Plague here from the surviving Israelites. The Lord, thro' the Prevalence of his Intercession, repented him of the Evil, and said to the Angel that destroyed the People, *It is enough, stay now thy Hand*, *2 Sam.* xxiv. 16. The Greek Text of this Passage of our Author, is different according to the Copies; the *Vatican Edit.* and *Alexand. MS.* read *ἐλίχθη τὸν ὄχλον*, and so the *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, and *Arabic* render, i. e. he overcame the Plague or Trouble, *ce Trouble*, says *Calmet*, occasioned by their Murmuring, for so *ὄχλος* sometimes signifies, as well as *Multitude*; in which last Sense, it is improperly taken by the old English Versions, for the Contest was not with the Multitude, but with the Destroyer. [I believe *ὄχλος* was designed for *χόλος*, *iram*: Which I take to be the true Reading. See *Heb.* xii. 15. *ἐνοχλή*: which in *Deut.* xxix. 18. is *ἐνοχλή*.] The *Complut.* Edit. has *ἐλίχθη τὸν ἀλοφρόνιστον*, which our Translators manifestly follow here. The Sense of the Passage in either Reading, is, that *Aaron* stopped the Plague,



Plague, or the Angel of Death, by the Word; and so the old Versions, with more Propriety, render, *i. e.* by the Prayer which he so powerfully addressed to God; *Aaron le surmonta*, says *Calmet*, *par la force de la priere qu'il adressa à Dieu*; and by reminding him of the Promises which he had made to their Forefathers, the Patriarchs, *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, the Covenant which he had entered into, and the Oath which he had sworn unto them; which last Circumstance is not mentioned in the Books of *Moses*, as an Argument, or Motive urged by *Aaron*. There seems great Strength and Energy in the original Words, λόγῳ τὸν καλῶς ἐλάτρεν, *i. e.* "by the Power of Prayer" he brought under, or into Subjection, the "Destroyer himself; and, as it were, forced or "constrained him to relent." This Efficacy, and almost uncontrollable Power of Prayer, is finely displayed upon another Instance of Disobedience, which provoked God's Displeasure against the *Israelites*; they had solemnly promised God not to worship any Image, as he had expressly forbidden them by *Moses*, and immediately after, as if in Defiance of his Vengeance, they made the *Molten Calf*, and sacrificed to it as their great Deliverer out of *Egypt*: Upon which God says to *Moses*, *Let me alone, that my Wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them*, *Exod. xxxii. 10.* intimating, as if he could do nothing against them, that his Almighty Power was restrained, so long as *Moses* prayed, and interceded for them.

Ver. 23. *For when the Dead were now fallen down by Heaps one upon another, standing between, he stayed the Wrath, and parted the Way to the Living.* The latter Part of this Verse is somewhat obscurely expressed; the Sense is, he stood between the Dead and the Living, and prayed for the People; for so *St. Jerom's Bible*, as 'tis called, adds, and stopped the Way of the Destroyer to them that remained; the *Geneva Bible* renders, *He stood in the midst, and cut off the Wrath, and parted it from coming to the Living.* See *Numb. xvi. 48.* where the *Chaldee Paraphrase* mentions *Aaron* standing praying in the midst, and with his Censer making a Separation, *Stetit Abaron in oratione in medio, & fecit interstitium cum thuribulo inter mortuos & inter vivos.*

Ver. 24. *For in the long Garment was the whole World.* [Ἐν τῷ ποδῶν καὶ ἐνδύματι ἦν ὅλος ὁ κόσμος, *In veste poderis quam habebat*, says *St. Jerom's Bible*; *i. e.* "upon the long Robe or "Garment which *Aaron* had on," (not in it, as our Version has it) was a Representation of the whole World; for upon the Skirts of the High Priest's Robe, and on his Girdle, was a Variety of peculiar Colours, as Blue, Purple, Scarlet, and White, by which four, according to *Josephus*, were represented the four Elements; for by the Scarlet, the Fire was represented; by the White Linen, the Earth; by the Blue, the Air; and by the Purple, the Water or Sea. *St. Jerom* hath the very same Conceit, *Pontifex Dei creaturarum omnium typum portans in vestibus suis.* *Epist. ad Fabiol.* which he borrowed probably from *Josephus*, *Antiq. lib. iii. c. 7.* or from *Philo*, who says, Ὅλη μὲν δὲ γέλοισιν ἀντικρίσιμα, ἢ μίμημα τῷ κόσμῳ, τὰ δὲ μέγιστα, καὶ

ὅλας μὲν. *De Mose*, lib. iii. And in many other Places he has the same Thought. *De Profug. — De Somniis.* *Clemens Alexandrinus* expresses the Sense of our Author still nearer, Τὸ δ' Ἀρχιερεὺς ὁ ποδῶν καὶ ἐνδύματι ὅλος ὁ κόσμος. *Strom. v.* See also *Ambr. De fug. sac. c. iii.* It would be tedious to mention the many Rabbinical Conceits, supposed to be mystically implied in this Imagery of the High Priest's Robe. This is a very remarkable Instance of the Allegorical Interpretation, which chiefly was in Vogue from the Time of the LXX Version, to that of *Aquila*, for near four Centuries. See *Mangey's Pref. vol. i. Philo* abounds in Expositions of this Sort: Nor is it any Wonder, that our Author, who was most probably an *Alexandrian Jew*, should affect the same: Instances of it are frequent in the Writings of *Barnabas*, *Hermas*, and others of the Apostolical Writers. And we have a very remarkable one in *St. Paul's Epistles*, Τὸ δ' Ἀγαρ Σινὴ ὅλος, *κ. τ. λ. Gal. iv. 24, 25.* But there is another Interpretation of this Passage of our Author, which is not so far fetched, or mystical, as the former, *viz.* that upon the long Garment, or High Priest's Robe, were all Sorts of Ornaments, for so κόσμος very frequently signifies, as well as the World. And some have thought this Sense of the Word to be more agreeable to the Place, and to agree better with the Context, where some of the Ornaments are mentioned, particularly the resplendent Breast-plate. In this Sense, *Junius* understands the Words, rendering, *In talari vestimento totus erat ornatus*; and thus the *Geneva Bible*, *In the long Garment was all the Ornament*; and *Coverdale's Version* is rather more expressive, *In his long Garment was all the Beauty.* [But the Greek, ὅλος ὁ κόσμος, cannot signify all Sorts of Ornaments. The first Interpretation is indisputably the true one; the latter, as being a Mistake, is scarce worth mentioning, unless as such. Ὅλος ὁ κόσμος, as *xvii. 20.* ὅλη ἡ αἰσῆς, *xix. 6.*]

*Ibid.* And in the four Rows of the Stones was the Glory of the Fathers graven.] This is a Description of the *Pectoral*, adorned with Jewels, which the High Priest wore, which were so artificially set in it, as if they were but one single Stone, though really divided into four Rows by little Partitions of Gold, and all together made a Square of precious Stone; the Greek accordingly expresses this by τέλεισι καὶ αἰσῆς in the Singular Number. Hereon were engraven in *Hebrew Characters*, the glorious Names of the Patriarchs, *Jacob's* twelve Sons, and the *Insignia* of the several Tribes, according to their Generations or Births, called here the *Fathers*, or the Heads of the Tribes; the Names of the six Elder were towards the right Shoulder, and the other six towards the left. *Joseph. Antiq. lib. iii. c. 7.* In the High Priest's Breast-plate were likewise the *Urim* and *Thummim*, which gave answer in difficult Cases; but the Learned are not agreed upon the Manner of consulting, or receiving the Answer from thence. These two Ornaments, says *St. Jerom*, which signify Light and Perfection, intimate, that in God's Ministers, Purity of Doctrine, and Holiness of Life, should always be inseparable: That Truth



Truth should be engraved in their very Heart, and that the Light within should shine forth in all that appears outwardly— not only their Words; but their Actions, their Motions, their Dress, should bespeak them more immediately the Servants of God, and have some Tendency to teach and instruct others. *Veritatem mente concipiat, & toto eam habitu resonet & ornatu, ut quicquid agit, quicquid loquitur, sit Doctrina populorum.* Hieron. Epist. 127. De vest. Sacerdot.

Ibid. *And thy Majesty upon the Diadem of his Head.*] Upon Aaron's Triple Crown or Diadem, was an Inscription of the sacred Name of God; Holiness unto the Lord, being engraved in a golden Plate upon the Forehead. We may also, with *Josephus*, understand this allegorically, that the Triple Crown and Plate of Gold represented the Glory and Majesty of the Almighty. *In loc. citat. Eccles. xlv. 12.*

Ver. 25. *Unto these the Destroyer gave Place, and was afraid of them.*] If such Regard was paid, even by the destroying Angel, to Aaron, the High Priest, appareled in his sacred Habit, appearing in his Robe of Glory, as to stop his Hand and alter his Purpose, we need wonder the less at what *Josephus* records concerning *Alexander the Great*; "Upon Intelligence that he was drawing near towards Jerusalem, Jaddus the High Priest advanced to meet him together with the rest of the Priests in the Habits of their Order, with the Citizens in a venerable Pomp and Solemnity. When Alexander saw from a Distance the Order of the Procession, the People all in White, with the Priests at the Head of them in their silken Robes, and the High Priest himself in his purple Stole, embroidered with Gold, his Mitre upon his Head, and a Golden Plate upon his Forehead, with the Name of God engraven upon it, the Majesty of this Spectacle struck him with so reverend an Awe, that he advanced to, and embraced Jaddus, adored the sacred Inscription, and, instead of destroying the City, he went up to the Temple, and sacrificed there in Form." *Antiq. lib. xi. c. 8.*

Ibid. *For it was enough that they only tasted of the Wrath.*] We may hence see the Truth of that Observation, *The effectual fervent Prayer of a righteous Man availeth much*, James v. 16. For, upon the Intercession of Aaron, God thought fit to spare the rest of the People, and to give a Specimen only of his Displeasure for the Instruction of such as yet remained alive. His Design was, by a Taste only of his Severity, to make his Chosen sensible of the great Danger of failing in their Duty and Obedience to him, and how dreadful and insupportable the Fury of his Wrath must be.—But he dealt not so favourably with the Egyptians, upon whom his Vengeance was poured out in full Measure, when he smote all the First-born in Egypt, the most Principal and Mightiest in the Dwellings of Ham, *Psal. lxxviii. 52.* [At the End of this Chapter, there seems to be wanting the Word *δικαίως* (as *γ'* 20.) after or before *ικανή*: To which is opposed *ἀσέβως* in the Beginning of the next Chapter: thus, *ἢ γὰρ μόνον ἡ πείρα* &

*ὁργῆς δικαίως ἱκανή* πρὸς τὴν ἀσέβειαν μέχρη τέλους, &c. See upon ch. xi. 9.]

## CHAP. XIX.

## The ARGUMENT.

**G**OD's Vengeance against Sinners further shewn in the final Overthrow of the Egyptians in the Red Sea, whilst the Israelites, his Chosen, passed over it as on dry Land, upon which Occasion Moses composed an *ᾠδὴν*, or Hymn of Thanksgiving. A Recapitulation of some of the former Plagues, and of particular Mercies vouchsafed to the Israelites in the Wilderness. The Author concludes the Book with a fine Observation, that universal Nature is obsequious to God's Will; that all the Elements fulfil his Pleasure, and change their known Qualities and Powers, either to take Vengeance upon his Enemies, or to succour and protect his Chosen.

Ver. 1. *As for the Ungodly, Wrath came upon them without Mercy unto the End: For he knew before what they would do.*] This, says *Calmet*, should be joined to the former Chapter, in which the Author mentions, that the Wrath of God being hot against the murmuring Israelites, Aaron stopped its Progress; but, says he, when God determines to take Vengeance of the Egyptians, nothing is able to stop or withstand it; it admits of no Intercession, nor knows any Mitigation or End.—After having smote them with successive Plagues, and slain all their First-born in the same Instant, his Severity and Indignation pursues them *μέχρη τέλους*, to the very last, to an utter End of them, which was accomplished by their final Overthrow in the Red Sea. God knew the Obstinacy and Stubbornness of Pharaoh; he had pronounced of him long before, that he would not hearken unto Moses, nor regard any or all the Wonders and Signs done by him, *Exod. vii. 4.* He knew the evil Heart of the Egyptians, and their inveterate Malice against Israel, and he prepared a Punishment suitable to their insidious Design, and wicked Intention.

Ver. 2. *How that having given them leave to depart, and sent them hastily away.*] *Καὶ μετὰ ταῦτα προπέμφαντες αὐτοὺς* which signifies something more than hastily; it means, that they not only urged them to be gone, but assisted them in their Departure, and furnished them with all Necessaries that they wanted for their Journey, which is confirmed by *προπέμφαντες*, which is joined to it, for so this very Phrase is used by St. Paul, *Ζηνοῦν καὶ Ἀπολλῶν προπέμψον*, i. e. *Help Zenas and Apollos forward on their Journey with Care and Diligence*; and this is explained by the Words which immediately follow, *ἵνα μηδὲν αὐτοῖς λείπῃ*, that they may want nothing, *Tit. iii. 13.* See also *Acts xv. 3.* This hasty Departure of the Israelites was foretold *Exod. xi. 1.* where the Hebrew reads, *When he shall send you away, he shall thrusting thrust you out from hence altogether.* The Translation of the LXX too is very strong and remarkable in this Place, *ἐκβαλεῖ ὑμᾶς ἐκβαλῆ*, where the very manner of the Expression



Expression implies Begeriness and Impatience to perform it. But the Chaldee Paraphrase upon the Place is most full to the present Purpose, *Expellende expellet vos, & cum dimiserit, exitum erit ipse*, and, in the Account which follows after, *Ezed. xii. 33.* relating to their Departure, it is said, that the Egyptians were urgent upon the People that they might send them out of the Land in haste; where the LXX render, with a peculiar Emphasis, *καὶ ἐκείνη ἡ ἡμέρα ἐκβλήθη αὐτοὶ*. And the learned Rabbins observe, that the Hebrew Word which expresses Haste, and is used in this Place upon the Occasion, hath in it an extraordinary Mark (noted also in the Hebrew Margin) which encreaseth the Signification, and implies a more than ordinary Care and Haste in urging their Departure. And no wonder that they were so importunate to have them instantly gone; for they said, as the same Paraphrase continues the Account, *Si moram traserint ipsi hic horam unam, ecce omnes Egyptii mortui*, "If the Israelites continue here one Hour longer, we are all dead Men;" and therefore what Josephus adds is not improbable, that the Egyptians made the Hebrews very considerable Presents to induce them to go the sooner away.

Ver. 3. *For whilst they were yet mourning and making Lamentation at the Graves of the Dead.* This is not fully expressed, and probably wrong translated: In the Original it is, *וַיִּבְכּוּ וַיִּשְׁחַקוּ וַיִּשְׁחַקוּ וַיִּבְכּוּ*, which means a great deal more, as I apprehend, than bare crying and bewailing; *וַיִּשְׁחַקוּ*, or *וַיִּשְׁחַקוּ* may, indeed, express inward Sorrow; but it seems little less than a Solocism to describe such a Passion of the Mind by *וַיִּשְׁחַקוּ*. I am inclined rather to understand and apply this Phrase to the then Employment of the Egyptians after the great Loss of their First-born, that they determined to set forward, and pursue the Israelites, even then, when all Hands were employed in making the usual necessary Funeral Preparations for their Dead; for thus I understand *וַיִּבְכּוּ וַיִּשְׁחַקוּ*, which the Egyptians observed very strictly, and, according to *Herodotus* and *Diodorus Siculus*, were not wanting in, either to the better, middle, or even the meaner Sort. They mention likewise the Manner of these Preparations, how, and at what Rates they were performed, and that the Whole took up a very considerable Time; which is confirmed from *Gen. l. 30.* where the *יָמֵי הַמּוֹרָה*, or the Days of Mourning, as our Translators there render, are said to be seventy Days, which were not so many Days of mere Sorrow, but were the allotted Days for the Funeral Preparations, and the Performance of those previous Rites, and religious Ceremonies to the Body of Jacob deceased, which were usual and customary among the Egyptians; and Joseph, as living among them, or for other Reasons, thought fit to follow on this Occasion. See *Bishop Patrick in loc.* Our Version therefore seems again mistaken, when it represents the Egyptians, in so short a time, making Lamentations at the Graves of the Dead, just before their Pursuit of the Israelites, which some make to be Three Days only, others Six after their general Ca-

lamity! See *Usher's Annals ad an. Mund. 2513.* *Herodotus* expressly mentions, that till the Seventy Days for the Funeral Preparations were expired, the Egyptians did not put the Body into the Coffin, *lib. ii. c. 86.* which seems confirmed from the Order observed in Jacob's Burying, which was after the Egyptian Manner, for when the set Days for the Funeral Preparations were fulfilled, the Sacred Text says, they then set forward, in order to bury him: The Crying, therefore, or Lamentation here mentioned, could not be at the Graves of the First-born, for it must be much too early in point of Time, according to the best Accounts which are given of the Egyptian Customs, on such Occasions; they seem rather to be crying over the *Exequiarum iusta*, the Preparations they were then making for their future Interment, while they were getting Things ready, their Ointments, Spices, Gams, Linen, and other Necessaries for Embalming, called *טָפֶסֶת*, *Gen. l. 2.* and thus *טָפֶסֶת* itself seems sometimes used. The whole Passage may more properly be understood thus: "While they were busy, and all Hands were employed in making the necessary Funeral Preparations, and were lamenting at, or over the Provisions making for their Embalment and Interment; in the midst of this Work, which Prescription, Piety, and a Love for their deceased Children had engaged them in, they set forward out of Revenge, to pursue the Israelites."

*Ibid.* They added another foolish Device, and pursued them as Fugitives, whom they had entreated to be gone. *l. 8.* They on a sudden changed their Minds, and foolishly followed a different Resolution, and pursued after the Israelites as so many Fugitives, not only because they returned not at the Time expected, and the Labour of so many Hands was in Danger to be lost; but they represented them as Robbers, Persons, who under the Notion of borrowing, had run away with their Goods, and spoiled them of their Riches and Substance. And thus *Fugitives* is used frequently by the old Comedians; and so in *St. Paul's Epistle to Philemon*, where mention is made of *Onesimus* running away, which *St. Paul* artfully softens, calling it a departing only, it follows after, *If he have wronged thee, &c. v. 18.* It was certainly the Effect of a divine Infatuation, that the Egyptians should pursue after the Israelites so far, and in such a desperate Manner, when they saw, or might have perceived the Red Sea open her Bosom to give Passage to God's Chosen. A very learned Writer thinks the Egyptians might reason thus: "Who knows whether all *Moses's* Power be not confined only to the Meridian of Egypt, or whether his Commission may extend over *Palestine* and *Madian*? Probably, though his Command was great over the Wind and Water, over the Air and Clouds, over the Dust of the Earth, and over all senseless and irrational Creatures; yet he may have no such great Command over Armies or Hosts of Men. Upon these, and the like Presumptions, they became desperately resolute to be avenged upon the Israelites."



"Israelites for all the Miseries and Losses which Moses had brought upon them, especially as they knew the Israelites had no Skill in Arms, and had no offensive Weapons with them." *Jackson's Works*, tom. iii. c. 40. But God gave that great Leviathan Pharaoh, for so the Psalmist expressly calls him, and his mighty Army, as a Prey to the promiscuous Sorts of ravenous Creatures, which inhabit the Wilderness, *λαοὶ τοῖς Αἰθίοψι*, as the LXX express it, *Psal. lxxiv. 14.*

Ver. 4. *For the Destiny whereof they were worthy, drew them unto this End.* *Εἰς αὐτὸς ἡ ἀνάγκη τῆς τύχης αὐτῶν, ἡ. ε.* a wretched Stupidity and Fatality possessed them, which hurried them on to this, *ad hanc rem trahebat*, says the Arabic, or to this desperate Resolution, the End and Conclusion of all, and which completed all their Misfortunes, and made them insensible of what they had already suffered, that they might fill up the Measure of the Punishment designed them, which was to be in a very uncommon and exemplary Manner: "For had Pharaoh and his People died of the Pestilence, or other Disease, when their Cattle perished by the Murrain, the Terror of God's powerful Wrath had not been so visible to all the World, as it was in the Overthrowing the whole Strength of Egypt at once, which had taken Arms, and set themselves in Battle against him: Now the stronger the Infatuation, and the more ignominious and general this Destruction of Pharaoh and his mighty Host was, the more was his glorious Power manifested, and the brighter did the Riches of his Goodness shine towards his Favourite Israelites, whom no secondary means could have affected so much, as the perpetual Memory of this great Victory." *Jackson in loc. cit.* There is an Expression like this of our Author's in *Josephus*, who, describing the Calamities of his Countrymen, under *Vespasian*, says, *πεπρωμένοι τῷ τῷ χρεώ, ὅ τῃ τε πόλει καὶ αὐτοῖς ἰδὴ παρέη*: that they were blinded by that Destiny or Fate which hung over them and the City: And the same Infatuation was upon this People in order to their Captivity in *Babylon*, and the Destruction of their City and Temple by the *Chaldeans*: And many other Examples there are in every Age of the World of such judicial Infatuations, as betrayed particular Persons, or whole Nations, into that Ruin and Destruction which God justly decreed for them. So true is that Observation, *Quos Jupiter vult perdere, dementat prius*, That God first infatuates those whom he intends to destroy.

Ver. 5. *That thy People might pass a wonderful Way.* It was likewise through the Permission of God that the Israelites were pursued by the Egyptians, that he might shew his Power and Mercy to them in their great Deliverance; for the Israelites were shut up into so narrow a Compass by their Pursuers, between impassable Mountains and the Red Sea, that it was impossible for them to have escaped; there was no Thought of flying, and as they had no Arms, they could not fight; and if they continued where they were, they must inevitably have been starved: In this Streight and Danger, Moses, by God's Command, strikes the Sea

with his Rod, and opens a Way through the Water for the Israelites' Passage and Escape, called here *ὁδοποιεῖα καὶ ἐξόδος*, a surprizing or incredible March. See *Joseph. Ant. lib. ii. c. 15.*

*Ibid.* But they might find a strange Death. The Egyptians, when they saw the Israelites marching forward in the Sea, without any Inconvenience or Impediment, made no doubt but the same Way was equally safe for them; they did not apprehend that Divine Justice had opened this Way, at the same time, for the Preservation of his Chosen, and the Destruction of their Oppressors: Upon viewing, therefore, the safe Passage of the Israelites, and their successful Progress, they advanced into the Sea with the more Eagerness, which returned upon them with great Violence, and destroyed the whole Army, that not a Messenger was left to carry the Tidings. *Josephus* computes the Number of the Egyptians that perished in the Red Sea, to be Fifty thousand Horsemen, and Two hundred thousand Foot, and Six hundred Chariots, *Antiq. lib. ii. c. 15.* That such an infinite Number of Persons should perish at the same Time, by the Return of the mighty Waters, may well be called *ἐξέσθαι καὶ θάνατος*, a new and an unusual kind of Death, never before heard of, but at the universal Deluge; and the Judgment of God was more visible in it, upon Account of the far greater Number that were destroyed, than when the Earth opened her Mouth and swallowed up *Corah* and his rebellious Company, which the LXX call *φύσμα*, an unusual Sight, and a very surprizing Accident. God vouchsafed the like Favour to the Israelites in the Days of *Joshua*, when the Waters of *Jordan* being cut off, and standing upon an Heap, the Children of Israel passed over it on dry Ground, *Josh. iii. 17.*

Ver. 6. *For the whole Creature in his proper Kind, was fashioned again anew.* *Ὅλη δὲ ἡ κτίσις ἐν ἰδίᾳ ἥντι παλαιᾷ ἀνωθεν διανομήται*, i. e. by a supernatural Power from on high. See the like Use of *ἀνωθεν*, *Luke i. 3.* *John iii. 31.* *James i. 17. iii. 17.* in all which Places it is used in the Sense of *ἀνωθεν*. [In the Opinion of some. But more probably wrong understood so.] *Junius* renders *Tota creatura in suo genere de integro superne reformabatur*; and the Syriac and Arabic Interpreters both express *ἀνωθεν* by *superne*: Ours, and the old English Versions follow the *Vulgate*. The Expression of fashioning the Creature again a-new, very much resembles the Mode of the Hebrew Language; for where Mention is made in Scripture of the Lord's making a new Thing, that is, altering the Course of Nature by some Miracle, in the Hebrew it is expressed by, *the Lord creating a Creature*. See particularly *Numb. xvi. 30.* The Sense of the Passage here is, that the Elements were so altered in their Operations, and diversified in their Effects, through the Power of God, that there seemed to be, as it were, a new Creation; for there was nothing but Miracle, either when God would punish his Enemies, or protect his Chosen: Or there may be another Sense of this Place, says *Calmet*, "That the Creatures seemed to return to their first and primigenial State, in which they were at the Beginning of the Creation;



"Creation; Matter again appeared indifferent to all Sorts of Forms, so obedient was it to follow and execute all the Orders of its Maker; the Elements, in particular, were not any more what they were before, or in Times past, but they seemed, as at the Beginning, to have assumed a new Form, so singular and extraordinary was their Power."

*Comm. in loc.* Which I apprehend to be the Sense of the *Vulgate*, though obscurely expressed.

Ver. 7. (As namely) *a Cloud shadowing the Camp.* Τῇ δὲ νεφέλῃ σκιάζοντι τὸν ὄμιον, according to the *Alexand. MS.* i. e. the *Israelites* were kept unhurt by the Cloud shadowing the Camp; which seems far preferable to the *Vatican Reading*. [But, on second Thoughts, cannot be admitted.] There were Three several Uses of the Cloud that attended the *Israelites*. 1. To guide them in their Journeys; and this it did as a Pillar going before them. 2. To preserve them from the Heat of the Sun in the Wilderness; and then it was spread out like a Covering, *Psal.* cv. 38. and was a Cloud shadowing the Camp in this Sense. 3. It served to defend them from their Enemies, that they might not be able to assault them; and so it stood between the Host of *Israel* and that of the *Egyptians*, and was a Cloud of Darkness to the latter, hindering them from any Approach to the *Israelites* in their Pursuit after them, *Exod.* xiv. 20. This last Sense seems most proper to this Place. I have before observed (see Note on ch. x. v. 17.) that this Miracle has been greatly misrepresented by some modern Freethinkers, as if there was not any real Cloud, but only an occasional Fire made by the *Israelites*, for a Blind to their Enemies, and to lead them into a Mistake: But not only this Writer, and the Son of *Sirach*, *Eccles.* xxiv. 3, 4. but the inspired Penmen make this Cloud to be supernatural, the Work of the Divinity itself, *Numb.* xiv. 14. *Psal.* lxxviii. 14. xcix. 7. cv. 39. *Philo* in particular, who speaks the Sense of the *Jewish Synagogue* and *Alexandrian Schools*, speaks thus of the Cloudy Pillar and the *Israelites* Deliverance: "God does not succour or save in any such sort as Man; 'tis peculiar to him to interpose his Omnipotence where all human Means fail." And accordingly he makes this whole Matter miraculous, conducted by an invisible Angel, and the Cloud so thick and extensive, as even to cover the Face of Heaven. *De vita Moysi*. From this extraordinary and supernatural Cloud we may derive probably that Part of Poetical Machinery of the Heathen Deities appearing in, or with a Cloud, so frequent to be met with in profane Writings.

*Ibid.* And where Water stood before, dry Land appeared; and out of the Red Sea, a Way without Impediment; and out of the violent Stream, a green Field.] It would be more properly rendered, "In the Red Sea, or through it, was there a Way made, without any Danger or Impediment." And thus the *Psalmist*, *He led them through the Deep, as through the Wilderness*, ἀδύνατον αὐτοῖς ἐν ἀβύσσῳ, ὡς ἐν ἐρήμῳ, according to the *LXX Psal.* cvi. 9. and the *Syriac* renders, in like manner, *Aperita est in Mari Rubro via expedita*, and so do the *Old English*

Versions. But, according to this Writer, God not only made a Passage for his People in or through the Red Sea, by gathering the Waters thereof together into Heaps, whereby the dry Land appeared, as in the Beginning when the Earth came from the Bosom of the Waters, *Gen.* i. 9. but he adorned their Way by a beautiful Appearance of Herbs and Flowers. [Out of the Red Sea—and out of the violent Stream, is a literal Translation, and not amiss. It might have been continued in the same Form in which the foregoing Clause is rendered: And where Water stood before, dry Land appeared; and where the Red Sea was, there a Way without Impediment appeared; and where a violent Stream, there a Field bearing Grass appeared (or, was seen, ἰδεσθῆναι.) It is not χλωρὸν πεδῖον, a green Field, but χλωροφάν, Grass bearing: But it cannot properly be rendered, in the Red Sea, or through it, was there a Way made. For that, though it be true, is not the meaning of the Greek here.] Some have represented this as a real Description of the Bottom of the Red Sea; but it seems rather to be a Conceit founded upon some *Rabbinical Tradition*, or an *Hyperbole* and *Exaggeration*, to express the happy Success of the *Israelites*, and the easiness of their Passage; for there is no Foundation anywhere in Scripture for such a Notion, nor in any History of good Authority. *Pliny* indeed mentions, that the Red Sea was in many Places interspersed with Trees, and some of them bearing Fruit, and had the Appearance of a floating Wood, *Rubrum mare, & tatus Orientis oceanus refertus est sylvis*, lib. xiii. c. 25. But this, if true, would rather hinder and obstruct the *Israelites* Passage, than any ways contribute to forward it. 'Tis remarkable that *Josephus*, when he describes this very surprizing and extraordinary March of his Countrymen through the Red Sea, extenuates the Miracle undesignedly by the very Comparison, which he brings to illustrate it, and lessens the Wonder of the Fact, while he would accommodate it to the Heathens Faith; he was afraid lest the Gentiles should scruple to believe, that the unruly Waves of the Sea gave back at the shaking of a Rod, or the Voice of a Man; and therefore to make this the more easily believed, he intimates very injudiciously, that this Passage of the *Israelites* was like that of *Alexander the Great* and his Companions through the *Pamphylian Sea*: "Whether, says he, the Thing was done by God's extraordinary Will and Appointment, or by the Course of Nature, no Man ought so to wonder, as if it were a Thing unheard of, that the Sea should make way for the Men of those old and innocent Times, when, but the other Day as it were, the *Pamphylian Ocean* gave way to *Alexander* and his Followers, rather than any thing should hinder the Design which God had purposed to put a Period to the Kingdom of *Persia*." *Antiq.* lib. ii. c. 16. But that this Passage of *Alexander* and his Companions ought not to be compared, much less equalled with this of the *Israelites* through the Red Sea, appears from *Strabo*, who acquaints us, that where *Alexander* and his Men passed over, there was a narrow Passage upon the Shore, which, at a low



low Ebb is so dry, or the Waters however so low, that they may be passed over on Foot. *Lib. xiv. and Plat. in Vit. Alexand.* But there is no ground to suppose any Reflex of the Waters, or narrow Passage of the Red Sea to help the Israelites over.

[Ver. 8. Seeing thy marvellous Wonders. Greek θαυμάσιος θαυμάσια τέρατα, having seen wonderful Prodigies.]

Ver. 9. For they went at large like Horses.] *ὡς ἢ ἵπποι ἐπεμύθησαν* which is the Reading of the Vatican Copy, and of the Alexand. MS. The Generality of Commentators understand this of the Israelites exulting for the great Plenty of Manna which God vouchsafed them in the Wilderness, and that by it they grew wanton, like Horses high fed. Others confine the Sense to the Joy expressed by them for their unexpected Deliverance, sporting themselves, *χλονόρον πεδίω*, & 7. like Horses at full Liberty. *Badwell* prefers *ἐχρημέτισαν*, binniebant, which, he says, is the Reading of the most correct Copies, [of which however there is no mention in the Var. Lect. of Bos.] and with him agree *Vatablus* and the Geneva Version, i. e. That the Israelites neighed, rejoiced, and wantoned like Horses coming to a green fresh Pasture, after having been long kept up and confined in the Stable. This Simile is beautifully expressed by *Homer* in the following Lines :

ὡς δ' ὅτε τις εἰσὶν ἵππος, ἀποστήσας ὅππ' ὀρέγῃ,  
Δασμὸν δασυρήξας θείει πεδίοιο χροαίνων,  
Βιάθως ἀέθου ἐυρήει· πολάμοιο,  
Κυδιόων· ὕψ' ἢ καίη· ἔχει, ἀμφὶ ἢ χαίται  
ὦμοις αἰσάρον· ὁ δ' ἀγλαΐῃφι πεποθώς,  
Ῥιμφα ἰ γῆνα φέρε· μέλα τ' ἤθεα καὶ νομὸν ἵππων.  
Il. vi. & 506.

which beautiful Comparison *Virgil* has happily imitated :

Qualis ubi abruptis fugit præsepia vinculis  
Tandem liber Equus, campoque potitus aperto,  
Aut ille in pastus armentaque tendit equarum,  
Aut assuetus aquæ perfundi flumine noto  
Emicat, arrectisque fremit cervicibus altè  
Luxurians: luduntque jubæ per colla, per armos.  
Æn. lib. xi.

There is the same Simile, and upon the very same Occasion, *Isa. lxiii. 12, 13.* where God is described as conducting the Israelites by the Right-hand of *Moses*, With his glorious Arm dividing the Water before them, to make himself an everlasting Name, leading them through the Deep as an Horse in the Wilderness, that they should not stumble. See *Habak. iii. 15.*

*Ibid.* And skipped like Lambs.] The Israelites are frequently represented in Scripture as a Flock, under the Conduct of their Shepherd *Moses*: They are so described *Isa. lxiii. 9, 11. Psal. lxxvii. 20. lxxviii. 52. Συμπαῖν*, by which the Joy of the Israelites is expressed, properly belongs to Beasts, and is here, by an elegant Metaphor, applied to Persons. See *Malachi iv. 2.* in the LXX. *Luke vi. 23.* and in the same Manner it is used by *Euripides*. It was thus *David* expressed his Joy before the Ark, by bounding and springing from the Ground by the most sprightly and playful Motion, *2 Sam. vi. 16.* remarkable in, and peculiar to the Lamb

and the Deer: In like manner we find the Passions of Men frequently applied to Beasts, and even inanimate Things, both in sacred and profane Writings.

*Ibid.* Praising thee, O Lord, who badst delivered them.] This Blessing of their Deliverance from the Dangers of the Red Sea, and the visible Overthrow of all their Pursuers in it, was so unexpected and acceptable, that the Israelites spent that whole Night in Hymns and Thanksgivings to God. *Moses*, in particular, composed a Song, *Exod. xv.* (which many learned Men suppose to be in Hexameter Verse, *Joseph. Antiq. lib. ii. cap. ult. Euseb. Prepar. Evangel. lib. xi. c. 3.*) to the Honour of God upon this joyful Occasion, and in Memory of their great Escape from the Violence of the Waves, through his Almighty Power, which the Waters saw, were afraid of, and retired, *Psal. lxxvii. 16.*—*Refluum trepidavit æquor*, as *Cowley* well expresses it. This Mercy of God to the Jewish Nation, and his Command over the insensible and unruly Element, is finely displayed, in *Psal. cxiv.* When Israel came out of Egypt, and the House of Jacob from among the strange People, Judah was his (God's) Sanctuary, and Israel his Dominion. The Sea saw that, i. e. perceived his Presence, and fled—At the 5th Verse, the Question is asked by one Part of the Choir, What aileth thee, O thou Sea, that thou fleddest? *Τί σοι ἐστίν, θάλασσα, ὅτι ἐφυγες.* And the Answer is very beautifully returned by the other, according to the LXX Version (for this is one of those Psalms that was sung alternately) ἀπὸ προσώπου Κυρίου ἐσαλεύθη ἡ γῆ, δὸν προσώπῳ τῷ Θεῷ Ἰακώβ, & 7. *Lactantius* represents the Israelites as conducted through the Red Sea by an Angel, or rather the Angel, so often spoken of in the Old Testament, *In qua educatione ostendit virtutem majestatis sue Deus. Trajecit enim populum medio Mari Rubro, præcedente Angelo, & scindente aquam, ut populus per siccum gradi possit.*—*Laet. De vera Sapient. lib. iv.* the same divine Person, whom *Clemens Alexandrinus* calls *Μουσικὸς Ἀγγελος*, and supposes to be the Conductor of Israel out of Egypt. *Virgil* has a Thought which very much resembles the Scripture Account of this Miracle, where he makes the Goddess *Cyrene* in the beautiful Episode of *Aristæus*, to divide the Waters for his Passage, and even to compel them to stand on an Heap, as the Psalmist expresses it,

simul alta jubet discedere late  
Flumina, quæ Juvenis gressus inferret, at illum  
Curvata in Montis faciem circumstetit unda,  
Accepitque sinu vasto. Georg. iv. & 339.

Ver. 10. For they were yet mindful of the things that were done while they sojourned (in the strange Land).] *Εμνημόνευτο ὃ ἐτι τῶν ἐν τῇ παροιῶν αὐτῶν.* The Words in the Parenthesis are added, by our Translators, for Explanation Sake, and are properly enough inserted to confine the Sense to what happened in their sojourning in Egypt. The Place itself may be differently interpreted, according as we understand it of the Israelites, as on the Banks of the Red Sea, immediately after their Passage; or of them after their Continuance in the Wilderness



ness for some considerable Time. If taken in the former Sense, is it any Wonder that the *Israelites* should be yet mindful of the Plagues of *Egypt*, which were so very lately inflicted, and some indeed but just passed, and all of them together, according to the learned *Usher's* Account, *Ann. ad A. M. 2513*. lasted barely a Month, and even according to the *Jewish* Computation, which is the longest, not a Twelve-month. Some Criticks therefore understand it here, which the *Oriental* Versions wholly omit, in the Sense of *moreover*, or *besides*, "That in the midst of their Triumph for their present Deliverance, it was an Increase of their Joy, when they remembered besides in how many other Instances God had interposed in their Favour when they were in *Egypt*, and the signal Difference he made in the Execution of his Plagues, between the *Egyptians* and his chosen." Or it may be understood of the *Israelites* after their Continuance for some considerable Time in the Wilderness, "That the Sense of the many signal Mercies which God had vouchsafed to them in their *Egyptian* Bondage, was not yet obliterated; they compared the Plagues inflicted on their Enemies with the many Blessings conferred upon themselves; how the River *Nile*, contrary to its Nature, was troubled with foul Blood; and instead of Fishes, which it furnished before in great abundance, and was indeed the usual Food of the Inhabitants, *Numb. xi. 5*. cast forth disagreeable Shoals of Frogs. *Exod. viii.* That the Soil of *Egypt*, rich and fruitful as it was, instead of Cattle and Creatures useful, bred venomous Flies, and swarmed with noxious and destructive Animals.—They remembered how, thro' the Providence of God, and his distinguishing Care over them, they were free at the same time from the general Calamities; and when the Earth and Water both conspired to plague the *Egyptians*, those very Elements favoured the *Israelites*, the former in supplying them with Food, and the latter by opening a Passage for them." [For ἐμμένον, ὅς ἐστι—I believe the Author wrote ἡδὴ τῶν, &c. as xviii. 9. Παύσαν ἡδὴ προαναμελπομένων, &c. For now they remembered the Things that had befallen them while they were sojourners. The mistake might arise from the Likeness of the Sound in ἡδὴ and ὅς: And this has happened to other Authors in these same Words.]

Ibid. *How the Ground brought forth Flies instead of Cattle.* The marginal Reading is, *Lice*, "What is more despicable, says *Philo*, than a Louse? And yet of such Force and Momentum did these Vermin prove, as even to extort from the *Egyptians* an open Confession and Acknowledgment that this was the Finger of God, who can make the most inconsiderable Creatures become terrible, when appointed to execute his Vengeance." *De vita Moysi*, lib. i. Our Version here is not very accurate, or rather this Writer, for the Ground, in reality, does not bring forth Flies, much less Cattle; the Meaning is, and the Sense is more natural and just, that the Ground was so disposed by God, as to be a proper *Nidus* for the Generation of Flies, but did not afford

its usual Nourishment for the Support and Increase of Cattle. This Explication is favoured by *Psal. civ. 14*, where the *Psalmist* enumerating the gracious Dispensations of God's Providence, says, *He bringeth forth Grass for the Cattle*; and immediately after he is said to bring, *ἔκγειν*, (the Word here used) Bread and Wine out of the Earth, for the Comfort and Refreshment of Men; where the Sense is not, that God bringeth these good Creatures themselves immediately out of the Earth, but makes it fruitful, and disposes it in a manner proper for the producing them. [Ἄνθρωποι καὶ ζῶα ἐκ γῆς Flies instead of Animals, or living Creatures. As if Flies were not living Creatures or ζῶα. This is a strange Passage, unless the Context be faulty. From the Word ἐκγειν, in the opposite Part of the Sentence, it should seem that, instead of ζῶα, he ought to have written χερσαίων. So *19. ἔκγειν ὅς ἐστι* ENTAPA μὴ ζῶα.]

Ver. 11. *But afterwards they saw a new Generation of Fowls, when, being led with their Appetite, they asked delicate Meats.* The Meaning here is, that, as the Ground was so disposed as to bring forth Flies, and the River Frogs, for the Punishment of the *Egyptians* in an unprecedented Manner, so, to shew his Favour to the *Israelites*, God furnished them in the Wilderness with a new Sort or Generation of Fowls for their Entertainment. But we are not to imagine that the Quails, which are the Fowls here referred to, were, at that time, a Species new created, or miraculous, as having never before existed: The Expression is figurative, and intimates, either that these Birds were in the Desert, where they did not use to appear, or that they were new with respect to the *Israelites*, or that the Manner of their appearing in such large Flocks was unusual. *Moses*, who mentions this after a more simple Manner, says only, that a Wind from the Lord carried them into the Wilderness, and made them fall round about the Tents of the *Israelites*. *Josephus* supposes these Birds to come from the *Arabian Gulf*, and then adds very oddly, that they were so tired with crossing it, that they dropt down, being quite weary, into the Camp of the *Hebrews*. *Antiq. lib. iii. c. 1.* as if it was likely that they should be tired just at that particular Spot, and could not fly further, or stop shorter, or that God himself, by whose Orders they were sent, had not directed their Course, and appointed where they should fall. This seems another Instance, where *Josephus*, by attempting a Solution, extenuates the Miracle.

Ver. 12. *For Quails came up unto them from the Sea for their Contentment.* *Εἰς τὸν ὄχλον αὐτῶν ἀνέβη ἀπὸ τῆς θαλάσσης ὄρνιθες.* There is no Necessity for supposing, as some have fancifully done, that one particular Bird, the Guide and Conductor of a great Number that followed, is here meant, for ὄρνιθες, by *Synecdoche*, is put for a Multitude of them. Instances of this are frequent in the sacred Writings, particularly in the Scripture Account of the Plagues of *Egypt*: Thus, where it is said in our Version, that the Frogs came up, and covered the Land, the LXX render, *Ἀνέβησαν δὲ βαίτες ἅς, καὶ ἐκάλυψαν τὴν γῆν Αἰγύπτου*, *Exod. viii.*



viii. 6. and so it is in the Hebrew. And, in the Description of the Plague of Lice, *Exod. viii. 17*, the Hebrew again expresses it by the Singular Number. The like may be observed of the Locusts, which, though they are described as covering the Face of the whole Earth, and darkening the Land through the Infinity of their Number, *Exod. x. 12, 14*, yet, in the Original, are mentioned only as one, the Locust. And the LXX expresses it in like Manner, Ἀναβήτω αἰεὶς ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν, καὶ προσέσται αὐτῇ καὶ χίτων πνικτήναι αἰεὶς, καὶ μετὰ ταῦτα ἐκ ἔσου ἔσται. [It should be observed that the good Greek Writers, when a Word in the Singular Number is used for a Multitude of any kind, I believe, always place an Article before that Word, as ἡ ἵππος, ὁ ὄψις, for οἱ ἵπποι (or ἡ ἱππικὴ δύναμις) οἱ ὄψις, &c. Our Author had omitted the Article before in this same Word, ch. xvi. 2. and y. 10. of this xix<sup>th</sup> chap. συνέτα for τὸ συνέτα, though there, indeed, he is acquitted by the Alexand. and Complut. which read συνέτα.]

Ver. 13. And Punishments came upon the Sinners, not without former Signs, by the Force of Thunders. The rendering of the Geneva Bible is more intelligible here, But Punishments came upon the Sinners, not without Signes, that were given by great Thundrings, which seems preferable too, as it preserves the Opposition better, and the Syriac and Arabic render in like Manner. I cannot agree with those Interpreters, that would refer this Passage to the Desolation occasioned by the strange Lightning and Hail, mentioned ch. xvi. 22. for then the Pointing should be different, nor do we read of any Signs preceding that Plague. I am more inclined to understand it of the great Overthrow in the Red Sea, "That as God had given the Israelites many Tokens and Proofs of his Favour, to encourage their Trust and Dependence upon him, so with respect to the Egyptians, called here emphatically the Sinners, their sad Calastrophe came not upon them without Warning, and the Notice of foreboding Thunders." This is agreeable to what Josephus writes, "That this Judgment was preceded with fierce Winds and Tempests, violent Storms of Hail and Rain, and terrible Thunderings and Lightnings." *Antiq. lib. ii. ch. 16.* And this probably is meant by those Words of Moses, that the Lord troubled the Host of the Egyptians, and took off their Chariot Wheels, that they drove them heavily, *Exod. xiv. 24.* And to this learned Men apply those Words of the Psalmist, The Clouds poured out Water, the Air thundered, and thine Arrows went abroad: The Voice of thy Thunder was heard round about, (where the LXX read very remarkably, Φωνὴ τῆς θεότητος σου ἐν τῷ τροχῷ, rotā Curruum, according to the Vulgate) the Lightnings shone upon the Ground, the Earth was moved, and shook withal, *Psal. lxxvii. 17, 18.* See *De Muis, Hammond, Patrick in loc.*

Ibid. For they suffered justly, according to their own Wickedness, inasmuch as they used a more hard and hateful Behaviour towards Strangers. The Sense of this whole Verse, according to Grotius, is, that the Punishment of the Egyptians did not happen to them without proper

Warning of the Consequence of their inhuman Behaviour, which they might have learnt from the Punishment of the People of Sodom in particular, whom the Lord destroyed with Fire from Heaven for their great Wickedness and Inhospitality. And indeed their Punishment is expressly mentioned by St. Peter, as a designed Example of God's Vengeance upon the Ungodly to all future Ages. Calmet's Exposition is to the same Purpose, "That the Goodness of God had a long Time before given notice to the Egyptians of the Misfortunes which threatened them, by the Thunder and Fire from Heaven, which fell upon the Sodomites for their Inhumanity towards Strangers, in which the Egyptians imitating, or rather exceeding them, might have read their own Fate." *Comm. in loc.* Philo speaks of their Behaviour towards the Jews in like Manner, and takes notice of the like aggravating Circumstances, Ζῆνοι ἦσαν οἱ Ἰσραῖτοι . . . καὶ τρεῖς τινὰ ἰκέται, κ. τ. λ. *Judei, externi & hospites erant (cum auctores generis fame coacti per inopiam alimentorum Babylone, & ex superioribus satrapiis profecti in Aegyptum demigrassent) & quodam modo supplices, tanquam in Asylum sacrum, ad fidem Regis, & incolarum misericordiam confugerant. . . . Eos igitur qui Patriam reliquerant, in Aegyptum advenerant, ut in altera patria tuto habitaturi, Regionis Imperator servilem in modum vexabat, & tanquam Belli jure captos, aut tanquam vernas de justo domino emptos opprimebat, & pro mancipiis habebat, qui non modo liberi erant, verum etiam hospites, supplices, inquilini, max etiam jussa supra vires imperabat, laborem labore alio subinde cumulans, deficientesque ferrum sequebatur. De vita Mosis. See also Orig. cont. Cels. lib. iii. c. 114. [Grotius and Calmet saw the true Sense and Design of this Passage: But the Interpretation they give of it cannot be made out of the present Context; which, at y. 13. stands thus: Οὐκ ἀνὰ τοῖς προσηγορίαις τῶν τελευτήτων τῇ βίᾳ τῶν κτερουμένων. Where, instead of τῶν κτερουμένων, the Author wrote τῶν κτερουμένων, fulmine istorum, from ὁ κτερουμένος: See Hesychius. The Translation is this: Not without the Signs which formerly befell the violent Sodomites, who were destroyed by Thunder: That is, the Egyptians had sufficient Warning, if they would have taken it, of the Punishment of Inhospitality, and the Violation of Strangers, from what befell the Sodomites, who were killed by Thunder and Lightning upon that Account. Τῇ βίᾳ τῶν κτερουμένων, for τοῖς βίαισι κτερουμέναις: Which is a very usual way of writing in all Authors, sacred and profane, Poets and Prose Writers.]*

Ver. 14. But these brought Friends into Bondage that had well deserved of them. Οἱ μὲν δὲ ἀεγύπτιοι εἶναι ἰσχυροὺς, i. e. these made Slaves of Strangers that had been Benefactors to them. Coverdale's, and the Geneva Bibles render with more Propriety, brought the Strangers into Bondage that did them good. For the Egyptians, after having received great Advantages from Joseph, especially in the Time of Famine, and from the Israelites in general by the Improvement of their Land; after having invited Jacob's Family to settle among them, and made great Rejoicings at their coming, at length, even



even though they were incorporated, perfidiously treated them with unheard of Severities.

Ver. 15, 16. *And not only so, but peradventure some respects shall be had of those, because they used Strangers not kindly; but these very grievously afflicted them, whom they had received with Feastings, and were already made Partakers of the same Laws with them.* The Meaning is, that it was some Mitigation of the Fault of the Sodomites, or that some regard, *ἐπισημοσύνη*, see *ch. iv. 15.* ought to be had to them on this Account, because the unkind Treatment they were guilty of was done to Persons unknown, to Foreigners, and such as had no civil or political Relation to them: But the Egyptians enslaved those whom they had invited, that were freely admitted among them, that lived under the same Roofs, were governed by the same Laws, and Partakers of the same common Rights and Privileges. This Explication is according to the reading of the *Vatican Copy*, which *Grotius* thinks corrupt here, and has attempted to restore the Text thus: *Καὶ ἐμὸν, ἀλλ' ἢ τῆς ἐπισημοσύνης ἐστὶν αὐτοῖς, ἐπεὶ ἀπεχθῆς προσεδέχοντο τὰς ἀλλοτρίους, οἷα μετὰ ἰσχυραμάτων εἰσεδέξαντο, κ. τ. λ. i. e.* if the Sodomites deserved to be punished for using Strangers so inhospitably, the Egyptians did much more, who evil entreated such as were Inmates, Neighbours, Friends. And thus *ἐπισημοσύνη* is used by this Writer, *ch. xiv. 11.* This Conjecture *Calmet* approves of, as making the Sense clearer, and agreeing better with the Context. It may be proper to observe, that the Comparison, which runs here in Favour of the Sodomites, must be confined to the single Point of their denying Assistance to such as were mere Strangers, and quite unknown; for considering their general Behaviour to the Angels after Lot had received them, which was the greatest Breach of Hospitality, and their unnatural Designs upon them, which was an Attempt of the greatest Wickedness, no Behaviour of the Egyptians could be so hateful, nor any Action so criminal. Our Translators probably were sensible of this, when they inserted, *peradventure*, in the Text, which has nothing to answer it in the Original [*ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐπισημοσύνη*—Perhaps for *ἀλλ' ἢ τῆς ἐπισημοσύνης*, i. e. *scilicet, forte*. For the Word *scilicet* was wont to be written by Abbreviation in that Manner. But perhaps some Favour will be showed to the Sodomites, since those, whom they used so hatefully, were unknown to them. Our Translation too renders it, *But peradventure*. I do not understand *Grotius's* Conjecture, unless *ἐστὶν* be a Mistake of the Press for *ἐστὶν*. *τὰς ἀγνοήσας*, rather *τὰς ἀγνοήσας*. But the true Reading, I believe, is, *τὰς ἀγνοήσας*, the same as *τὰς ἀγνοήσας*.]

Ver. 17. *Therefore even with Blindness were these stricken, as those were at the Doors of the righteous Man, when, being compassed about with horrible great Darkness, every one sought the Passage of his own Doors.* The *Vatican Copy* reads, *ἕκαστος τῶν αὐτῶν θυρῶν τὴν διόδον ἐζητεῖ*. Every one sought the Passage, not of his own, but of the righteous Man's Doors. And this indeed seems to be the Sense of the Fact, as it is recorded, *Gen. xix. 11.* where it is said, *That they wearied themselves to find out the Door:*

See *Psalm. in loc.* Our Translators followed a Copy which read, *ἕκαστος τῶν αὐτῶν θυρῶν τὴν διόδον ἐζητεῖ*, which is the Reading of the *Alex. MS.* and of the *Syriac* and *Arabic* Versions, and is indeed less doubtful and ambiguous. According to this Reading, the Sense is whether we understand the Place of the Sodomites or Egyptians, that they were so confounded with an Excess of Blindness, that they could not find out even their own Doors. The *Greek Text* both here and in *Genesis xix.* expresses this Blindness by *ἀναισθησία* in the Singular Number, but the Original in the latter has *Blindnesses* in the Plural, and the *Jerusalem Targum* renders, in like manner, by *Cecitatus*, which denotes very great and extreme Blindness. Thus where the Prophet mentions bitter Weeping, *Jerem. xxxi. 15.* as our Translators render, in the Original is, *Weeping of Bitternesses, fletus amaritudinum*, according to the *Interlineary Version*, which the Evangelist expounds, *Weeping and great Mourning*, *Matth. ii. 18.* According to some, the *Hebrew Etymology* of *Sodom*, implies Darkness. See *Philo De confus. Linguar. Hefychius in voce Σόδομα*.

Ver. 18. *For the Elements were changed in themselves by a kind of Harmony, like as, in a Psaltery, Notes change the Names of the Tune, and yet are always Sounds, which may well be perceived by the Sight of the Things that have been done.* *Δι' αὐτῶν γὰρ τὰ στοιχεῖα μεταρρυθμίζοντο, ὥστε ἐν ψαλτηρίᾳ φθόγγοι τῶ ῥυθμοῦ τὸ ὄνομα διαλλάσσονται, πάντοτε μένοντα ἐν ᾗχῳ, ὅπερ ἐστὶν εἰκαστικὸν ἐκ τῆς τῶν γενομένων ὁψέως ἀκριβοῦς.* This is the Reading according to *Grabe's Edition*, but the *Vatican* has *μεταρρυθμίζοντα*, omitting the Preposition; *μεταρρυθμίζοντα* is not well rendered, *changed by a kind of Harmony*, nor *δι' αὐτῶν*, *in themselves*: Nor do they thus give any Idea that is clear or consistent, *μεταρρυθμίζοντα* denoting rather Change of Order and Disposition (from *μεταρρυθμίζω transmutato adaptando aliter*) and *δι' αὐτῶν*, *throughout*, or *among themselves*, which is a better rendering. Nor is our Version more happy in applying *πάντοτε μένοντα ἐν ᾗχῳ*, to *φθόγγοι*, which very manifestly relates to the Elements, to the *στοιχεῖα μεταρρυθμίζοντα*, and not to Sounds. For the Sense is (which will still be clearer by putting the *Simile* in a Parenthesis) that the Change, or new Disposition of the Elements among themselves, which is described in the three following Verses, occasioned no Disorder or Confusion, but the Elements, notwithstanding their changing Place, preserved that Harmony which is peculiar to them, *πάντοτε μένοντα ἐν ᾗχῳ*, always continuing in Concert. As in a Psaltery, or Instrument of Music by the different Movement of the Strings the Tune is diversified, and the Name or Kind of the Measure or Mode, the *ῥυθμὸς ὄνομα* is thereby altered: As among the Greeks there were different Names for their different Modes, *Phrygian, Dorian, Lydian*; and the same occurs among the Hebrews, who intimate every such *ἐκπαλλαγὴ μέλους*, or Change of Modulation, by the Term *Selab*, which the LXX very properly render *διαψαλμα*. See *Phavorinus*, and *Suidas in voce*. [*Δι' αὐτῶν μεταρρυθμίζοντα, scilicet, ᾗ*. Which Word is either dropt out of the Context, or must be understood to make Construction,



struction, which cannot subsist without it. So ch. iv. 15. ἰδέσθαι for ἰδόντες ἦσαν, or ἰδόν. See the Note there. ἦν καὶ ἀπὸ τῆς ἡμέρας, for καὶ ἀπὸ τῆς ἡμέρας, ch. xvii. 16. ἦν ἔχον and ἦν προέχον, for ἔχε and προέχε, Mark x. 22. 32. Δι' αὐτῶν μεταμορφώματα is, were shifted into each others Place. Διὰ here implies alternation. Inter se invicem transmutabantur. Πάντοτε μόνον ἐν ἡχῷ, always continuing in Sound. The Word μόνον cannot belong to τὰ στοιχεῖα, because the Elements, Earth, Fire, and Water, of which he is speaking, cannot, with any Sense, be said to continue in Sound, which is the Signification of ἐν ἡχῷ, not in Concert, which would be ἐν συμφωνίᾳ. Nor is there, at present, any other Word in the Sentence with which μόνον can agree. And this Observation, I think, easily leads to the true Reading and Pointing of the Passage: Δι' αὐτῶν ὅτι τὰ στοιχεῖα [ἦν] μεταμορφώματα (ὥστε ἐν ψαλμῷ φθόγῳ τῷ ῥυθμῷ τὸ ὄνομα διαλλάσσει, πάντοτε μόνον ἐν ἡχῷ) ὥστε εἰν εἰκάσαι, &c. The Interpretation and Sense is this: For the Elements were shifted into each others Place, and yet continued to act, though in a different Manner (as in a Psaltery different Sounds change the Name of the Music, and yet all the while continue Sounding) as may be perceived by the careful View (ἐν τῇ ὀψέως ἀκριβῆς) of what then happened. For Land Creatures were changed into watry; and those that used to swim passed over to Land. The Fire had Power in the Water, forgetting its own Qualities; and the Water forgot its quenching Nature. On the other hand, the Flames, &c. Omit the Parenthesis, and the Connexion will be very clear: Which is a sure Mark how the Passage ought to be pointed. Instead of τὸ ὄνομα, it might be read τὸν νόμον, which will make just the same Sense.] The Elements are always a kind of Emblem of the Harmony of Sounds, which they preserved under this new Change, as in their natural State; for such a transitory Alteration occasioned no more jarring in the System and Order of the World, than different Sounds arising from the several Strings of an Instrument, or from Symphonies and Voices of all Pitches disturb the Melody of Music, which the Variety rather perfects than confounds. Seneca has finely described this agreeable and regular Confusion, *Nonne vides quam multorum vocibus Chorus constat? Unus tamen ex omnibus sonus redditur. Aliqua illic acuta est, aliqua gravis, aliqua media. Accedunt viris femine, interponuntur tibie, singulorum ibi latent voces, omnium apparent. Epist. xlviii.* which Philo, borrowing the Thought from the Terms of Music, as beautifully expresses concerning the Harmony of the natural World, ἡ δὲ φύσις . . . τὴν συμφωνίαν τῷ παντὶ ἐξ ἐναντιοῦντων ἐναρμονοῦται. De Mose, lib. i. And in this Sense we are to understand Homer, where he makes Jupiter, the Lord of Nature, pleased with the Discord of the Gods, *Iliad. xxi.* that is, according to Eustathius, with the War of Earth, Sea, and Air, &c. because the Harmony of all Beings arises from that Discord: Thus Earth is opposite to Water, Air to Earth, and Water to them all; and yet from this Opposition arises that discordant Concord by which all Nature subsists. Thus Heat and Cold, Moist

and Dry, are in a continual War; yet upon this depends the Fertility of the Earth, and the Beauty of the Creation.—But there may, perhaps, another Sense be given of this Passage of our Author's, if we consider ῥυθμός as meaning a Sett of Measures or musical Sounds, ranged at certain proportioned Intervals, answering to our Scale in Music; for the Ancients seem to have had several ῥυθμοί, or Scales, to which the Sounds or Strings of different Harps were proportioned and adjusted, and φθόγῳ τῷ ῥυθμῷ together, may imply the differently proportioned Intervals of the Measure, Scale, or ῥυθμός, which the Strings producing the Sounds are set to and adjusted by. And these different Sets of Sounds proportioned to the different ῥυθμοί, changed the kind of the Music, and produced different τόνοι or Modes, which Aristoxenus and Euclid make to be thirteen, and Ptolemy only seven. See Plato De Legg. lib. ii. Eucl. Περὶ ἀρμον. H. Steph. Greek Lexicon. So that it is not improbable but that the true Reading of this Simile may be ὥστε ἐν ψαλμῷ φθόγῳ τῷ ῥυθμῷ τόνον διαλλάσσει, πάντοτε, or πάντοτε δὲ μόνον ἐν ἡχῷ. Which still heightens the Musical Allusion, and the Sense of the whole Verse as follows: "For the Elements were transposed among themselves "without losing their proper Harmony, as in "a Psaltery, or ancient Harp, the Sounds of "the Harmonic Scale new proportioned among "themselves, change the Mode of the Music, "and yet all continues regular and in tune:" Which one may guess to be the then State of the Elements, ἐν τῇ τῶν γεινόμενων ὀψέως ἀκριβῆς, i. e. from an accurate View and Examination of what then happened, for so I would chuse to render with Junius, than to understand ἀκριβῶς adverbially, and apply it to εἰκάσαι, as our Translators do, with which it does not properly accord. I shall only observe farther, that as the ancient Philosophers frequently compare the Symmetry of the World to a Concert of fine Music, (See Plut. in lib. De Mus. Macrob. in Somn. Scip.) which though of a compounded Nature, and admitting of a great Variety of Notes and Changes, is nevertheless ravishing and beautiful; so this Writer manifestly adopts here the same Thought, and applies it to what happened in Egypt and in the Desert, and from hence illustrates God's Dealings with the Israelites and the Egyptians, whose Miracles, whether displayed in the Way of Judgment or Mercy, though they over-ruled the Powers of Nature, yet no ways disconcerted the regular and beautiful Order of it.

Ver. 19. For earthly Things were turned into watry, and the Things that before swam in the Water, now went upon the Ground.] i. e. Both the Israelites and their Cattle passed through the Red Sea itself, as safe as on dry Ground, and the Frogs leaving the Waters, not only overspread the Land of Egypt, but entered into the Houses of the Egyptians, and even into their Kings Chambers, Psal. cv. 30.

Ver. 20. The Fire had Power in the Water, forgetting his own Virtue: and the Water forgot his own quenching Nature.] This refers to the Plague of Rain, Hail, and Fire mixed with it, mentioned before. 'Tis observable that in



this Plague God made use of three of the Elements at one Time, as his Instruments of Vengeance. For as the Egyptians had a Conceit that there were many local Deities, some presiding over the Air, others over the Waters, some Celestial, and others ruling over the Earth; hence *Jehovah*, the only true God, thought it necessary to assert his own Unity, and shew the Immenity and Universality of his Dominion and Power, by commanding at the same time so many of the Elements to fulfil his Will in chastising this rebellious People. See Note on *ch. xvi. v. 16, 17, 18.*

Ver. 21. *On the other Side the Flames wasted not the Flesh of the corruptible living Things, though they walked therein.* [*Εὐφράτων ζῶων, of Animals easily to be destroyed.*] The Flames were mitigated that they might not burn up the Beasts that were sent against the ungodly, as the Author expresses himself in *ch. xvi. 18.* According to the Description here given of the corruptible living Things, it seems most agreeable to understand the *Locusts* in particular (though even these cannot strictly be supposed then existing, nor does the *Mosaic* Account countenance any such long Continuance of them, see Note on the Place referred to) which are described as a Nation by the Prophet *Joel*, and their March, like that of an Army, for Desolation. The *Syriac* Version seems to confirm this Sense, *Bestias vastatrices flamma non exussit*, which suits with the Character given in History of these mischievous and destructive Creatures.

*Ibid.* *Neither melted they the icy kind of heavenly Meat that was of Nature apt to melt.* [*Οὐδὲ τὸν ἄτμῳ, &c.* There seems to be no manner of Necessity for these two Epithets almost equivalent. It looks as if one of them was owing to a various Reading taken into the Context, as just before, instead of *ἄτμῳ* *Aldus's* Edit. has *φθάρων*. Our Translation, which has, *melted*, either fetched the Word *ὑμῶν* from the former Part of the Verse, or, instead of *ἄτμῳ*, perhaps read *ἄτμῳ*, *sc. φλόγες*, which I should prefer to the vulgar Reading: *Οὐδὲ ἔτμῳ κρυφαλοῖς ἄτμῳ γένος, &c.* which is the Order of the Words in the best Copies, *Alexand. Complut. Ald.*] The Fire had no Power over the same Manna, which the Sun could easily dissolve in the Field. Manna is here called icy, not only from its resisting the Fire, but from its being generated in, or by the Air, or from its resembling in Smallness the hoar Frost on the Ground; the *Geneva* Bible renders, *Neither melted they that which seemed to be Ice, and was of a Nature that would melt, and yet was an immortal Meat.* As *Ambrosia* was supposed to be the Food of the Gods, so Manna, as coming down from Heaven, or, according to others, as being the Bread of Angels inhabiting there, is called *Ἀμβροσία τροφή* by this Writer, and by *Philo* ἡ ἁγία τροφή. See Notes on *ch. xvi.* From the Use of this Word, and some others drawn from the Heathen Writings, *Calmet* infers our Author's Acquaintance with them. The *LXX.* and the *Vulgate*, have taken the same Liberty of borrowing Words from the Poets, even in Parts of the inspired Writings.

Thus *Job ix. 9.* they insert the Names of *Pleiades, Hyades, and Arcturus.* And in *ch. xlii. 14.* they call the Name of *Job's* third Daughter, *ἡγεῖς Ἀμυθάας, the Horn of Amathaea,* alluding to the *Grecian* Fable, which arose long after *Job's* Time.

Ver. 22. *For in all things, O Lord, thou didst magnify thy People, and glorify them, neither didst thou lightly regard them: but didst assist them in every Time and Place.* What our Author here adds of God's having magnified and glorified the *Israelites* in all Things, and assisted them in every Time and Place, is another Instance of *Jewish* Opiniatry and Conceit. See Note on *ch. x. 15.* 'Tis according to the Sentiment of that People, who imagined themselves to be the only beloved of God, that they had an unchangeable Interest in him, and that no Neglect or undutiful Behaviour of theirs could alienate them from his Favour, or make him become their Enemy, and reject them; that God would never punish his own People in Covenant with him, and who were called by his Name, in any such severe Manner, as to make them Examples to all other Nations, and nothing could ever persuade them that their City, or Temple should actually be destroyed: But notwithstanding their boasted Interest, fancied Alliance, and fond Dependence upon their Adoption and Privileges, God, at length, thought fit to reject them, and has set a Mark upon them, like the Curse of *Cain*, as *St. Austin* expresses it, *Comm. in Psal. lviii.* to let others see, what a Difference in the same People the Love or Displeasure of God can make, and that his Favour to any Nation is not absolute, unconditional and hereditary. The very learned *Dr. Jackson* observes, *tom. iii. p. 210.* that our Author in this Work proceeds upon right Principles in making the *Egyptians*, as well as the *Canaanites*, to be an accursed Seed from the Beginning, as being the Offspring of *Cham*; and the Children of *Israel* to be a Seed doubly blessed, as being the Progeny of *Sem* and of faithful *Abraham*: But that he is guilty of a two-fold Error in his Inference and Consequences, first, in presuming that the Curse derived from their Father *Cham* should be perpetually upon the *Egyptians*. 2dly, That the Blessing, derived from *Sem* and *Abraham* unto their Seed, should be absolutely everlasting, and go along with them in every Time and Place. For, continues he, the Calendar made by this learned Author, of the opposite Fates or Destinies of the *Egyptians* and the *Jews*, began in his own Time to vary, and shortly after our Saviour's Resurrection, to be out of Date, and even quite inverted: For the Lot or Destiny which this good Author assigned unto the ungodly *Egyptians*, *That Wrath should come upon them without Mercy unto the End*, *ch. xix. 1.* did, at length, fall upon his presumed holy ones, upon the *Jews* his Countrymen, of whom *St. Paul* gives this melancholy Account, and very indifferent Character, *That they both killed the Lord Jesus and their own Prophets, and persecuted the Apostles, being contrary to all Men, and displeasing to God. Forbidding to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved, filling up the Measure of their Sins, so that Wrath is come upon*



upon them to the uttermost, 1 Theff. ii. 15, 16. But this Induration, which, through their own Fault, hath happened to the Seed of *Sem* and *Abraham* in a greater Measure, and for a longer Time than that which befel the Seed of *Cham*, or the *Egyptians*, will not, we have Reason to think, be a perpetual Curse upon that People, nor their Rejection be absolute and final; but continue only until the Fulness of the *Gentiles* shall come in, when the natural Branches, if they abide not still in Unbelief, shall be grafted again into their own Olive Tree, Rom. xi. 23.—*Grotius* and *Calmet* imagine this Book, as we now have it, imperfect and unfinished; but

others have commended it as concluding properly with a just Reflexion and instructive Moral, viz. That the Righteous are more particularly the Care of Heaven, that God provides for their Safety and Happiness, and is ready to assist his chosen, and such as continue steadfast in his Covenant, in every Time and Place. A Consideration the most effectual and engaging to recommend the Study and Practice of true Wisdom and Piety, which was the great and laudable End proposed by the Author of this Book, and, when sincerely intended, and happily accomplished, is the Glory of all other Works and Undertakings.

F I N I S.









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C R I T I C A L  
C O M M E N T A R Y  
U P O N T H E  
B O O K

O F T H E  
Wisdom of Jesus the Son of Sirach.

Being a CONTINUATION of  
Bishop *PATRICK* and Mr. *LOWTH*.

---

By *RICHARD ARNALD*, B. D. Rector of *Thur-*  
*caston* in *Leicestershire*.

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*Ecclesiasticus*, qui *Sapientia Jesu F. Sirach* inscribitur, pleraque cum *Proverbiis Salomonis* habet communia, nisi quod hic noster copiosior est, & minus habet difficultatis. Ex eo certius, & minore cum periculo discent *moralem Philosophiam* studiosi, quam ex ullo *Platone*, aut *Aristotele*. *Bullinger. Præfat. in Vers. Leo. Judæ.*

Παιδείαν συνέσεως καὶ ἐπιστήμης ἐχάραξεν ἐν τῷ βιβλίῳ τῷ Ιησοῦ υἱοῦ Σεραχ Ἱεροσολυμίτης, ὅς ἀνώμωρθε σοφίαν ἀπὸ καρδίας αὐτῆς. μακάριος ὁς ἐν τούτοις ἀνατραφῆσεται, καὶ ὁ θεὸς αὐτὰ ἐπὶ καρδίαν αὐτῆς σοφιοθήσεται. εἰ γὰρ αὐτὰ ποιήσῃ, πρὸς πάντα ἰχύσει. cap. I.

Ἰδετε, ὅτι ἐκ ἐμοῦ μόνω ἐκοπίασα, ἀλλὰ πᾶσι τοῖς ἐκζητῶσι σοφίαν. cap. xxiv.

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L O N D O N:

Printed for the AUTHOR, by *W. Bowyer*.

And Sold by *J. and P. Knapton* in *Ludgate-street*, *S. Birt* in *Ave-Mary-Lane*,  
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MDCCXLVIII.



CRITICAL  
COMMENTARY

UPON THE

B O O K

OF THE

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Being a Commentary

Bishop PATRICK and Mr. COWLEY

By RICHARD ARNOLD, B.D. Rector of St. John's  
College, Cambridge.

Printed by J. Sturges, at the Press of the University of Cambridge, in the Strand, near St. Dunstons Church, in the City of London.

1790.

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iv  
D E D I C A T I O N  
T O T H E  
Right REVEREND FATHER in GOD

J O H N,

Lord Bishop of L I N C O L N.

*My Lord,*

THE great Regard which you have always shewn for whatever may tend to promote the Cause of Virtue and Goodness, and the Affection which you was pleased to express for your Clergy, encourage me to hope for a favourable Acceptance of the following Sheets.

The excellent Morality of *The Wisdom of the Son of Sirach*, and the Justness of its Observations, which have stood the Test, and gained the Approbation of so many successive Ages, have deservedly recommended it to general Esteem. A celebrated Metropolitan \* in particular, one of the early Lights of the Reformation, had

\* Archbishop Whitgift.

such



such a high Opinion of its Worth, and the great Usefulness of its being thoroughly understood, that he purposely engaged the learned *Drusus* to undertake an Illustration of it, under his Patronage and Encouragement.

Though I might, after the Example of our Author, in celebrating such famous Men, as *are Leaders of the People by their Counsel, wise and eloquent in their Instructions, and by their Knowledge of Learning meet for great Purposes*, be induced to attempt a Parallel between his Favourite Character, *ch. L.* and that of your LORDSHIP, yet I chuse religiously to adhere to the Advice of this wise Writer, not to offend in the Presence of Great Men, nor to court Favour by the mean Artifice of Flattery.

May the same good Providence of God, which from a Calamity, that threatned your Life, reserved Your LORDSHIP for the Happiness of this Diocese, still continue to watch over you for the future Benefit and Service of his Church.

I am,

My LORD,

Your LORDSHIP'S most Dutiful,

and Obedient Servant,

RICHARD ARNALD.



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# PREFACE.

THE Book of *Ecclesiasticus*, according to some Writers, is so called, because the Ancients divided the Books of the *Old Testament* Volume into four Sorts; the first contained the *Pentateuch*, the second the *Prophets*, the third the *Hagiographa*, the fourth the Ecclesiastical, or *Apocryphal* Books, as not being in the *Jewish* Canon. Among the Ecclesiastical Books, this of *Jesus the Son of Sirach*, being most remarkable and useful, it was καὶ ἐξοχὴν called *Ecclesiasticus*, whilst the rest of the same Class have lost their Name. According to others, this Title was given by the *Latins* to it, to denote its Use in the Church, its being read for the Sake of Edification in the publick religious Assemblies: or lastly, because, like *Solomon's Ecclesiastes*, which it resembles in Name, as well as Matter, it teaches and instructs such as attend to it by the admirable Precepts which it delivers, and the earnest and frequent Exhortations therein to Wisdom, which in these *Sapiential* Books is another Word for Religion. In the printed *Greek* Copies it is improperly styled *The Wisdom of Sirach*, which is an Abbreviation made with great Absurdity, for it ascribes the Book to *Sirach*, who was neither the Author, nor the Translator of it, and therefore could neither way have any Relation to it. It is more usually and properly called *The Wisdom of Jesus the Son of Sirach*, because Wisdom, in some Branch or other of it, is the Subject of the whole Book.

The Author opens his Work with the Elogium of Wisdom in general; then he enters into a Variety of useful Particulars, and continues to deliver many important Precepts and instructive Lessons, for the right Conduct of Life, to ch. xxiv. where Wisdom is supposed to speak herself in Person, and by the most engaging persuasive Motives, which are continued to ch. xlii. 15. invites Men to the Practice of Virtue, and the Pursuit of what is lovely and of good Report; where his Collection of wise Sentences and Proverbs ends. He then, by way of Epilogue, solemnly enters upon a pious Hymn, wherein he extols the Works of God, his infinite Wisdom and Power displayed in them, and, in dwelling upon his Praises, his Rapture and Transport is so great, that he exceeds himself, and almost what is human, in the Sublimity of his Sentiments: And at length finishes the Whole with a Panegyric, or solemn Commemoration of the most celebrated Worthies of his own Nation, illustrious Instances in their respective Generations of the several Virtues he has been recommending. Manifestly copying in this Division, says *Valesius*, the Method and Order of *Solomon*, and exhibiting, like him, *Proverbs*, *Ecclesiastes*, and *Canticles*, not in separate Books indeed, but as Parts of the same Work. *Not. ad Script. Eccl. Euseb. L. iv. c. 22.*

The Ancients styled this Book by the *Greek* Name *παραβολος*, signifying that it treats of, and comprizes, all Sorts of Virtues. And indeed 'tis a System of Morality so full and comprehensive, as that there is scarce any Virtue which this excellent Piece does not recommend, and lay down Rules for obtaining it; nor a Vice, or Indecorum, which it does not expose and discourage; it forms the Manners of Persons of all Ages, Sexes, and Conditions, by an Infinity almost of useful Maxims and Instructions. One learns from it all the Duties of Religion, and civil Life, both what Piety commands, and Politeness and Good-manners expect. Every one may here discover, so full and obvious is it, what he owes to God, to his Country, his Neighbourhood, his Family, and to himself; how to behave in the different Relations of Life, either to Superiors, or Inferiors, Friends, or Enemies; and so it may be thought, as indeed some have represented it, to comprize all the Duties of both Tables: For the Precepts which it delivers, and the principal Matters which it treats of, may be divided into four Sorts, 1. Theological. 2. Political. 3. Œconomical. 4. Ethical, or Rules respecting all Sorts of Men indifferently, however placed or circumstantiated. These four Heads take in most, if not all, the Maxims of this Book, so that what lies dispersed in the great Volumes of Philosophers and Moralists, is collected into a short Compass, and to be found here as it were in Miniature: In short, the Author has given us at once a whole Treasury of Wisdom, and with great Profusion has intermixed Reflections, Counsels, Exhortations, Reproofs, Examples, Prayers, Praises, &c. so that Truth appears in different Attitudes and Forms, but beautiful and engaging under each, and shines with so complicated a Lustre, as cannot but draw Attention, and command



# P R O E F A C E

command Respect and Admiration. But besides the excellent moral Instructions here given, some learned Men have discovered in it certain Vestiges of a more deep and recondite Wisdom, and judge it to contain the more secret *Solomoniac Wisdom*. See *Lee's Dissert. on the second Book of Esdras*, p. 32. which probably was taught in the Schools of the Prophets, and, after the Cessation of them, in those of the great Doctors of the Law, and Interpreters of the sacred Writings.

It was composed originally for the Use and Advantage of those, who were disposed to regulate their Lives agreeably to the Laws of God; with this View the Grandson rendered it into *Greek*, and with the same Design has it been translated into many other ancient and modern Languages. On the same Account, as being an instructive Manual, and good for the Use of edifying, has it met with general Esteem, especially in the *Western Church*, and introduced by our first Reformers, and the venerable Compilers of our Articles, into the Publick Service. Nor can it fail of producing, in such as are well-disposed, those Fruits, which one never fails of gathering from the Knowledge of Truth, when searched after, not merely as matter of Speculation or Curiosity, but with an honest Intention to practise what it teaches. For this Reason, as well as to enforce the Author's Precepts, and make his Design more useful and extensive, I have sometimes ventured beyond the common and literal Sense, and have accommodated a more exalted and spiritual one, extracted either from the valuable Comment of *Mess. of Port Royal*, or what occurred to me, and seemed naturally to arise from the Text itself, and might without Violence be inferred from it: By this means I have brought home to *Christians*, what by this Writer was originally directed to the *Jews*, and have assisted the Reader to find out the Duties of the *New Law*, in the Letter and Precepts of the *Old one*.

There is one more Excellency which I must not omit, which is common to this with the *Book of Proverbs*, that the Maxims are delivered in a way the most useful and beneficial, in such short and weighty Apothegms, as may most strongly affect the Mind, and yet not overcharge the Memory; a Method in which the Wisdom of the Ancients thought it most proper to deliver the Rites and Mysteries of Religion, as well as their Civil Laws and Constitutions. For Truths, which depend upon Demonstration and a long and abstruse Chain of Reasoning, are not so obvious to all Capacities, as those which are couched in short memorial Sentences, in expressive Aphorisms, in single and often independent Propositions, as all Collections of proverbial and sententious Truths are, which being founded upon Experience, and authorized by the Observation of others, are admitted as just and approved Maxims, and as such successively handed down to Posterity; and every Age confirms, and finds the Benefit of them.

Though it is indubitably certain that this Book was not written by *Solomon*, who lived many Ages after, and there are in the Work itself internal Marks to disprove such a Claim, yet it hath been ascribed to him, on account of the great Resemblance of Matter and Style, and made by the *Latin Church* to be one of his five Books, as they are called, and is so quoted by several of the Fathers, and as such in most Copies joined with them, and like them wrote Stiche-wise in the *Alexandrian MS.* and supposed, according to *Epiphanius*, to be written originally in Metre. *St. Jerom* says, that he himself saw a *Hebrew* Copy of this Work, not under the Name of *Wisdom*, but of *Parables*, or *Proverbs*. *Præf. in Prov.* *Munster* also, and *Fagius* mention others; but *Scaliger*, *Drusius*, and *Huetius*, think none of these to be the Original, but either *Ben-Sira's* Alphabet, or some late *Hebrew* Version made from the *Greek*, such as that which appeared of the Book of *Tobit*, which *Fabricius* mentions, *Bibl. Gr. Tom. 2.* And indeed it must be acknowledged, that this Book is composed very much in Imitation of the *Proverbs of Solomon*, and very frequently alludes to, and copies from them; hence by *Athanasius*, or the Author of the anonymous Prologue, this Writer is said to be *ἑπ' ἀπὸ τοῦ Σολομῶντος*, with this Difference only, that the Sentences of the *Book of Proverbs* are not so closely connected, especially from the Tenth Chapter of that Work, as those of this Writer, who more frequently ranges, under distinct Heads, what he observes upon the same Subject, and in the *Roman Edit.* and some MSS. Titles are occasionally prefixed to some Chapters, denoting the Contents of what follows, though even this of our Author might have been more perfect in this Respect, as his Reflexions upon similar Occasions lie too much dispersed, and the Distribution of Chapters not regular, being probably different Collections by him, and not sorted so orderly by the Translator, as one might expect, and as is intimated in the *first Prologue*.

We are therein informed, that the *Hebrew Sirachides* gathered many grave and short Sentences of wise Men that had been before him, some scattered ones, or Remains probably of *Solomon's* 3000 Proverbs, *1 Kings iv. 32.* successively delivered down. See *Bartoloccius, Bibl. Rabbin. Tom. i. p. 249.* *Huetius, Dem. Evang. Prop. 4.* Nor is it to be doubted, but that many useful Maxims of other learned Men, as well as some of his own, were added by the last *Jesus*, the Son of *Sirach*, to his Grandfather's Book, or from marginal Additions of other Men's Sayings of the like Nature; which being too few to fill a Book of themselves, and as other fugitive Pieces liable to be lost, if not collected together, they were joined to this larger Work of the same kind, to be ready at hand, when occasion-  
ally



nally looked for. Thus *Solomon's Proverbs* were augmented with a new Collection, by the Men of *Hezekiah*, taken, as some imagine, from Copies of *Solomon's Proverbs*, with these Sayings added, which therefore passed under the Name of *Solomon*. Be that as it will, such Books of Apothegms were made as it were Heads of a Common-place Book, to which Things of the same Nature were reduced. So the ancient Vocabularies have come to be enriched with many new Words, by their Possessors in different successive Ages. We cannot otherwise account for the Variations in the several *Greek Copies* of *Ecclesiasticus*, and the Translations of it, nor for the entire Sentences, which are found in some, and wanting in other Copies. And I have sometimes been inclined to think that Text, ch. vi. 22. *Wisdom is according to her Name, and is not manifest unto many*, is one Addition of the Translator, where he derives the *Greek Word* σοφία, from a *Hebrew* one, which signifies covered, or hid, which the elder *Jesus*, who wrote in *Hebrew*, could not do, but his Grandson might, who was skilled in that, and the *Hebrew Tongue*. And the like probably may be observed of ch. xliii. 8. as the reading is in all the present *Greek Copies*.

The *Hebrew Sirachides* wrote his Book in the Language of the *Jews* of *Jerusalem*, such as was used after their Return from the Captivity, probably either in the *Chaldee Dialect*, or *Syriac*, as a Manual for the *Jews* in *Egypt*. The Learned suppose the original Work itself to have come down imperfect, either through the Author's Death, or the Loss of some Part of it in *Egypt*. See *Bishop Chandler's Vindic. of Des.* p. 81—85. which may perhaps account for the great Incoherence, and abrupt Transition in many Places. We have no authentic Monument whereby we can know how long the Original was preserved; it is supposed to have been lost, either in troublesome Times, or dropt through Disuse. The *Greek* is the present and only Original, and is the most early and authentic Translation of this Work, made for the Use of the *Jews* in *Egypt* in their Dispersion, who had then almost all forgot their native Tongue; and so this, as well as other Books, not canonical in that Language, might easily be lost. It seems to have been too literal a Translation, which often occasions the Sense to be either obscure, or deficient. The Translator himself has the Modesty to acknowledge, that he doubts he has failed in expressing the full Spirit of the then Language, whether it was the ancient and pure, or more modern and corrupt *Hebrew*, and ingenuously apologizes for not coming up to the exact Propriety, and Expressiveness of the Original; which might indeed easily happen, as it has to the Law and the Prophets, which lose much of their Energy, when attempted in another Language, as is well urged in his Favour in the second Prologue. It is well if Inaccuracy be his only Fault; *Drusus* seems to think, that he has sometimes actually mistaken the Meaning of the Original in some of the more obscure and intricate Passages; and no Wonder that this too should happen, for even the *Greek Version* of the Canonical Books has often stumbled on seemingly plain Ground.

There is a strange Transposition of Chapters in the best *Greek Copies* of this Book, from ch. xxx. to ch. xxxvi. to say nothing of whole Sentences or Verses so transposed, on which Account the printed Editions, as may well be expected, greatly differ from one another; these, with the number of various Readings, which *Hasebelius* has collected with much Exactness, and are chargeable chiefly on the Carelessness of Transcribers, shew the present State of it to be corrupt and mutilated. And with respect to the *Greek Translation* itself, I am far from contending that the Language is beautiful, or altogether correct. On the contrary, it does not always seem agreeable in Construction to the received Rules of Grammar; and especially the uncommon Use of the *Greek Particles*, so frequently to be met with in it, has been objected to, as harsh: but these Particularities, I conceive, mostly owing to the Idiom of the *Greek Macedonian Language*, and are not so properly Faults, as Modes of that adopted Tongue. But that it abounds with Solecisms, as *Camerarius*, and others have charged it with, I cannot admit. For the *Alexandrine Greek*, in which Dialect this Book, as we at present have it, undoubtedly was written, however wide from the common and received Way of Writing, has yet, by some Men of Learning, been observed to concur with it very surprizingly, where one would not expect it. *Hebraisms* indeed often occur in the Text, and so they do in the *Greek* one of the Old and New Testament; but they are not reckoned by the judicious Faults or Blemishes. *Philo*, I believe, is not oftner guilty of Solecisms than other *Greek Writers*, nor the Christian Fathers, who wrote in *Egypt*, nor do the *LXX* often transgress in this Way, unless when the Perplexity of the Original, or their Defect of understanding it, drove them accidentally so to do, which perhaps may be the Case of the Translator of this Book.

I have before intimated, that in his Version he often uses the *Macedonian Greek Language*; for from the Time of *Alexander the Great*, it is certain, the *Jews* began to Hellenize, and that the *Greek Tongue*, spoken by the *Macedonians*, became more common among them. And indeed, it is no wonder that the *Jews* of *Alexandria*, to whom that Monarch, and *Ptolemy Soter*, after his Death, granted the same Privileges with the *Macedonians*, and other *Greeks*, should, by their constant Intercourse with the other Citizens, among whom they were there mingled, be necessitated to learn, and constantly use the *Greek Language*, and that that should happen to them here, as did before at *Babylon* on the like



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like Occasion, I mean that by accustoming themselves to a foreign Language, they should forget their own. And this will appear the more probable, as we learn from *Philo*, *Josephus*, and the Apocryphal Writings, particularly the Books of *Maccabees*, *Wisdom*, and this of *Ecclesiasticus*, in which frequent Allusion is made to *Græcian* Rites and Customs, that the *Jews* had learned their Philosophy, and embraced several of their Opinions, ever since their conversing with that People under *Alexander the Great*, the *Ptolemies*, and *Seleucide* his Successors, who reigned in *Egypt* and *Syria*.

The old Versions, particularly the *Syr.* and *Arab.* are sometimes so wide from the *Greek*, that one scarce knows how to believe that they were made from it, often inserting long Paraphrases foreign to it, and in other Places omitting as much, and yet there is no good Reason to think that they translated from any *Hebrew* Copy: if that indeed was certain, they would stand on an equal Foot with the *Greek*, excepting its being translated so early, and by so near a Relation. Nor do the *Orient.* Versions agree any better with the *Latin*. As to the *Vulgate* in particular, it is uncertain what Copy it follows, or of what Authority that Copy was; it sometimes adds whole Sentences, which have nothing to answer them in the *Greek*; possibly the Translator, to be more explicit, gave two Rendings of the same Sentence, or, as *Huetius* conjectures, inserted some parallel Maxims from some other Work. It does not appear to have been interpolated, except some marginal Annotations should accidentally have crept into the Text, much less to have been corrupted with Design by an officious Hand; and there is still less Reason to assert, that any Alterations have been made by the pious Fraud of some *Christian*, to make it conform to, and countenance some favourite Sentiments and Opinions, as *Grotius* has, without any Warrant or Proof, more than once intimated. *Bossuet*, *Calmet*, and the other Commentators follow the *Vulg.* too implicitly and securely, and make that Version the Foundation of their Annotations, and no Wonder that the Popish Expositors should adhere religiously to it, which the *Council of Trent* has confirmed and ratified. It may be observed of all these, and of *Grotius* himself among the rest, that by commenting from this, instead of the *Gr.* which serves now for the Original, a Sense is often given either superfluous, or foreign to the Author's Meaning.

The Old *English* Versions, as *Coverdale's* and the *Bishops Bible* generally copy the *Vulgate* too closely, imitating and transcribing it in many [faulty] Instances; the *Geneva* often departs from it for the better. Our last Translators are not so servile, nor do they follow any one *Greek* Copy invariably, as it is difficult, I may say, impossible, to fix upon any one Copy as the true Standard of the rest; but they seem chiefly to have regarded the *Complut.* which, though it lies under a Suspicion of conforming its *Gr.* to the *Vulg.* yet *Dr. Græbe*, *Prolegom.* ch. iii. §. 1. says, it exhibits a Text in this Book, *Non nuper fictum aut interpolatum, sed jam olim a Patribus ita lectum.* But they scruple not occasionally to prefer the *Latin* before the *Greek*, where they think it gives a better Sense, and sometimes even to adopt Conjectures, unsupported by any Copy for the same Purpose. But upon the whole, either not attending sufficiently to the Scope of the Context, or not expressing fully the Spirit and Propriety of the *Gr.* their Rendring is in very many Places inaccurate and obscure, and in some faulty and mistaken. These Defects are indeed discernible in many Translations, made immediately from the Original, but they must necessarily be more numerous, where Translations are made from one another, as most of our *English* ones probably are; which holds true of the canonical Books, [see *Boyle on the Style of the H. Scriptures*,] as well as of the *Apocryphal* Writings.

The Learned are divided in their Sentiments about the Time of writing this Book. The first Opinion is of those, who refer it to the Reign of *Solomon*, and make that Prince to be the Author of it. But to the Reasons before hinted at against this Notion, we may add, that this Writer speaks of *Solomon* himself, very much to his Discredit; of the Kings his Successors; of Prophets, and other famous Men, who lived before, and after the *Babylonish* Captivity; of the Twelve Minor Prophets, and cites the very Words of *Malachi*, the last of them. He mentions also *Simon* the High-Priest, whose Time, whether we understand it of the first, or second of that Name, will by no means synchronize to the *Æra* of *Solomon's* Reign. And the Author in some Passages, as ch. xxxiv. 11, 12. li. 6. discovers certain particulars of his own Life, which cannot be applied to that Prince. The second is of such as place this Writer under the Pontificate of *Eleazar*, and in the Reign of *Ptolemy Philadelph.* between *A. M.* 3711. the supposed Year of *Simon the Just's* Death, and *A. M.* 3783. the Year of *Euergetes I.* Death, according to *Usher*, and other Chronologers. This Opinion is in Part admissible, and may be true so far as it relates to this Writer's going into *Egypt*, but not as to the Time of his writing this Book of *Ecclesiasticus*, which was under another Reign, and in his more advanced Age. The third is of those, who place him either under the Pontificate of *Simon II.* of whom they understand ch. l. or of *Onias III.* before *Christ.* cir. 171 Years, and make him (the Grandfather) to go, or rather flee into *Egypt* on Account of the Persecutions and Distresses which the *Jews* suffered under *Antiochus Epiphanes*, to whose troublesome Times they refer ch. xxxiv, xxxv, xxxvi, li. This Opinion is as much too late for the Author's writing his original Work, and agrees not with his seeing *Simon the Just* officiate, men-



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tioned ch. 1. nor does it allow a sufficient Distance of Time between the two *Sirachides*, the Author, and the *Greek* Translator, the latter of whom translated, as he himself says, under *Euergetes*, which must mean the second of that Name. The new Hypothesis advanced in the following Sheet of their respective Times, makes the Grandfather to have written *Ecclesiasticus* sometime under *Euergetes* I. about 232 Years before *Christ*, and the Grandson to have translated in the first Year of *Euergetes* II, or rather of the joint Reign of the two Brothers. Which Date is proposed as most probable, because otherwise the Life of the Translator would be carried beyond the Age of Man, as will appear distinctly from the Chronological Table annexed; for the Favour of which I am obliged to the singular Goodness of a very learned Prelate, to whom Religion, and the Republic of Letters are greatly indebted, and whose Sentiments on all Occasions are so just, that every the least Work of his is truly valuable.

Some Disputes have been raised concerning this Writer, from his being called *Jesus*, the Son of *Sirach*. From the first some have contended, that the Author of this Book was *Jesus*, Son of *Josedec* the High-Priest, mentioned *Hagg.* i. 1. as we meet with several of this Name in the *Jewish* History; but as that *Jesus* lived in the Times of *Zachary*, *Malachi*, *Ezra*, and *Nebemiah*, he must have been some Centuries before our Author, for these holy Men flourished under *Darius Hystaspes*, who preceded even *Alexander the Great* 200 Years; but this Writer lived after Prophecy had ceased, after the Time of *Ezra*, and the perfecting the Canon, even after that of *Simon the Just*, the last, as is generally supposed, of the Men of the great Synagogue, from whole Family by *Eleazar* probably this Writer was descended. From the Second, viz. Son of *Sirach*, it has been alledged by some Rabbins, and *Christian* Writers, that, as the *Jews* have now a Book among them which they call the Book of *Ben-Sira*, i. e. the Book of the Son of *Sira*, and this Book containing a Collection of moral Sayings, this *Ben-Sira*, or the Son of *Sira* (of whose Proverbs *Fagius* has given two Alphabets in *Heb.* and *Chaldee* with a *Latin* Version) is the same with *Ben-Sirach*, or the Son of *Sirach*, and his Book the same as that of *Ecclesiasticus*. But this Surmise seems to be founded only in the Similitude of the Names of these Authors; for there is so far from being a perfect Agreement, or a Conformity of Sentiments between them, that *Ben-Sira's* Alphabet has many Things, which the other has not, and some quite contrary to it, [see Note on ch. xxv. 26.] and others trifling, ridiculous, or indefensible, as will appear from a Comparison of the Sentences, which *Corn. a Lapide*, to prove them different Persons, has prefixed to his Commentary. Those few parallel ones, which we meet with, possibly *Jesus* might adopt, and insert into his own Work, as there is a very considerable Difference betwixt them, in Point of Time likewise. For this *Ben-Sira*, according to some *Jewish* Writers, was the Son or Nephew of *Jeremiah*, and not long after his Time, and had a Son named *Uziel*, and a Grandson *Joseph*, [Names which suit not either the Author or the Translator] and so must have lived in the Time of the Captivity, or soon after the Return from it; but the Author of *Ecclesiasticus* flourished after the Time of *Alexander the Great*, and the Establishment of the *Greek* Monarchy. See *Buxt.* and *Bartolocc. Bibl. Rabbin.* With as little Reason is *Jesus*, the Writer of this Book, supposed by others to be one of the *LXX* Interpreters; for though tis probable he went into *Egypt* in the Time of *Ptolemy Philadelphus*, yet that he was sent thither, or assisted in that Translation, or took the Hint from Questions proposed to those Interpreters, to set about his own Work of moral Sentences and Apothegms, is all Conjecture. This Notion took its Rise probably from *Aristeas* mentioning one of that Name amongst those Interpreters, which, suppose it true, though his Account is generally reckoned fabulous, is not sufficient to determine that *Jesus*, the Son of *Sirach*, was the Person.

I have, in the Comment on the Book of Wisdom<sup>a</sup>, considered, and examined the principal Councils, on the Sanction of which the Romanists ground the Canonicalness of this, and the other apocryphal Writings, to which I beg Leave to refer the Reader; at present I shall take Notice of, and confute another Pretence, which is urged by some<sup>b</sup> of that Communion, viz. that besides the first Canon of Scripture, made in the Time of *Esdra*, there was another added in the Time of *Eleazar* the High-Priest, by a Council then assembled at *Jerusalem*, when they sent their *LXXII* Interpreters to *Ptolemy*, King of *Egypt*, for the translating their *Hebrew* Bible into *Greek*, in which Council they canonized the Books of *Tobit*, *Ecclesiasticus*, and some others. In Answer to this I observe, 1. That it does not appear by any Evidence that the *Jews* ever had any such second Canon among them. 2. Had there been any such, they were too tenacious of their Laws, and the Traditions of their Elders, ever to have parted with it. 3. To what Purpose should they afterwards reject such a Canon, or what would they have gained by it? Possibly they might have been willing to abolish or mutilate those Scriptures, as *Esay* and *Daniel*, which prophesied of the Coming of *Christ*, at the Time when they rejected him; but what should induce them to attempt an Alteration as to these Books in which there are no such Prophe-

<sup>a</sup> Annotat. on *Calmet's* Preface.

<sup>b</sup> *Genebrard*, *Maldonate*, *Serarius*, *Perron*, &c.



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cies against them? 4. Had these, now called *Apocryphal* Books, ever been made Parts of the Canonical Scriptures, it would have been a wicked Sacrilege in the *Jews* after to have rejected them, nor would *Christ*, that so often and sharply reproves them for taking away the true Sense of Scripture, have failed to have condemned them more severely for renouncing whole Books of it. As there is then no such Canon any where to be produced, nor any Probability that the *Jews* should receive any such, who religiously adhered to the first as delivered to them by the Prophets, and still less Reason to imagine that they ever should part with it afterwards, if once authorized, it is as clear, as any Evidence can make it, that there never was any such second Canon of Scripture made by a Council of *Jerusalem*. See *Cosin's Schol. Hist.* p. 14. &c. *Calmet* indeed says, that it is a received Opinion of the Catholic Church, that this Book was placed in the Canon of Scripture, and that it may be demonstrated by the Testimony of several Fathers, and by the Tradition of all *Christian* Churches, and by its being quoted by a great Number of Ecclesiastical Writers, as a Work inspired by the Holy Ghost. To the first Assertion I answer, that if by the Catholic Church, he means the Church Universal, it is not true; *Episcopus*, to shew the Agreement of Christian Churches with the *Jews* in this Point, enumerates the Decisions of nine of the *Eastern*, nine of the *Western*, and two of the *African* Churches, determining for the Canon as we now have it, and excluding all other, but the 22 Books received by the *Jewish* Church, and contained in the *Hebrew Bible*. See *Joseph. cont. App.* L. i. If by Catholic Church he means that of *Rome* in particular, her Judgment cannot outweigh the Decisions of a larger Number, and Churches of greater Authority, viz. those of *Jerusalem*, *Alexandria*, *Antioch*, and *Constantinople*, to the contrary. As to the second Pretence that the Fathers severally and quote this Book as Scripture, it may be replied 1. That the Term *Scripture* is often taken laxly to signify any ancient Ecclesiastical Writing, containing excellent and pious Instructions in them, in regard whereof this Book, and the other of *Wisdom* may have been called Holy Writings, and divine Books, and sometimes canonical ones, but not in so true and strict a Sense, as the other uncontroverted Books are. 2. That when either the *Greek* or *Latin* Fathers make a more honourable Mention of them, and attribute to them the Title of Holy Writings, yet this does not place them higher than in the second Rank of Scriptures, which are of a lesser, imperfect, and doubtful Authority. I shall in a third and last Part, which will finish my whole Design, attempt to illustrate in the same Manner the Books of *Tobit*, *Judith*, *Baruch*, &c. to which I shall add some Strictures and Observations on particular Passages in the Books of *Maccabees* and *Esdras*. And this, God willing, shall follow with all convenient Speed.

## E R R A T A.

In Disc. Pag. i. l. 35. for xxxix read xlix.

Pag. iii. l. 28. for still r. skill.

iv. l. 21. for Phylion r. Physcon.

9. l. 34. for entirely r. entire.

13. l. 58. for Domine r. Domini.

17. l. 16. for Patients r. Parents.

28. l. 6. add a.

l. 16. col. 2. read firmus.

51. l. 31. col. 2. dele a. *ibid.* for and r. et.

52. l. 55. dele in.

53. l. 57. read Captivity.

55. l. 50. for supposed it designed r. agreed.

56. l. 60. for Resh r. Rosh.

57. l. 29. for on r. one.

*Ibid.* l. 46. r. Gomorrah.

*Ibid.* col. 2. the last line instead of ; put ?

58. l. 47. for σκληροσμός. r. σκληροσμός.

61. col. 2. l. 12. for singula read multa.

63. col. 2. l. 32. read mandatorum.

66. col. 2. l. 32. read subverter.

70. col. 2. l. 46. r. Weak engage together, the Weak.

71. l. 42. for his r. their. *Ibid.* l. 64. add it.

73. l. 17. for etiam read aliam.

Pag.

74. l. 48. after Blessings put a full Point.

76. l. 11. for xii. read 2.

81. l. 26. read nec cupiditates peccantium.

96. l. 30. for in gentes read ingentes.

105. l. 7. after Virtue put a comma.

*Ibid.* l. 35. insert so.

143. col. 2. l. 63. for thy read they.

144. l. 1. for et read ei.

153. l. 2. for quantum read quantam.

*Ibid.* l. 36. for acception read acception.

155. l. 30. for in to read into.

160. l. 30. for βαρὺν read βαρὺ.

166. l. 54. for best read last.

173. col. 2. l. 10. for this read his

186. l. 13. for ad v. r. adv.

194. col. 2. l. 15. after God dele the full Point.

204. l. 34. for the read this.

208. col. 2. l. 43. after Sense put a comma only.

227. l. 7. for lxvi read xlv.

In the Author's Preface to the Comment on the Book of *Wisdom*, omit And among them the learned Dr. Duport, the then *Greek* Professor in the University of Cambridge.

P R O



# PROLOGUE.

**A**LMOST after all the Prophets.] Either this is a Mistake, or they mistake who make *Malachi* the last of all the Prophets; for should we understand this of *Jesus* the Grandfather, (to carry the matter as high as possible) though undoubtedly the Grandson is meant here, as the learned have very justly observed that this Book was wrote in the third Century before *Christ*, and translated about 133 Years before his Advent, See Bishop *Candler's* Def. p. 41. we cannot reconcile the Assertion here with the Time in which Chronologers have fixed the Death of *Malachi*, and the compleating of the Canon; which *Helvicus*, *Prideaux*, *Usher*, place about Anno 428. *Artaxerxes* 37. except the Word Prophet is to be taken in a more lax and extensive Sense, See following. *Disc.* p. i.

## PROLOGUE II.

**F**OR in the eight and thirtieth Year coming into Egypt, when *Euergetes* was King, &c.] The Learned are greatly divided how to settle this Difficulty: They are not agreed whether the Words should be understood of the 38<sup>th</sup> Year of the Translator, or of the Years of the Reign of *Euergetes*, or of the 38<sup>th</sup> Year of *Jubilee*, or of the 38<sup>th</sup> of the *Dionysian Æra*, or the 38<sup>th</sup> Year of the *Jews* Deliverance from Slavery under *Ptolemy Philadelph*, or of the 38<sup>th</sup> Year from the Grandfather's writing his Book in *Hebrew*, or of the 38<sup>th</sup> Year from the Grandson's coming into *Egypt*. See following Discourse, p. ii, &c. where these Opinions are discussed, and the Difficulty cleared up.

*Ibid.* I found a Book of no small Learning, therefore I thought it most necessary for me to bestow some Diligence and Travel to interpret it.] Our Translators suppose the Book he translated to be the same that he found: But can this be? was he a Stranger to his Grandfather's Work till he happened to meet with it in *Egypt*? The account in the former *Prologue* is, that the original Work was transmitted from Father to Son, viz. by *Jesus* the Elder to *Sirach*, and by *Sirach* to *Jesus* the Translator; and no doubt but it was preserved by them as a most valuable Work in their Family. Of this indeed *Jesus* the Translator gives some Account above; and yet by this Expression it seems as if he met with his Grandfather's Work by mere Chance in *Egypt*, which is not an easy Supposition. May not ἀφ'μοιου here stand for, and relate to, some other Book, the meeting with which was his Inducement to translate his Grandfather's Work in like Manner? for they seem to be plainly distinguished, as two different Works, but of the same Nature and Kind: ἀφ'μοιου, which is properly rendred here, from the *Greek*, *Exemplar* in the *Polyglot* Bibles, does not signify a Copy or Transcript of the Original Book, (nor is it usual, speaking of a Copy, to say, *Exemplar non parvæ doctrinæ*.) but means a learned and ingenious Performance of the like kind, which moved him to an Imitation of it in a similar Case, to translate the Work he had before spoken of, and to publish it for the Sake of his Countrymen in Dispersion. Though ἀφ'μοιου is dissimilis, ἀφ'μοιου here must be understood in the Sense of ἀφ'μοιωµα, Similitude or Likeness. And what Book so likely to be this ἀφ'μοιωµα, as one of the τῶν παλαιῶν βιβλίων written after the Prophets, and among these what so probable, says a very learned Friend, to whom I am not a little indebted in the following Work, "As the Wisdom of *Solomon* in particular, the Translation of which into *Greek* he might first meet with in *Egypt*, after he had made some Stay there; and which, being done with great Skill, and proving very instructive, might be his Motive to think of doing the like with his Grandfather's Collection of Sentences, which were of the same kind, and partly on the same Subject, See first *Prolog.* This likewise might be his Inducement to intitle his Work in the same Manner, *Wisdom*. For the first *Prologue* says, he gave it this Name, and that *Jesus* did imitate *Solomon*, which perhaps was the Reason why one is tacked, or joined to the other. Our Translation therefore of the abovesaid Passage (he conceives) should run thus: For in the 38<sup>th</sup> Year (of my Age) being in *Egypt*, in the Reign of *Euergetes*, and staying there some Time, I met with a learned and instructive Tract or Instance of this Kind, and thereupon I myself [αὐτὸς] thought I was bound to apply myself with close Study and Diligence, to the rendring into *Greek* this same Book τῆς τοῦ βιβλίου, viz. his Grandfather's, which he before recommended as a most useful Book. This makes his whole *Prologue* consistent with itself, and to be easy and natural, and likewise conformable to the account given in the anonymous *Prologue* above." I could not conceal from the Reader this ingenious Conjecture, how far the Circumstance of Time, and the Æra of the respective Writers will confirm it, the Learned must determine.



A

## DISCOURSE

CONCERNING

## The AGE of the two SIRACHIDES,

One the Author, the other the Greek Translator of

## The BOOK of ECCLESIASTICUS.

WHERE there are intrinsic Characters in any Author that shew the Age he did, or did not live in, or give Ground for reasonable Conjectures of the Time he wrote in, little Notice should be taken of any Authorities to the contrary from Writers of a distant, subsequent Age, to the Prejudice of the Author, whose Characters he overlooks or contradicts. This is the Case of the *Prologue* of *St. Athanasius*, which is joined with the *Prologue* of the *Greek Translator* of the *Book Ecclesiasticus*. It is probable he is the same *Athanasius*, Bishop of *Alexandria*, as *Euthalius* dedicated his Edition of the *Acts* and *Epistles* to, who flourished between the Years 458 and 490, as is proved by *Zacagny* the Editor: And if so, he was above a Century at least from the Age of the Great *Athanasius*, and at too great a Distance from the Age of the Translator of *Ecclesiasticus*, to be regarded in any historical or chronological Point, wherein he differs from that Translator.

This I take to be the shortest way of getting rid of the first Difficulty in the *Prologue* of *Athanasius* the younger. The Age of *Malachy* is too well settled to be shaken by so modern an Authority; and for the Author of the *Hebrew Ecclesiasticus*, he is in several Places express against the Assertions or Deductions that may be drawn from any Expressions in the *Prologue* aforesaid. For Instance, the *Hebrew Sirachides*, speaks in the Praise of the twelve Minor Prophets, Chap. xxxix. 10. *And of the twelve Prophets let the Memorial be blessed.*—So that he not only lived after them, but even after their Prophecies were collected into one Volume, which went under the Denomination of the Twelve Prophets, as did the Collection of the Five Books of *Moses*, under the Name of the *Pentateuch*, and of the *Oetateuch*, when the Three other Books were added to it.

And to be sure that *Malachy* the last Prophet made one in the Collection of the Twelve Prophets, the same *Hebrew Ecclesiasticus* quotes the very Words of *Malachy* as a Prediction of his, then yet to be fulfilled. For speaking of *Elias*, who, as *Malachy* foretold, was to come before the great and terrible Day of the Lord, he epitomizes what *Malachy* had said upon that Occasion, Chap. iv. 5, 6. *Elias*, says he, *was ordained to pacify the Lord's Judgment before it breaks forth.* And then quotes the very Words of *Malachy*, Chap. xlviii. 10. *To turn the Heart of the Father unto the Son.*

But how then are we to understand *Athanasius* when he says, The Son of *Sirach* lived almost after all the Prophets? It is of no Consequence whether we understand him at all. If he meant almost after the Twelve, or any of the Minor Prophets, he is plainly mistaken. And if he uses the Word *Prophet* in any other Sense, it is foreign to your Purpose. Possibly he might learn of the *Jews* (who esteemed the *בן-קול* to be a lower Degree of Prophecy) to call those Prophets who are favoured with that gentle Voice: Or rather, with *Josephus*, to term some holy Men Prophets, who lived in the Interval between the ceasing of Prophecy and the Advent of *Christ*, and predicted a few future Events, relating to publick or private Affairs, which came to pass accordingly, as *Josephus* affirms.

The same *Prologue* of *Athanasius* affirms, that *Sirachides* was no less famous for Wisdom than *Solomon*, which, I think, intends no more than that his Collection of wise, pithy Sayings, were in as great Repute, were known and read as much as the Proverbs of *Solomon*, which were in the highest Esteem for their Wisdom and Learning. As much as to say, *Sirachides* was looked on as another *Solomon*, for his wise, moral, and oeconomical Precepts.



cepts. Eastern Comparisons (and herein the the *Egyptians* imitated them) are not to be stretched to every Degree of Equality. *Sirachides* might imitate *Solomon*, and resemble him in many things without coming up to his full Height of Wisdom, much less to his Spirit of Inspiration.

The Learned are indeed much divided in Opinion touching the 38<sup>th</sup> Year, mentioned in the Prologue of the *Greek Sirachides*, but most of their Reasons may be answered easily, and methinks I see, in the Prologue itself, Light enough how to understand it differently from them all. His Words are these: *Ἐν τῷ λη' ἔτει (ἐπὶ τῷ Εὐεργέτῃ Βασιλέως) παραγενθεὶς εἰς Αἴγυπτον ἡ συγγραφή, ἔχου ἑ μὴ κρᾶς παιδείας ἀφόμοιον*: —Of which I take the Sense to be this, “For in the 38<sup>th</sup> Year (Euergetes being then King) after I had come into Egypt and sojourned there all that whole long Time, I met with a Copy, or Exemplar of this Book, fraught with no small Learning.” —To synchronize, is to be equal in Time or Duration with some other thing: And here is nothing to synchronize with besides the 38 Years of his Abode in Egypt, which began from the Year of his first Entrance into that Country, and concurred with the succeeding Years to the 38<sup>th</sup>.

I am aware that ἀφόμοιον, or ἐφόμοιον (as some Manuscripts have it) is not classical Greek. For tho' ἀφόμοιος doth usually stand in the Greek Writers for unlike, taking the Particle ἀπό in a contrary Sense to that I use it in, yet since ἀφόμοιως commonly signifies *Similitude*, I cannot see why ἀφόμοιον may not signify a Counterpart of a Writing, copied upon, from, or after it. It must be remembered, that in *Alexandria*, the common People, as yet, spoke *Macedonian Greek*, and our Translator, conversing much with them, might fall into their Dialect, or compound Greek Words as they did, tho' not much in Use before him, when he thought them to be most expressive of his Meaning.

They that understand this 38<sup>th</sup> Year of Part of the Jubilee Year, surely did not consider that those Years, no more than the Sabbatical Years, were observed out of the Land of *Canaan*. The Design of the Jubilee, was to preserve the Inheritances of Families within their own proper Tribes; and therefore when a Possessor, through Misfortune, or luxurious living, had been forced to mortgage his Estate, it was ordained to be restored to him or his Heirs, at, or after the Revolution of 50 Years, and so the Inheritance was restored to the Family that formerly possessed it; but as the *Jews* had no Inheritances in their Dispersions, the Jubilee Year was impracticable, and the Observation of such an Epoch needless, and next to impossible.

Nor will Recourse to the *Dionysian* Year help those who would accommodate this 38<sup>th</sup> Year to that Epoch, for his *Æra* beginning from the first of *Ptolomy Philadelph*, and *Philadelph* reigning but 38 Years, according to *Ptolomy's* Canon, at most thirty nine according to *Josepbus*, the first of *Euergetes* must be the 39<sup>th</sup> or 40<sup>th</sup> of the *Dionysian Æra*, and consequently exceeds a Year or two the 38<sup>th</sup> Year of the *Greek Sirachides*.

The Year of the *Jews* Deliverance from Slavery, under *Ptolomy Philadelph*, bids fairest for a *Jewish* Epoch to be remembered in *Egypt*; but as this Deliverance has no other nor better Authority than that of *Aristeus* (for *Josepbus* follows him) the Fact is doubtful, especially since this Deliverance is said to be purchased with a large Sum of Money by the *Jews*, which how they that were Slaves, and not long ago led Captives into *Egypt* were able to amass, is not easy to guess. The Year of this Deliverance is not mentioned by *Aristeus*, *Eusebius* (upon what Authority I know not) places it in the second or third Year of the Reign of *Philadelphus*, but that is most improbable, that a wise King, just come to the Throne of a newly conquered Kingdom, should make it one of his first Acts to do the most provoking Thing possible to a superstitious, changeable, seditious People, viz. the procuring the Publication of a Book that rallied their Religion and their Gods, and exposed the Tyranny and Cruelty of their Ancestor Kings, and perpetuated the History of the shameful Destruction of their Nation, in the Cause of those very *Jews* that were now again their Slaves. *Scaliger*, therefore, from the reckoning of *Julius Africanus*, places it in the latter End of his Reign. By the Computation therefore of *Julius Africanus*, this Version was not made under *Euergetes* the first, for he reigned but 24 Years, and add to those 24 Years the five or six Years of *Philadelph*, after the *Sirachides* had made this pretended Greek Version, and you get no higher than five or six Years more, which fall short of the 38 Years in the Prologue.

Indeed, by *Eusebius's* Computation, the *Greek Sirachides* might come into *Egypt*, and begin his Translation the second or third of *Euergetes*; but then there are other Circumstances that overthrow this Opinion also; for the *Hebrew Sirachides* writ his Book under a King of *Egypt*, who persecuted the *Jews*, and from whom he was in Danger of his Life after many Sufferings by false Accusations, &c. This could not happen in *Ptolomy Lagi's* Reign, because the elder *Sirachides* was scarcely born at that Time, at least he was too young to repair into *Egypt* to get *Wisdom and Knowledge*, which, as he himself seems to intimate, was the End of his going thither, much less



less was he of an Age capable of writing a Book of such wise Instructions and Observations. Nor is it likely that he or his People, should suffer such grievous Things under *Philadelph*, a Prince of a most humane Temper; and particularly favourable to the Jewish Nation, according to the same *Eusebius*. If then we bring the *Hebrew Sirachides* into Egypt, not sooner than the Reign of *Euergetes* the first, the *Greek Sirachides* could not in his Reign translate this Book; for a proper Interval must be allowed between the Writing and the Translation, much longer than the Reign of *Euergetes*, or even of his Successor. It must be considered the *Hebrew Sirachides* wrote his Book in *Hebrew*, or in the Language of the Jews at *Jerusalem*, as a Manual for the Jews in Egypt, who must therefore be supposed able to read and understand well that Language: But the *Greek Sirachides* therefore translated this Book out of *Hebrew*, because the Jews had then almost all forgot their native Tongue: Thus the *Greek Prologue* of the Translator, "Having found a Copy of no small Learning, or Instruction, I thought it most necessary for me to bestow some Diligence and Travel to interpret it with great Watchfulness, and still in my leisure Hours to bring the Book to an End, and set it forth, or publish it for their Use, who in this Egyptian Dispersion, or Peregrination were given to Study or Learning, being before prepared in Manners to live according to the Law." This was the very End proposed by his Grandfather in writing the Book, to the Intent, says the Translator in the same Prologue, that those which are desirous to learn, and are addicted to these Things, might profit much more in living according to the Law. Such a Change in Language in the same People, might easily happen within the Compass of three Generations, or of 120 Years, and not much sooner; consequently the *Greek Translator* did not tread too quick upon the Heels of the *Hebrew Writer*, but his Age must be brought down to the Reign of a later *Ptolomy*; and if he did translate, as he says

he did under *Euergetes*, he must be under *Euergetes* the second, and at a good Distance from *Euergetes* the first.

The Opinion of those (which is the general Opinion of learned Men) who make this 38<sup>th</sup> Year to be the Year of his Life, is liable to few or no Exceptions; but it seems to be too vague an Expression, without some Word expressive of his Age to restrain it to that Sense, unless it should appear that such Omissions are not infrequent in this Translation: The Mention of his own Age at all does not seem to be of any Importance towards raising the Value of the Work itself; but the long Stay in Egypt before he undertook it, implies that he was well qualified for such a Work, and fully acquainted with the Want his Countrymen were in of such a Translation.

The following genealogical Table may contribute to strengthen what I have advanced above concerning the Age the Translator lived in; at least it will shew that *Jesus* the younger could not translate his Grandfather's Book under *Euergetes* the first.

I think it may be collected from several Passages of *Ecclesiasticus*, that *Sirachides* the Writer was of the priestly Line, and if we may credit the reading in some *Greek MSS.* *Ecclus* l. 3. he was descended from *Eleaser*, the Brother of *Simon Justus* the High Priest; and should that be allowed, I make *Jesus*, the Son of *Sirach* the younger, to have translated 38 Years sooner than *Archbishop Usher* doth, viz. in the first Year of *Euergetes* the second ante Chr. 169. and not in his 38<sup>th</sup> Year, 132, which would protract the Translator's Life too long.

I would not be thought in the Table to fix the Year precisely, when each Priest entered on his Office. It is sufficient for our Purpose, that it is near the Time specified, allowing about thirty Years to each Priest's Continuance in his Office.

Before



Before Christ  
305 Ptol. Lagi beg.

Jaddus

Onias I. — Menasse.

In his Reign

300 bef. C. —

Simon the Just began his Priesthood. — Eleazar

292 C. —

Eleazar Brother of Simon

285 C. Ptol. Philad.

259 C. —

Menasse Brother of Onias. I.

247 C. Euergetes I.

233 C. —

Onias II. Son of Simon

222 — Ptol. Philop.

219 C. —

Simon II.

205 — Ptol. Epiph.

199 C. —

Onias III. — Jesus called — Onias called — Lyfimachus  
Jafon Menelaus

175 C. —

Jafon

173 C. —

Menelaus

181 C. Ptol. Philop.

169 11 Philometor de-  
posed and fled to  
his Brother whom  
the Alexandrians  
had made King.

169 C. 12 } Philometor  
1 } Phyfeon, or Euergetes II.

Jesus the Author of Ecclesiasticus:  
293 C. — he *might be* 9 or 10 Years old,  
or two before Simon the Just died.  
For he saw him officiate, *Eccclus* 1. 1.  
247 C. — went into Egypt under Ptolomy  
Philadelph, at the Death of Ptolomy  
Philadelph; aged 55.  
— Some Time under Euergetes I. writ  
*Eccclus*, aged about 66 — for he *was old*  
when he writ it about 232 C.

Sirach Son of Jesus the elder.

Jesus Son of Sirach, the Translator,  
who, if he translated, in the 38<sup>th</sup>  
Year of his coming into Egypt, and  
that 38<sup>th</sup> Year fell on I. Physion, or  
Euerget. II. when he was about 60  
Years or upwards, he must have  
come into Egypt 207 before Christ,  
*i. e.* in the End of Ptol. Philopator.  
At which Time Jesus might be  
about 22 Years of Age.

But whether the elder *Sirachides* was of the  
Family of *Simon* the High-Priest by *Eleazar*  
or not, it is certain he was of a competent  
Age to remember *Simon's* graceful perform-  
ing of the Duty of High-Priest: That he  
was not of sufficient Age and Experience, be-  
fore the Reign of *Euergetes* I. to write his  
Book, in *old Age*: And that the Reign of  
*Euergetes* I. was too short (24 Years) for his  
Grandson in advanced Years, to translate this

Book under the same *Euergetes*: As on the  
other hand, the Grandson must have lived  
beyond the usual Period of Men, to begin  
this Translation in the 38<sup>th</sup> of *Euergetes* II:  
according to *Usher*, or his Father *Syrach* must  
have exceeded the like Period, did he, the  
Son, at the 38<sup>th</sup> Year of his Life, reach the  
Reign of *Euergetes* II. and yet his Grandfa-  
ther *Jesus* be acquainted with *Simon* the  
first.

E. Duresme.



# COMMENTARY

ON THE

## Book of *Ecclesiasticus*.

### CHAP. I.

Ver. 1.

**A**LL Wisdom cometh from the Lord.] The Author opens this Book, as Solomon does his of *Proverbs*, with the Commendation of Wisdom; he shews its Eternity, Emanation from God, and Union with him. Wisdom is sometimes taken for that Eternal Wisdom, which is an essential Attribute of the Divinity; sometimes Personally, for the *Λόγος*, or the Word begotten of the Father; and sometimes for that Derivative Wisdom, which God's infinite Goodness is pleased to communicate to Mankind, in different Measures and Proportion. But in Scripture, and in these Sapiential Books particularly, whenever mention is made of Wisdom with any Mark of Commendation, either the sincere practice of Religion and Virtue is meant by it, or such Knowledge at least, that has a near and strong Influence upon it. That all Wisdom cometh from the Lord is exactly the Sentiment of Solomon, (whom this Author very often imitates and copies) *Prov. ii. 6. The Lord giveth Wisdom, out of his Mouth cometh Knowledge and Understanding.* And therefore St. James well advises, *If any Man lack Wisdom, let him ask it of God, that giveth to all Men liberally, i. 5.* See also *Dan. ii. 20, 21, 22, 23. Sapientiam homini tribuit Deus,* says *Lactantius, quam terrenus Pater dare nullo modo potest. De Opificio Dei, c. 19.* distinguishing God in this particular from an Earthly Parent, who tho' he can give Temporal good Things for the Comfort of Life, yet cannot he give Wisdom for the Conduct of it. This Observation of our Author should excite us to adore God with a Respect and Duty worthy of him, and to acknowledge with the pro-

foundest Humility, that God, in giving us Wisdom, has given us the greatest Gift that he can bestow, even a Gift in some Sense equal to himself.

*Ibid. And is with him for ever.]* The *Vulgate* renders, *et cum illo fuit semper, & est ante ævum.* The first Clause is not in the *Greek.* The Meaning of the Latter is, that Wisdom considered as the *Λόγος*, or a Divine Attribute, is always present with God, as his Joint-counsellor, and the Partner of his Throne. See *Wisd. viii. 3. ix. 4. Prov. viii. 22, 27, 30.* to which agrees the *Tigurin* Version, *et eidem semper conjuncta est.* *Rabanus Maurus* understanding it of the *Logos*, says, this Author opens his Book as St. John does his Gospel, *In the Beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, &c.* If with the *Vulgate* and some other *Latin* Translations we understand it in the *Præteritum*, the Sense then may be, "that God had from "all Eternity a perfect Idea of his Future "Works, that the Design and Order of the "Creation with the whole Series of Providence, was always present in the Eternal "Mind, in a Manner infinitely more perfect, "than the Scheme of any Work can be supposed to be in the Memory and Understanding of the best Architect.

Ver. 2. *Who can number the Sand of the Sea, and the Drops of Rain, and the Days of Eternity?*] We meet with a Sentence resembling this, *c. xviii. 10. As a Drop of Water unto the Sea, and a Gravel Stone in Comparison of the Sand, so are a thousand Years to the Days of Eternity.* *Virgil* has the same Comparison,

*Quem qui scire velit, Libyci velit æquoris idem Discere, quam multæ Zephyro turbentur arenæ;*

A

Aut



*Aut, ubi navigiis violentior incidit Eurus,  
Nosse quot Ionii veniant ad littora fluctus.*

Georg. L. ii.

As to the first of these, viz. the Quantity of the Sea Sand, *Archimedes* has made an Attempt to shew the possibility of numbering them. *Lib. de Arenæ numero.* and the *Pythian Apollo*, to recommend his Oracles, and raise a high Conceit of the Immensity of his Knowledge, boasts of his Skill in this Particular,

Οἶδα ἐγὼ ψάμμῃ τὸν ἄριθμον, μέτρα θαλάσσης.

And as one cannot count the Days of Ages past and to come, so is it equally impossible to date the Epocha of Wisdom, to fix the Time when she first began to be, or to determine her certain Period. The impossibilities here referred to (for such they must be acknowledged with respect to Human Power) God only can effect, who, as the Prophet sublimely describes him, *measures the Waters in the Hollow of his Hand, and metes out Heaven with a Span, and comprehends the Dust of the Earth in a Measure, and weighs the Mountains in Scales, and the Hills in a Balance, whose Spirit none hath directed, nor shewed to him the way of Understanding.* *Isai.* xl. 12, 13, 14.

Ver. 3. *Who can find out the Height of Heaven, and the Breadth of the Earth, and the Deep, and Wisdom?* See *Ch. vi. 22.* and Note upon it. As in the former Verse Wisdom is compared to three Things that cannot be numbered, so in this it is compared to as many as cannot be measured, intimating, that as these cannot be measured or numbered by any but God, so neither is Wisdom known to, or can be perfectly comprehended by any Being else. Thus *Job*, speaking of the unsearchable Wisdom of God, and his unfathomable Perfections, puts these Enquiries, and illustrates the Absurdity of the Attempt by some of the like Instances. *Canst thou search out the Almighty to Perfection? It is higher than the Heaven, what canst thou do? deeper than Hell, what canst thou know? The Measure of it is longer than the Earth, and the Breadth of it than the Sea.* c. xi. 7, 8, 9. And the Apostle cries out, *O the Depth of the Wisdom and Knowledge of God, how unsearchable are his Judgments, and his Ways past finding out!* *Rom.* xi. 33. *Hesiod*, in his *Theogony*, describes the Height of the Heavens by saying, a Smith's Anvil would be nine Days in falling from thence to the Earth, which is as random a Conjecture with respect to the Height above, as the Attempt of *Archimedes* was rash of numbring the Sands beneath.

Ver. 4. *Wisdom hath been created before all Things, and the Understanding of Prudence from everlasting.* *πρότερον πάντων ἐκτίσται σοφία, καὶ σύνεσις φρονήσεως ἐξ αἰῶνος.* The Greek Translator expresses Wisdom by different Words in this Book, as *σοφία*, *σύνεσις*, *φρόνησις*, *παιδεία*, &c. If we should understand Wisdom, here personally, it does not follow that the Logos is a Creature, or even the first born of every Creature in Point of Order and Time;

the Expression here rather implies his Existence before all Things, even before the Beginning of the visible World. For if the Logos created all Things, as the Scripture assures us, *that without him was not any thing made*, *John* i. 3. he cannot himself be any Part of the Creation, either in Heaven or Earth, or be numbered among the Creatures, as he was before all created Beings. It is well worth observing, that Wisdom is not here said to have been created *πρώτη πάντων*, the first of all Things, but *πρότερον πάντων*, before all Things, before the Creation of any Thing in Heaven, or in Earth, and to have been *ἐξ αἰῶνος*, from Eternity, as *αἰών* is strictly taken in the preceding Verses. *Πρότερον* is used in this Sense often by the *οἱ*, and by this Author, c. xii. 17, xli. 5. xlv. 3. and is equivalent here to *πρό τῶ αἰῶνος ἀπ' ἀρχῆς ἐκτίσθαι με*, c. xxiv. 9. See Note on that Place, where the Verb *ἐκτίσθαι*, the same that is here used, must mean an eternal Generation, as it is said to have been *πρό τῶ αἰῶνος*, and *ἀπ' ἀρχῆς*, from the Beginning, and before the World: In which Sense most Catholick Writers understand it, *Prov.* viii. 22. a Passage particularly resembling this, and from which probably it was taken, where Wisdom is said to have been with the Lord before his Works of old, i. e. before the Works of the Creation, from everlasting, or ever the Earth was. 'Tis observable that our Translators render *the Lord possessed me from the Beginning*, following a Copy which read *ἐκτίσθαι*, as the Hebrew Word is translated by *Aquila*, and *Philo de Temulentia*. But allowing *ἐκτίσθαι* to be the true Reading, which is disputed, it may be used both by *Solomon*, and the Son of *Sirach* in the Sense of *Generated*, and thus *Athanasius*, *Serm.* 3. *cont. Arian.* *Cyrl.* L. v. *Theoph.* c. vi. *Hil.* *Lib. de Synod.* understand Creation. And indeed the Terms Generation and Creation, are often used promiscuously in the best Authors. Thus *Cicero*, *Quoniam plurima beneficia continet Patria, & est antiquior Parens quam is qui, ut aiunt, creaverit, major ei profecto, quam Parenti, debetur gratia.* L. i. *de Repub.* And in this Sense we find it used by *Virgil*, *Aeneid.* Lib. x. 517, 543. and on the other hand Generation is sometimes used for Creation, thus *Pf.* xc. 2. *πρό τῶ ὅτι γεννηθῆναι*, before the Mountains were brought forth, i. e. created, or existed. And when such strong Terms as before mentioned, expressive of Eternity, are added to *κτίσθαι*, it then means eternal Generation. In like manner when *Homer* calls the Gods *ἀειχρόνους*, we cannot suppose that he means any Reflection upon them, or intends any lower Sense than that of *αἰὲν ὄντας*. Indeed *Apoc.* iii. 14. the Logos is said to be, *καὶ ἀρχὴ τῆς κτίσεως τῆ θείας*, the Beginning of the Creation of God, an Expression, according to the Inaccuracy of our Translation, not very unlike, *Wisdom was created before all Things*, as if the Logos was but the first of God's Creatures, made use of as an Instrument to create all others; whereas *ἀρχὴ* in this Place signifies an Author, an Original efficient Cause or



or Creator, and so in all the Divine and Moral Writings, this Word is used, and applied to the Infinite and Eternal Being. The *Ethiopic* Version of the Place in Latin agrees herewith, *et fuit ante omnia quæ creavit Deus*. See *Blackwall's Sac. Class.* vol. ii. p. 177. So that this Passage of *St. John* being capable of so orthodox and good a Sense, there seems the less Occasion to alter *κρίσις* into *κρίσις*, as *Dr. Grabe* has done in his Edition. But all Difficulties and Objections will be avoided, if Wisdom be considered here as a divine Attribute, the infinite Wisdom of God, displayed in, and poured forth upon all the Works of the Creation. In this Sense *Grotius* understands this Passage of our Author, *Creata dicitur divina Sapientia, cum se operibus prodidit*, and refers to *ψ 9.* as explanatory of it. Nor is it unusual with this Writer, to apply the Term Creation to Qualities and Attributes, as it does here to Wisdom in a secondary Sense, see *c. vii. 16. x. 18. xxxviii. 4. xlv. 2.* Lastly, may not *προλέγα* express the Pre-eminence of Wisdom above all Things and Persons, in point of Worth, Dignity, and Essence, far above all Principality, and Power, and Might, and Dominion, and every Name that is named, not only in this World, but also in that which is to come? See *Heinsii Aristar. Sac. in Job. i. 15.*

Ver. 5. *The Word of God most high is the Fountain of Wisdom.*] This Verse is omitted in most Greek Copies, as it is also in the Syriac, and Arabic Versions; it occurs in the *Complut.* and from thence our Translators inserted it. We may understand by the Word of God, either the Logos personally, who is called the Almighty Word, in the Book of *Wisdom, c. xviii. 15.* by *Philo* also, and the *Chaldee Paraphrasts*; or by the Word of God, may be meant the Holy Scripture, which is the Source of Wisdom, and a rich Treasury of heavenly Knowledge; and that the Commandments therein contained are the Way to Wisdom, according to the Observation in *ψ 26.* See *Deut. iv. 6.*

*Ibid.* And her Ways are everlasting Commandments.] *Coverdale's* and the *Geneva* Version is more clear and explicit, *the everlasting Commandments are the Entrance unto her.* The Sense is much the same as in the former Sentence, tho' the Phrase is somewhat varied, as may be observed almost throughout this, and the Book of *Proverbs, viz.* that the keeping of the Commandments, or the Observance of the Precepts of the Decalogue, which *Moses* styles Everlasting, from their Unchangeableness, in Opposition to human Laws, that are alterable at pleasure, is the Way which leads to Wisdom. Like that, *Prov. i. 17.* *The Fear of the Lord is the Beginning of Wisdom,* and that in *Job, xxviii. 28.* *The Fear of the Lord is Wisdom; and to depart from Evil, is Understanding.* The Words of *Baruch* very happily express the Sense of our Author. *Hear, O! Israel, the Commandments of Life, give Ear to understand Wisdom. Thou hast forsaken the Fountain of Wisdom, for if thou*

*hadst walked in the Way of God, then shouldst thou have dwelled in Peace for ever. c. iii. 9, 12, 13.*

Ver. 6. *To whom hath the Root of Wisdom been revealed?*] Thus *Baruch iii. 15.* *Who hath found out her Place, or who hath come into her Treasures?* See also *ψ 29, 30, 31, 32.* and *Job xxviii. 20, 23.* If by the Root of Wisdom, we here understand Religion, then the Sense may be, "that the right Knowledge of God, and the true Way of worshipping him, was discovered but to a few Nations;" *God shewed his Statutes and Ordinances unto Israel, but the Heathen had no Knowledge of his Laws,* as the *Psalmist* expresses it, *Pf. cxlvii. 19, 20.* Thus again *Baruch c. iii.* *No Man knoweth her Way, nor thinketh of her Path; but he that knoweth all Things knoweth her, he hath found out all the Way of Knowledge, and hath given it unto Jacob his Servant, and to Israel his beloved.* Or if we understand this of God himself, as the Root and Fountain of Wisdom, the meaning then will be: "Who can fathom the Depth of infinite Wisdom, unravel the Mysteries of Providence, and the Secrets of God's Judgments? Or who can fully explain the Nature and Essence of the Deity, or know the Whole of his Will, and the true and perfect Manner of his Worship, which can only be discovered in his Word, and as far as he has been pleased to reveal himself, and make the Counsels of his Will known?" *Πανεργήματα* is used by *Solomon* and this Writer in a good Sense, tho' oftener, I believe, taken in a bad one. The next Verse is omitted in many Greek Copies, and by the *Arab.* and *Syr.* Interpreters. It seems only an Explanation of this, and perhaps crept into the Text from the Margin. By *πολυπειρία* in it, seems to be understood Wisdom's manifold Way of acting; and the Diversity of her Gifts and Operations, which is but indifferently rendered by our Translators, *Experience.*

Ver. 8. *There is one wise and greatly to be feared, the Lord sitting upon his Throne.*] There is one only wise, *i. e.* God. All others have Wisdom thro' and from him. *St. Paul* styles him the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, *1 Tim. i. 17.* and so *Clemens, Σοφὸς ὁ μόνος Θεὸς ἡ τέλειος μόνος.* God alone is wise, he alone is perfect. *Strom. ii.* and *iv.* and *Philo, αἰφενδῶς αἱ τελειότητες ἡ ἀκρότητες ἐνός εἰσι μόνον,* the Heights and Perfections of Excellency are only proper and peculiar to one. *De Sacrif. Cain et Abel.* *Plato* in like manner appropriates Wisdom to the Deity: *Τὸ μὲν σοφὸν καλεῖν, ἐμοίγε μέγα εἶναι δοκεῖ, ἡ Θεῷ μόνῳ πρέπον.* In *Phæd.* Or may not this be considered as an Answer to the foregoing Questions and Interrogations, *ψ 2, 3, 6, 7?* That how difficult soever these Instances may seem in themselves, or to our Capacity, yet to God's Wisdom they are open, as well as possible; that he alone knows the Original, deep Designs, and infinite Worth of Wisdom, who has possessed her from all Eternity, and gives her to whom,



whom, and in what Proportion he pleases. Our Translators, and the *Geneva* Version, to make the Sense clearer, and to particularize who is meant, insert, *the Lord*, in the Text, and so does *Junius* in his Translation, tho' the *Greek* Copies begin the next Verse with *Κύριος*, except the *Alexandrian Ms.* The *Vulgate* rendering of this Passage is very lofty, *Unus est altissimus Creator omnium, omnipotens, & rex potens, & metuendus nimis, sedens super thronum illius, & dominans Deus.*

Ver. 9. *He created her, and saw her, and numbered her, and poured her out upon all his Works.] i. e.* God hath made all Things in Number, Weight, and Measure. *Wisd. xi. 20.* in the most exact Order and Proportion, and by the Marks of Wisdom on all his Works, hath brought her forth, displayed, and revealed her Excellency. For so *αὐτὴ* may be understood here and *ἡ* 4. and thus the *Oriental* Versions explain *ἐκτίσεν*, the *Syriac* by *patescit eam*, and the *Arab.* by *re-texit*. See *Pf. civ. 24.* and *Philo Περὶ νομοθεσίας*. *Calmet* likewise understands by numbering her, that "God knew her from all Eternity," and the Time of her first Appearance upon "the Earth, or any Part of it."

Ver. 10. *She is with all Flesh according to his Gift, and he hath given her to them that love him.]* Having shewn the Original of Wisdom, that it was from all Eternity, he proceeds beautifully to shew its Production, or gradual Appearance in the World, and that its Effects and Signatures are displayed upon the Creation in three Particulars. *First*, in general, as his Wisdom is plentifully shed, and poured out upon all his Works, and is universally and in all Respects to be admired. *It reaches from one End of the World to another mightily, and sweetly does she order all Things.* *Wisd. viii. 1.* *Secondly*, that tho' there are Tokens and Traces enough of Wisdom discernible in all inanimate Things, yet it is most visible in animal Bodies, and distributed to all of them in some Degree or other; for in all of them there is a Principle of Instinct, something analogous to Reason, and much resembling it. *Thirdly*, that the Gift and high Privilege of Reason belongs chiefly to Men, and even to them is communicated in different Degrees and Proportions; to one is given *the Word of Wisdom*, to another *the Word of Knowledge*, to another *divers Kinds of Tongues*, to another *the Interpretation of them.* *1 Cor. xii. 8. 10.* Wisdom is divided severally to every Man, as God pleases, and as is most necessary for each to receive it. *Ephes. iv. 7.* Such as are religious, and fear the Lord, she is most conversant with, and to them *ἐχομένη*, he hath distributed her Graces most liberally. Accordingly the Angels, a higher Order in the Scale of Being, whom the Psalmist calls God's Servants, continually doing his Will and Pleasure, are most perfect in Knowledge; and even among these Intelligences, *one Star differeth from another Star in Glory.* From this Principle, as *Solomon* does in the Book of *Proverbs*, the

Author takes Occasion to enlarge upon, and recommend the Fear of the Lord.

Ver. 11. *The Fear of the Lord is Honour, and Glory, and Gladness, and a Crown of Rejoicing.]* An awful Sense of God, a devout Affection to him, and a Fear of offending him, such a religious Frame of Mind, is not only a great Credit and Ornament to a Man, but is the Cause of much Joy and Happiness to him. It fills the Soul with a holy Confidence, with inward Satisfaction, and Complacency. And tho' the World has not often a just Consideration of, and Regard to the good Man's Merit, yet is he not the less honourable, or glorious in himself; his Glory is as much above common Applause, as Piety is preferable to Ambition. According to vulgar Opinion indeed, to inspire Men with the Fear of God, is to fill them with Melancholy and Sadness; but the wise Man here assures us, that this is the only true Source of Joy. To fear God, is not to startle at, and tremble before an All-powerful Being, made up of Severity and Cruelty, intent upon Man's Destruction, as the Devil often dresses up, and represents God to pious Souls, to cast them into Horror and Despair, and raise in them Jealousy and Distrust. If any thus describe God with such Marks of Abhorrence and Terror, it is not the true God they are representing, who is plenteous in Goodness, and has more Tenderness for his Creatures, than the most indulgent Father.

Ver. 12. *The Fear of the Lord . . . giveth . . . a long Life.]* See *ἡ* 20. A strict Course of Piety is most likely to prolong Life in a natural Way, whereas Sin, sometimes by natural Causes, sometimes by the Anger and just Judgment of God, is the Cause of a sudden, untimely, or violent Death. Thus the Psalmist: *The Blood-thirsty and deceitful Men shall not live out half their Days.* *Pf. lv. 25.* But Wisdom says of herself, *By me thy Days shall be multiplied, and the Years of thy Life shall be increased.* *Prov. ix. 11. and c. iii. 2, 16.* It is also the surest Way to procure God's Blessing, and to preserve Men from all Evils and Calamities; for the *Angel of the Lord tarrieth round about them that fear him, and delivereth him.* *Pf. xxxiv. 7.* And in some following Verses, to the Enquiry, *What Man is he that lusteth to live, and would fain see good Days?* the Answer is, *Eschew Evil and do Good, seek Peace and ensue it.*

Ver. 13. *Who so feareth the Lord, it shall go well with him at the last, and he shall find Favour in the Day of his Death . . .]* Some Copies read with the Margin, *He shall be blessed.* The *Syriac* has, *colentis Deum prosper erit exitus, & in fine dierum suorum benedicetur*; and the *Arab.* *timentis Deum optimus erit finis, & in extrema etate sua benedicetur.* The Sense in either rendring is, that the good Man in his last Hours shall not be tormented with the Worm and Sting of Conscience, with sad Reflections upon a past ill-spent Life, but shall have a sweet Foretaste of approaching Happiness, and a joyful Expecta-



## Chap. i. *the Book of ECCLESIASTICUS.* 3

pectation of entering into a better State, and receiving the Reward of his Piety. He shall die with a quiet and easy Conscience, and, like good old Simeon, depart this Life in Peace. Thus Galat. vi. 16. St. Paul says, *They that walk according to this Rule, i. e. the Rule of Righteousness, Peace is on them, and on the Israel of God;* for as the Verb is not expressed in the Greek, we may as well expound the Passage, as an Affirmation of what is, as a Wish of what may be. I refer it to the Learned to determine, whether this Writer, laying down so many fine Rules of Righteousness and moral Conduct, which the Study of the Law furnished him with, and Precepts of inward and spiritual Obedience, and a sincere Service of God from the Heart, which occur through the whole Work, and withal the great and certain Reward which attends good Men at all Times, and at their Death more particularly, can be supposed to be without a firm Belief of a Life to come; and whether the Reflexion here, and many other Expressions to the like Purpose, can be separated from the Hopes of it, without Violence.

Ver. 14. *To fear the Lord is the Beginning of Wisdom.* A good Understanding, says the Psalmist, have all they that do thereafter, the Praise of it endureth for ever; and thus Job, Unto Man he said, Behold, the Fear of the Lord, that is Wisdom; and to depart from Evil is Understanding, c. xxviii. 28. The Observance of the Commandments of the Lord, is the principal Point or Fulness of Wisdom, see *Y* 16, the Practice of which gives Men a better Understanding of what is most conducive to their Happiness, than any Maxims of Human Learning can infuse; for without Piety, or the Fear of the Lord, Wisdom is falsely so called, and degenerates into a vicious Cunning. Plato has an Observation like this, *ἡ θεῶν γνώσις, σοφία ἐστὶ, καὶ ἀληθὴ ἀληθινή.* The Expression here by the Infinitive *ἀρχὴ σοφίας φιλοῦσθαι τὸν θεόν*, is very elegant and classical. Thus Cicero, *Ipsium quidem peccare, quoquo te verteris, unum est.* Paradox. and Persius, *Scire tuum nihil est;* and St. Austin, more strongly, *Honorifico te debito sacrificio laudis, pro scire & posse.* Meditat. c. 12.

Ibid. *And it was created with the Faithful in the Womb.* The Faithful from their Infancy, have a Fear and Dread of God, and enter very early on a Course of Piety and Religion, and are no sooner conceived and born into the Church, say Mess. du Port Royal, but the Fear of God is formed in their Heart, and it continues with them to their Lives End. Or it may mean, that a good Disposition, and a Religious Temper is born and brought into the World with the Faithful, and accompanies them after. This is what the Author of the *Book of Wisdom* means, when he says, that being a witty Child, and having a good Spirit, he came into a Body undefiled, c. viii. 19, 20. i. e. not disposed, or naturally inclined to Evil. And thus Job

says, that from his Mother's Womb he had a natural Compassion for the Poor and Fatherless, c. xxxi. 18. And the contrary Temper is well described by the Psalmist, *The Ungodly are froward even from their Mother's Womb; as soon as they are born, they go astray, and speak Lies,* Ps. lviii. 3. i. e. they are naturally addicted to such Vices. Or we may understand this of some peculiar and singular Gift of God to the Faithful, as was the Case of the Prophet Jeremiah, of whom God says, *Before I formed thee in the Belly I knew thee, and before thou camest forth out of the Womb, I sanctified thee,* c. i. 5. The like may be observed also of John the Baptist. There is a remarkable Pleonasm in the Greek here, *μὲν πατρὶν ἐν μήτρᾳ συνεκλήθη αὐτοῖς*, which is an Hebraism: There are frequent Instances of the like Construction in this Book, in the LXX, See Jerem. xx. 14. and in approved Authors.

Ver. 15. *She hath built an everlasting Foundation with Men.* i. e. in just Men more particularly, such in whose Heart the Fear of the Lord is strongly rooted, the Impressions and good Effects of which will not be easily effaced in them, or their Children. As Wisdom was from Everlasting, so her Delights have ever been with the Sons of Men, rejoicing, as it is expressed Prov. viii. 31. *in the habitable Parts of the Earth.* And as she delights in the Children of Men above all others, as being the Image of God, among whom she has fixed her Residence, so will she abide, especially with such as fear the Lord, and do not by Sin deface his Image, *Wisd. i. 5. John xiv. 23.* What Wisdom says of herself, *Prov. viii. 23. πρὸ τοῦ αἰῶνος ἐθεμελίωσέ με*, exactly expresses *θεμελίον αἰῶνος* here, which is rendered more beautiful by the Metaphor, *ἐνόςσενον, fundamentum eternitatis nificavit*, as Junius renders. And what she observes of the Jewish Nation, c. xxiv. 8. *that the Creator of all Things caused her Dwelling to be in Jacob, and her Inheritance in Israel*, is equally applicable to all true Israelites, whom she favours above all others. The Vulgate here adds three Verses, which are not in the Greek Copies.

Ver. 17. *She filleth all their House with Things desirable.* In the foregoing Verse it is, *μεθύσκει αὐτοῖς*, according to the Idiom of the Hebrew Tongue, which expresses a Satiety or Fulness, by Ebrietas, or Inebriation. See S. Jerom. *Quest. in Genes.* Plantus has the like Expression, *Unde saturitate ego saepe exii ebrius. in Captiv.* The reading of the Complut. *οἶκον αὐτῶν*, which our Translators here follow, seems more agreeable than *οἶκον αὐτῆς*, which the Vulgate, and many Greek Copies have. What follows in the next Sentence *καὶ τὰ ἀποδοχεῖα ἀπὸ τῶν γεννημάτων αὐτῆς*, seems also corrupt. It would be better read, *τὰ ἀποδοχεῖα αὐτῶν γεννημάτων αὐτῆς*, and so I find Dr. Grabe has inserted in his Edition from Conjecture. See Prolegom. c. iv. Tom. iii. The Vulgate also is faulty here in rendering *γεννημάτων* by *Generationibus*. The Sense of the



the Passage is "the Fear of the Lord not only fills Men with spiritual Joy, and Comfort, but enriches those that have it." The Psalmist observes the like of the Faithful, That *Riches and Plenteousness shall be in their House*, cxii. 3. Solomon represents the Satisfaction and Advantages arising from Wisdom, under the Resemblance and Image of a most elegant and delicious Feast, where the τὰ ἁγία generally abound. *Prov. c. ix.*

Ver. 18. *The Fear of the Lord is a Crown of Wisdom, making Peace, and perfect Health to flourish.* . . . Besides inward Content, and Satisfaction, which is the usual Sense of Peace, it has several other Senses among the Jews, applicable also to this Place. Thus *Gen. xxix. 6.* *is he well?* in the Hebrew is, *is there Peace to him?* See also *c. xxxvii. 14.* It signifies also Prosperity; and the usual Salutation of wishing Peace to any one, or his House, always included Prosperity. See *Matt. x. 12, 13.* so *Num. vi. 26.* *the Lord give thee Peace*, i. e. make thee happy, and prosperous, and *c. xxv. 12.* *I give unto him my Covenant of Peace*, i. e. to make him, and his Family prosperous. See *Pf. lxxii. 3.* *Isai. xxxvii. 17.* *Lament. iii. 17.* According to *Grotius*, the Sense is "that the Fear of the Lord is of Service both to Soul, and Body, giving εἰρήνη to the former, and ὑγιαίνοντες, (a strong Expression denoting the Perfection of Health and Soundness) to the latter." The Conclusion of the Verse, *and it enlargeth their rejoicing that love him*, is omitted in the *Vatican*, and *Vulgate*, and is probably an Interpolation from *ψ. 12*, to which it agrees exactly in Sense.

Ver. 19. *Wisdom raineth down Skill and Knowledge of Understanding.* Our Author uses ἐξουμνησις in the same Metaphorical Sense, *c. x. 13.* The Meaning is "Wisdom, or the Fear of the Lord is the Source of true Knowledge and Prudence; without this, Knowledge is falsely so called, is proud, presumptuous, and overbearing; and Prudence degenerates into Craft and Cunning. Persons of great Abilities and Attainments, without a Sense of Piety and Religion, are infinitely more dangerous to Society, to the Church or State, than even the most wicked Men who have less, or but ordinary Skill and Talents. The latter can scarce hurt any but themselves, in Matters at least of a higher Concern; but the former are capable of unsettling, perverting, and ruining Numbers of thoughtless and unguarded Souls, and too often succeed, by their Sophistry and Address, in their mischievous Attempt." Upon the next Verse both the *Syr.* and *Arab.* Translations, paraphrase very largely, and insert a great deal, omitting all that follows, either in the *Greek* or *Latin* Copies to *ψ. 28.* as the *Chaldee* Paraphrase often inserts very large Portions, without Authority from the *Hebrew*, in many Parts of the old Testament.

Ver. 21. *The Fear of the Lord driveth away Sin, and where it is present, it turneth away Wrath.* . . . i. e. the Fear of the Lord and his Judgments, when it is strongly rooted in the Soul, inclines Men to, and encourages them in, the Performance of their Duty, and thereby keeps them from Sin and Punishment, its sure Attendant. See *Prov. xvi. 6.* It either puts them upon observing a prudent Circumspection and Caution in their Actions, or to atone for Sin committed, by Contrition and Repentance. *Tertullian* says excellently, *Qui præsumat, minus veretur, minus præcavet, plus periclitatur: Timor fundamentum salutis est.* *De Cultu Foeminarum.* This Verse is wanting in the *Roman Edit.* and some others: *Dr. Grabe* has inserted it from the *Complut.* which our Translators generally follow, which Copy he observes is of singular Use to supply the *Hiatus* in others. *Proleg. Tom. ult. c. iii.* Our Version renders παρρημεναι δὲ ἀποτρέφει ὀργήν, *where it is present it turneth away Wrath*; but *Grotius* understands by παρρημεναι, the meek and patient Man, whose Behaviour and Temper is such, that it is not easily inflamed, his Reason interposes against a rising Storm, its cool Judgment either prevents or asswages Wrath, and insensibly disarms its Fury. This Interpretation, though countenanced indeed by the Context, seems to want an Article to confirm it. Instead of this latter Clause, the *Vulgate*, *Grabe*, and *Clemens Alexandrinus*, *Pædag. L. i. c. viii.* insert ἀποτρεφει δὲ τὴν ὀργήν, *it turneth away Wrath.*

Ver. 22. *A furious Man cannot be justified, for the Sway of his Fury shall be his Destruction.* . . . Our Translators follow a Copy which read θυμώδης ἀνὴρ, as the *Complut.* that of *Camerarius*, and some other Copies have it. The *Vat.* and *Alexandr. Ms.* which *Hæschelius* here agrees with, have θυμὸς ἀδίκος, unjust Anger, such as is without sufficient and good Reason, or is immoderate in its Degree. *St. Paul* acquaints us, that we may sometimes be angry, and yet sin not, *Ephes. iv. 26.* And there is a Resentment, which is highly commendable, such, for Instance, is a Zeal for the Service of God, and the Cause of Religion, where Unconcernedness and Indifference are culpable and sinful; such a Lukewarmness, as is condemned in the *Laodiceans*, *Revel. iii. 16.* Anger, without some such just Occasion cannot be justified, nor free from Censure or Fault. The Sense is pretty much the same, with that of *St. James, c. i. 20.* *The Wrath of Man worketh not the Righteousness of God*, i. e. it puts a Man upon saying and doing Things contrary to his Duty, and is a Breach of that Perfection, which renders him acceptable to God. Anger proceeds upon a wrong Principle, it springs generally from Pride, and is moderated and vanquished most effectually by the Fear of the Lord, according to *St. Paul's* Observation and Advice, *Be not high minded, but fear.* *Rom. xi. 20.* Our Author speaks by the Figure *Litotes*, when he says, Anger cannot



cannot be justified, for more is intended than is here expressed; it means, that it is highly criminal, and to be condemned, and shall not escape Punishment, according to the *Marginal reading*. It is generally attended with Mischief to others, or to the furious Person himself, the Impetuosity or Violence of whose Passion, proves often fatal to him in its Consequences. The *Greek* expresses this by *ῥοπή θυμῶς*, a Metaphor taken from the Balance, and literally means, that the Excess or Preponderancy of Passion will overturn a Man. This in a larger Sense may be understood of other irregular Lusts and Passions, which, if criminally indulged, will be the certain Ruin of a Man.

Ver. 23. *A patient Man will bear for a Time, and afterward Joy shall spring up unto him.* *Ἦρετον αὐτῷ ἀναδώσει εὐφροσύνη.* A meek Man will bear with Injuries for a long time, and not disturb the Calm of his Mind, nor forfeit the Reward of his Patience. According to *Calmet*, the Sense is, that the good Man is often exposed in this Life to evil Treatment, Persecution, and Reproaches, but is not dejected or discouraged by his present Affliction; he will wait a while, *jusqu'au tems destiné*, until the appointed Time, for his Deliverance; in the mean time he rests himself upon God's Promises till Death, and then he will find himself not only delivered out of his Troubles, but filled with Joy and Glory in a better State. See *Wisdom* iii. 1, 2, 3. and c. v. 1, 2, 3. God often permits the Righteous to be afflicted in this World, that having approved themselves to him by their patient enduring of Tribulations, they may at length enter into Joy and Happiness. The Scriptures furnish many Instances of this, especially in the History of the Patriarchs and Apostles. *St. Paul* thus describes the State of himself and fellow Christians, *We are troubled on every Side, but not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in Despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed*, 2 Cor. iv. 8, 9. The Reading of this Verse, as it is in almost all the *Greek* Copies, seems corrupt; that of the *Alex. Ms.* seems preferable, *ἕως καὶ ἀνθέξει μακρόθυμος, ὃ ἤρετον αὐτῷ ἀναδώσει εὐφροσύνην*, i. e. God will give unto him *Beauty for Asbes, the Oyl of Joy for Mourning, and the Garment of Praise for the Spirit of Heaviness*. *Isai.* lxi. 3. or the Reading may be *ἤρετον αὐτῷ ἀνάδοσις εὐφροσύνης*, according to the Copy, probably which the *Vulgate* followed, *et postea Redditio Jucunditatis*. This Observation is particularly true with Respect to *Job*, who was an equal Pattern of Suffering, and Patience, and therefore we read, that God made his latter End, as prosperous as the Beginning.

Ver. 24. *He will bide his Words for a time, and the Lips of many shall declare his Wisdom.* . . . ] As applied to the meek Man, the Sense is, "he will stifle his Resentment, and not break out into indecent and out-

rageous Expressions; he will keep Silence, especially from hasty and injurious Words, tho' such a Command of his Temper be Pain and Grief to him; and his Moderation and Conduct in this particular will be both admired and commended." If understood of the good Man struggling under Adversity, the Meaning is, "that he will not openly complain of the Almighty, but silently bear the Discipline of Affliction, and wait God's own Pleasure, knowing that the Lord is good unto all that wait for him, to the Soul that seeketh him." *Lament.* iii. 25. The Description of this Religious Resignation in *ῥ* 26, 28, 29. of that Chapter, is very fine, and close to the present Purpose, *It is good that a Man should both hope and quietly wait for the Salvation of the Lord; he sitteth alone, and keepeth silence, because he hath born it upon him; he putteth his Mouth in the Dust, if so be there may be Hope.* The *Psalmist* gives the same excellent Advice of Submission to the Divine Will, *Hold thee still in the Lord, and put thy Trust in him, and he shall bring it to pass.* *Pf.* xxxvii. 7. which whole Psalm, a learned *Prelate* observes, is summed up in this, and the foregoing Verse of this Chapter. *Patrick's Comment. in Loc.* This Trust in God for Deliverance is very beautifully called by *St. Paul*, *ἔργον τῆς πίστεως* and *ὑπομονὴ τῆς ἐλπίδος*, 1 *Thess.* i. 3. *The Work of Faith, and Patience of Hope.* *Osander* understands this of Calumny in particular, which the good Man is loaded with for a time, while his Innocency is suspected, which he takes patiently, suffering wrongfully, but that afterwards his Righteousness shall be acknowledged and confessed before Men, and his just Dealings be as clear as the Noon-day. *Comm. in loc.* This may be further understood of prudent Silence, and modest Reservedness, which is not hasty to speak, nor forward to boast or extol itself; which Instance of Wisdom shall not go without its due Praise, nor suffer for its own backwardness. Some Copies read *χείλη πιστῶν*, the Lips of the Faithful, but *πολλῶν* is the more general reading, which the *Vulgate* and our Translators follows, i. e. his Silence shall be recompenced with the Praise of all Men. Our Author has the like Expression c. xxxix. 9.

Ver. 25. *The Parables of Knowledge are in the Treasures of Wisdom, but Godliness is an Abomination to a Sinner.* . . . ] i. e. In the Treasury, or Bosom of a wise Man, are many useful Reflections and Observations upon Men and Things, which he understands the most proper Season to bring forth and publish. For the true Mark of a wise Man is to know how to keep his Thoughts and Words to himself, and not to talk at random, and speak confidently about every Thing, or unseasonably of any Thing. *Who is a wise Man, and endued with Knowledge among you?* says *St. James*, iii. 13. *Let him shew out of a good Conversation his Works with Meekness of Wisdom.* Or the Sense may be, "Many good



good Lessons of Instruction and Morality are delivered by Persons of great Piety and Understanding, which are disagreeable to the Wicked, and, as so many Reproofs, are disregarded by him." See *Wisd.* ii. 12, 14, &c.

Ver. 26. *If thou desire Wisdom, keep the Commandments, and the Lord shall give her unto thee.* . . . See y 5. The Author of the *Book of Wisdom* accordingly observes, *That into a malicious Soul Wisdom will not enter, nor dwell in a Body subject unto Sin.* i. 4. Some Copies read the Beginning of this Verse with an Interrogation, as the *Roman* in particular, *irebūmēas eoqlav, Dost thou desire Wisdom? keep the Commandments.* And thus *St. Austin*, *Concupisti sapientiam? Serva mandata:* And he makes this Observation upon it, *Prior est in recta hominis eruditione labor operandi, quam voluptas intelligendi quæ vera sunt.* Adv. Faustum. The Sense of this Passage is not unlike that of *St. John*, vii. 17. *If any Man will do his Will, he shall know of the Doctrine whether it be of God.* And thus the Psalmist, *the Secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will shew them his Covenant,* Pl. xxv. 14. *Job* has determined the Matter when he says, *Behold, the Fear of the Lord that is Wisdom; and to depart from Evil, is Understanding.* c. xxviii. 28.

Ver. 28. *Distrust not the Fear of the Lord when thou art poor* . . . According to the *Marginal* reading, "Be not disobedient to the Fear of the Lord, i. e. to the Commandments of the Lord, when thou art poor or distressed." The *Tigurin* Version renders, *Religioni Domini parere ne recuses inops.* The Sense is, "Do not distrust God's Goodness in the Time of thy Adversity, or low Estate, as if he either could not, or would not succour thee, and so be induced to use unlawful Means, or fly to forbidden Arts, or trust too much upon any human Help for Preservation." For this Reason, says the Psalmist, *the Lord will not leave the Rod of the Ungodly upon the Lot of the Righteous, i. e. subject them to their Scourge and Tyranny, lest the Righteous put their Hand unto Wickedness.* Pl. cxxv. 3. And upon account of the Temptation and Dangers, attending the Extremes of each State, the Prophet *Agur* prays equally against Poverty and Riches, *Prov.* xxx. 9. The Words *ἐνδὲς δὲ, when thou art poor*, are not in the *Vat. Alex. Ms.* nor *Vulgate*. The *Oriental* Versions too omit them. *Dr. Græbe* has inserted them from the *Complut.* which our Translators here likewise follow.

*Ibid.* *Come not unto him with a double Heart.* . . . i. e. with Affections divided betwixt God and the World, for God requires the whole Heart, and to be served with uniform Obedience and Sincerity. Or the Sense may be, "Do not offer thy Devotions with a doubting Spirit." Accordingly *St. James* advises to *ask in Faith, nothing wavering,*

because a Person of such a distrustful Disposition has no Grounds to expect that he shall receive any thing of the Lord. *James* i. 6, 7. *Matt.* xxi. 22. *Mark* xi. 23, 24. *1 Tim.* ii. 8. The *Arabick* takes it in this Sense, rendering, *Neque accedat, dubius existens in corde suo.* The same Apostle calls such a one, a double minded Man, *διψυχος*, and describes him as divided and distracted in what he goes about, and unstable in all his Ways. *Quomodo præstabit Deus, says Lactantius, precanti quod oraverit, cum ad precandum neque ex animo, nec observanter accedit?* L. v. 20. The wicked are described by the Psalmist, as flattering with their Lips, and dissembling with a double Heart. Pl. xii. 2. which the *Hebrew* expresses by *leb valeb*, a Heart, and a Heart. See also *1 Chron.* xii. 33. where it is said of the Children of *Zebulun*, that they were not of double Heart, which according to the *Marginal* reading from the *Hebrew* is, *They were without a Heart, and a Heart, absque corde & corde*, as some old *Latin* Versions have it.

Ver. 29. *Be not a Hypocrite in the Sight of Men, and take good heed what thou speakest.* . . . *Grotius* understands this of Lying, *ne mentiaris coram hominibus*, and says, that *ἐνδοξασθαι* is so taken in several Parts of Scripture, *Job* xxxiv. 30. *Matt.* xxiv. 51. *James* v. 12. And indeed this hath some Countenance from the following Sentence, *Take good heed what thou speakest*, which the *Arab.* expounds of Veracity, *sit sermo labiorum tuorum æquus, & verax.* There may also another Interpretation be given of this Place, "Act not the Hypocrite before Men, by putting on the Mask of Religion, or boasting of thy Perfection in it, when thy Actions speak the contrary;" one of them, *qui Curios simulant, & Bucchanalia vivunt.* And thus the *Syriac* seems to understand it, *neque de Religione Dei gloriaris*, or act not the false Friend, with an Intention to deceive others, by the specious Shew and Appearance of Friendship. Lastly the Sense may be, "Do not play the Hypocrite by pretending to be what you are not, commending your self before others, and extolling your Merit, to gain their good Opinion and Applause." And thus the *Geneva* Version takes it, *Be not a Hypocrite, that Men should speak of thee.* *Junius* has still a new Interpretation, *Ne simulatus esto, ut si ora humana habeas*, which the Margin explains, "Do not play the Hypocrite by acting different Parts, and assuming two or more Persons, and speaking with two or more Mouths," but this seems forced. Probably *ἐνδοξασθαι* is a *Hebraism* literally rendred, and means no more than *coram*.

Ver. 30. *Exalt not thy self, lest thou fall, and bring Dishonour upon thy Soul, and so God discover thy Secrets.* . . . i. e. do not think to deceive, and impose upon God, as thou hast upon thy Friends and Neighbours, but avoid Dissimulation and spiritual Pride, lest

God



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God humble thee, and discover the Hypocrisy and Naughtiness of thy Heart, and expose thee to publick Shame and Contempt, by publishing thy secret Wickedness, which is the Moral of the proud Pharisee in the Gospel, *Luke xviii.* This the Lord threatens also by his Prophet, *This is thy Lot, the Portion of thy Measures from me, saith the Lord: because thou hast forgotten me, and trusted in Falshood, and I have seen thine Adulteries, and thy Neighings, the Lewdness of thy Whoredom, and thine Abominations on the Hills; therefore will I discover thy Skirts upon thy Face, that thy Shame may appear, Jer. xiii. 25, 26, 27.* and τὰ κρυπλά σου means here τὰ κρυπλά τῆς αἰχρῆς, as it is expressed 2 Cor. iv. 2. *Plato* finely observes, δὲ θεράποντες θεῶν ἢ χήμασι τεχνάζοντες, ἀλλὰ ἀληθείᾳ τιμῶντας ἀπέλλω.

Ibid. *Cast thee down in the Midst of the Congregation.*] This refers to the Custom of bringing Criminals to a publick Hearing, and punishing them openly for their Faults. See *Eccles. xxiii. 31. Prov. v. 14. and c. xxvi. 26.* where *Solomon*, speaking of such a Deceiver, says, ἐκκαλύψει τὰς ἐαυτοῦ ἀμαρτίας, εὐγνώστου ἐν συναγωγαῖς, *revelabitur malicia ejus in concilio. Vulg.*

Ibid. *Because thou camest not in Truth to the Fear of the Lord.*] ὅτι ἢ προσήλθες τῷ φόβῳ Κυρίου ἐν ἀληθείᾳ, i. e. sincerely and heartily, without Hypocrisy, contrary to the double Heart, *ψ 28.* for our Love to God must be entirely and undivided; and Sincerity is the Formality, or Soul of it. Some Copies read, ὅτι ἢ προσήλθες ἐν φόβῳ Κυρίου, *because thou camest not in the Fear of the Lord.*

### CHAP. II.

Ver. 1. **M**Y Son, if thou come to serve the Lord, prepare thy Soul for Temptation.] *Corn. a Lapide* thinks that the Occasion of this Advice was, that at this Time the Jews were grievously afflicted under *Ptolemy Lagus*, who took *Jerusalem*, and used the Jews with great Severity, and sent many thousands captive into *Egypt*, which change of State, it was apprehended, might incline many to forsake Judaism; to confirm whom, and keep them steady to the Religion of their Fathers, the Author gives them this seasonable Advice. *Comm. in loc.* See also *Dupin's Prelim. Dissert. p. 23.* All Temptations may be referred to two Sorts; either they proceed from God, or the Devil and his Agents. God tempts Men for the Trial and Manifestation of their Faith, he proves the Sincerity of their Virtue by occasional Afflictions, his Design is to make them better, more vigilant, more resolute, and more humble; to train them up to Victory, to prepare them for a Crown, and to increase their Glory and Reward; and he gives them, for this Purpose, Force and Strength proportionable to the Combat he suffers them to be exposed to. The Devil tempts Men, when he solicits them to Sin, when he invites them by Offers of imaginary Wealth or

Greatness to fall down, and worship him, when he is busy with Men's Thoughts, and by false Suggestions would gain over their Affections, when he insinuates the Difficulties and Discouragements of Religion, and the Pleasures of Vice and Licentiousness: His Temptations are always to be dreaded, they are designed to impose upon, and cheat Men, to rob them of their Innocency and Peace, to make them fall from one Wickedness to another, to disregard the Fear of God, to be indifferent about Matters of Religion, and, in Consequence of that, to fall from the Faith, and at length to sink them into Perdition, the Portion of Libertines and Unbelievers. To be tempted in the former Sense, is the Portion of all God's faithful Servants and Children, see *Hebr. xii. 6.* Thus *Moses* had a great Trial of variety of Afflictions, when he was appointed to serve the Lord in *Egypt*; he met with Contempt and ill Usage, not only from the *Egyptians*, but from the ungrateful *Israelites*, whose Deliverance he was soliciting and labouring for, and was often in Danger of his Life, from the Malice of *Pharaoh* and his People, but he was not frightened from executing the Commission he was entrusted with, by any Threats or Hardships which he endured; for he had a Respect unto the Recompence of the Reward from him that sent him. *Heb. xi. 27.* So under the Gospel, when the Sons of *Zebedee* coveted Places of Trust and Honour in an imaginary Kingdom, our blessed Lord told them, that the Preferments of his Court did not consist in the Vanity of Precedence, in sitting at his right Hand, or at his left; but in drinking of his bitter Cup, and being baptized with his bloody Baptism, *Matt. xx. 21.* And when *St. Paul* was called to an Apostleship, the Lord told *Ananias* in a Vision, that his Mission was not designed to triumph over the Gentile World, nor should his Revelations discover to him, what Kingdoms he should convert; but *I will shew him*, says God, *what great Things he must suffer for my Name's Sake*, *Acts ix. 16.* And this that Apostle well understood; for when he reckons up the Signs of an Apostle, he begins with his Patience under Afflictions, as if that Greatness of Mind which slighted the Tribulations, which attended upon preaching the Gospel, was a more eminent, and surer Sign of his Apostleship, than all his Power of working Signs, and Wonders, and mighty Deeds, *2 Cor. xii. 12.* *St. Chrysostom's* Observation upon this Notice to prepare for Temptations, is both pertinent and entertaining, καὶ αἱ ἐπαγγελίαι ἐκ προνομιῶν εἰς περιστάσεις ἐμπεσεῖν· μεγάλη πρόδροπὴ ἢ παράκλησις ἐναργὴς τῆς δαλείας κινδύνων εὐθὺς ἀπογεύσασθαι κ. τ. λ. *Bella vero promissio in tentationes incidere! Egregia verò exhortatio & consolatio ejus servitutis pericula statim degustare! plane egregia simul & admiranda, & maximum lucrum adferens. Audi quæ sequuntur, sicut Aurum igne examinatum, purius redditur, pari modo etiam anima, quæ inter afflictiones*



*afflictiones versatur & pericula, splendidior per illa evadit, omnemque peccatorum maculam abstergit.* Serm. xxiii. Tom. 5. Nor is the following less worthy of Notice and Regard, *Qui Deo placere cupit, ante omnia longanimitatem apprehendens ac patientiam, debet fortiter obvias quasque sufferre tribulationes, angustias, atque necessitates, sive corporales morbos ac passiones, sive impropria, atque injurias ab hominibus, sive etiam diversas invisibiles anxietates, quæ a spiritibus malignis inferuntur animæ.* S. Ephrem. Tract. de Patientia: The Vulgate adds, *Accedens ad servitutem Dei, sta in justitia & timore,* which is not in the Greek Copies; but St. Austin de Speculo, St. Cyprian, Tract. de Mortal. and St. Bernard all retain them; probably they were in some ancient Copy which they used, the same which the Vulg. follows.

Ver. 2. *And make not Haste in Time of Trouble.* Καὶ μὴ σφύγγῃς ἐν καιρῷ ἐπαγωγῆς. *Ἐπαγωγή* here signifies the Evils which God is pleased at any Time to visit his Servants with: See *ψ* 4. And thus it is used in very many Places by this Writer, iii. 28. c. v. 8. xxiii. 11. xl. 9. xlv. 3. xlviii. 2. See also *Pet.* ii. 5. The Sense is, When Tribulation and Anguish are upon thee, patiently depend upon God, wait till he graciously vouchsafes the Times of Refreshment and Deliverance, and do not, through Distrust of his Mercy, betake thyself to any unlawful Means of extricating or saving thyself; for God knoweth when, and how to bring his afflicted Servants out of their Temptations, 2 *Pet.* ii. 9. The Expression is the same with that, *Isa.* xxviii. 16. *He that believeth, shall not make Haste,* i. e. he that believeth God's Promises made to his faithful Servants, will not shew any Distrust, nor fly, or hasten to any base and unlawful Means, such as those mentioned to be made Use of in that Chapter, *ψ* 15. by some, *who made Lies their Refuge, and hid themselves under Falshood;* which Sense is preferred by the learned *Vitranga. Com. in loc.* The Virtue recommended in the Words before us, is what the Greeks call *σωφροσύνη*, and is, according to the Roman Orator, *Non perturbari in rebus asperis, nec tumultuantem de gradu dejici.* *De Offic.* L. i. And in the Scripture-Language it is to tarry, to wait the Lord's Leisure, and to possess the Soul in Patience; and in the Phrase of this Writer, to set the Heart aright, to endure constantly, and to wait for his Mercy. St. *Chrysostom's* Comment upon the Words is, *ἐν νόσῳ καὶ πένει ἐπ' αὐτῷ περιποιῶς γίνῃ.* *Hom.* 39. *Adv. Jud. Orat.* 6. According to *Calmet*, it is to shew no Signs of Anger and Impatience at any Trying, or severe Dispensation we may labour under, nor to let any hasty Word foolishly escape us, as if we questioned or disputed God's Right, Wisdom, or Goodness in so visiting us.

Ver. 3. *Cleave unto him and depart not away, that thou mayst be increased at thy last End.* i. e. That thou mayst receive the just Recompence of thy Patience. The *Port Royal* Comment understands this of increa-

sing to Perfection, that nothing so much displays and improves Men's Virtue as Submission and Constancy in Sufferings, that the Harvest, which will at last be reaped from thence, after Patience has had its perfect Work, springeth up unto eternal Life. Some Copies accordingly read the former Part of the Verse thus, *μείνον τὴν ἀνομιαν, κολλήθητι αὐτῷ, καὶ μὴ ἀποστής,* which is agreeable to the Context, and invigorates the Sense; or the Meaning may be, that in thine old Age, thou mayst abound with such good Things as may make thy latter End comfortable. Under the old Law God rewarded the faithful Services of such as cleaved unto him with long Life, Victory over Enemies, and such like temporal Blessings. *Junius* renders, *ut augearis ad finem usque tuum,* that thou mayst always thrive and prosper, even to thy latter End. Instead of apostatizing or revolting from God, in whom alone the Happiness of Man centers, make the *Plasmist's* Resolution your own, and devoutly say, *It is good for me to hold me fast by God, and to put my Trust in the Lord God,* *Psal.* lxxiii. 27.

Ver. 4, 5. *Whatsoever is brought upon thee, take cheerfully, and be patient when thou art changed to a low Estate: for Gold is tried in the Fire, and acceptable Men in the Furnace of Adversity.* Some Copies have, *ἐν καμίνῳ ταπεινώσεως σωθήσονται,* alluding probably to the Deliverance of the three holy Children from the fiery Furnace. The Arabic rendering of *δέξαι ἀσμένως,* is much to be admired and approved, *id in quo te Deus tentaret, sustine cum gratiarum actione;* the rendring of what follows, *καὶ ἐν ἀλλάγματι ταπεινώσεως σὲ μακροθύμησον,* is neither literal, nor full; the true rendering is, be patient in hoping for a Change of your present low Estate; and so *Grotius* takes it, *Patiens esto in mutatione depressionis tuæ speranda:* And *Junius*, *& ad commutationem dejectionis tuæ sperandam esto longanimus.* The Geneva Version, *Be patient in the Change of thine Affliction,* is literal indeed, but reaches not the Sense. The Psalmist seems better to express it, *Psa.* xxxvii. 7. *Hold thee still in the Lord, and abide patiently upon him.* See *James* iv. 7. 1 *Pet.* v. 6. *Pythagoras* gives the same Advice in the like Circumstances,

Ὅσα τε δαιμονίῃσι τύχαις θρονοὶ ἄλλοι ἔχουσιν,  
ὅν ἂν μάταιον ἔχης, παρὰ τὸ φέρει, μὴδ' ἀγανάκτει.  
Χρυσ. ἐπὶ *ψ*. v. 16.

In suffering, or bearing Afflictions, God enjoins not an Apathy, he neither expects, nor wills an utter Insensibility; he intends a Feeling when he scourges, and allows a proper Concern to be expressed, provided it be with Moderation, Submission, and Resignation. St. *Chrysostom* thus illustrates the Sense in *ψ* 5. *ὥστε τὸ χρεσίον τῷ πρὸς βασανιζόμενον, καθάρωτερον γίνεσθαι, ἢ τῷ καὶ ἡ ψυχὴ θλίψιν ὁμιλεῖσθαι, καὶ κινδύνους, φαιδρότητας, καὶ λαμπρότητας, ἀνέσι, καὶ πᾶσαν ἀμαρτημάτων ἀπορροήσθαι κηλίδας,* i. e. by Temptations and Afflictions a Man is brought



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brought, as it were, to the Touchstone; by these his intrinsic Excellency and Goodness is discover'd, and the greater the Improvement and Proficiency is under them, the more acceptable is the Sufferer to God, and the brighter Lustre is added to his Virtue.

Ver. 7. *And go not aside, lest ye fall.] i. e.* have not Recourse to any unlawful Means for Succour, which Men of little Faith and great Impatience are apt to fly to. Many in time of Tribulation are tempted to fall away after different Sorts, some take to evil Courses, and the hidden Works of Dishonesty to get a Living: others have denied the Faith, and for Fear of Persecution, or the Sword, have turned to a false Religion. Some have applied to, and trusted in evil Arts, as Sorcery or Magick, to help them in their Losses and Distress, as was the Folly of Saul, in consulting the Witch of Endor. The Precept of fearing the Lord, and waiting for his Mercy is, though the Phrase is somewhat varied, often repeated in this Chapter, and yet there is no Tautology in this respect; 'tis only, says *Osiander*, to keep our Faith awake, that we should not be tempted to think God had forgot us, if at any Time, in our Opinion, God seems slack concerning his Promise, and defers for a while answering our Expectation. *Comm. in loc.*

Ver. 9. *Ye that fear the Lord, hope for good, and for everlasting Joy and Mercy.]* Ελπίσατε εἰς ἀγαθὰ, καὶ εἰς εὐφροσύνην αἰώνιον, καὶ ἰλέως probably the true reading is ἰλέω· ἐλπίζον in this Construction, signifies to expect, wait for, or trust to or in any thing or Person. The Geneva Version takes it in this latter Sense, *Ye that fear the Lord, trust in good Things, and in the everlasting Joy and Mercy.* See the Use of this Phrase, *Psal.* cxxx. 5, 6. cxlv. 16. *Isa.* li. 5. according to the LXX. By ἀγαθὰ we may understand the good Things of this Life, which such as fear the Lord have the greatest Reason to expect. For did the Lord rain Bread from Heaven upon his faithful *Israelites*, and shall any doubt whether he can at all Times nourish his People, or send Food to those that stand in Need of it, and trust in his Goodness for it, though even the Fields should fail, and the Earth itself grow barren? God is not tied to ordinary Means, nor our Maintenance to the Fruits of the Earth, or other common Supplies. The Ravens shall find Meat, and bring it to *Elijah*, if God so commands, *1 Kings* xvii. 6. and a little Oyl, as long as he pleaseth shall continue running, and not fail, *Y* 14. Infinite is his Power, and infinite are his Methods and Ways, to reward and comfort them that cleave to, and depend upon him.

Ver. 10. *Look at the Generations of old, and see, did ever any trust in the Lord and was confounded? or did any abide in his fear, and was forsaken? or whom did he ever despise that called upon him?* Run over the Histories of all Ages and Nations, consider that of the Patriarchs and Prophets in particular, which affords many and shining Instances of

the regard God has for his faithful, and of his Care and Protection of them in all Straits and Dangers. The Psalmist had observed, and was convinced of an extraordinary Providence watching over those that led a godly Life, and says, *I have been young, and now am old, and yet saw I never the Righteous forsaken, nor their Seed begging their Bread,* *Psal.* xxxvii. 35. To the same Purpose is that, *Job* iv. 7. *Remember, I pray thee, who ever perished being innocent; or where were the Righteous entirely cut off?* This Observation is confirmed by an Enumeration of Particulars, *1 Maccab.* ii. 51—61. where the Writer instances in *Abraham, Joseph, Phinees, Joshua, Caleb, David, Elias, Daniel,* and the *three Children*; and then concludes, in Terms not unlike our Author's, *Thus consider ye throughout all Ages, that none that put their Trust in him shall be overcome.* On the contrary, did ever any rebel, and fight against Heaven, and prosper? Consider the Jewish Nation in particular, they promised themselves upon the Death of the righteous Heir, that the Inheritance would be their own, and yet how were their very Hopes blasted? Instead of securing their Title, they ruined it; instead of an expected Greatness, which they thought would last for ever, their Power and Jurisdiction had a quick and fatal Period; their supposed and boasted Right to the divine Favour, was swallowed up of Vengeance; their Patrimony was alienated, and transferred to the Gentile World; and this probably by a wise Providence, that the Gentiles might dread the like Ingratitude towards God, which made the Jews so deplorable an Instance, and such a dreadful Spectacle of the divine Vengeance. And hath not the same Indignation seized upon many Churches of the Gentiles too for their Disobedience, which before fell so heavy upon Jerusalem? For in what a sad and deplorable Condition are the once famous Churches of Carthage, and the rest of Africa? and hath not Anti-Christ fixed his Seat in the Temple of God, even in the once venerable seven Churches of Asia? If therefore no favourite Church or People, however they might presume upon, were protected by their Privileges, none ought to think themselves secure of the divine Favour any longer than they are careful to do his Will, and obey his Commandments. What a fine Reflexion is this of our Author's? And what a noble Encouragement does it contain in the Light we have considered it in, to invite Men to Obedience, and the Fear of the Lord? Can there be a stronger Inducement to Piety in successive Generations, than his confident Appeal for the Success of it, to the happy Experience of all former Ages?

Ver. 11. *For the Lord is full of Compassion and Mercy, and forgiveth Sins, and saveth in Time of Affliction.]* As Afflictions are generally occasioned by Sins, so 'tis observable here, that the ἀφεσις ἀμαρτιῶν, or God's forgiving, and remitting Sins, is mentioned first



in order, before his releasing or delivering in Time of Affliction. And so in *Hezekiah's Sickness*, when the Prophet is sent unto him, the Method of his Recovery is the same, *Isai. xxxviii.* Thus *2 Mac. iii. 32.* and following Verses, when *Heliogorus* had been scourged for his sacrilegious Enterprize, the Priest is first said to have made an Atonement, and God thereupon to have granted him Life. See also *Ecclef. xxxviii. 9.* and the Note on that Place. And in the Cures wrought by *Christ* himself, we find that the forgiving the sick Man's Sins, *Son, thy Sins are forgiven thee*, is the ordinary Preface to his Recovery. See *Psal. ciii. 3.*

Ver. 12. *Woe be to fearful Hearts...* i. e. such as fall away in Time of Persecution. As Fear is often recommended, so we find it as often forbidden. Unbelief is so commonly the Cause of Fear, and Fear so commonly leads to Unbelief, that we find them often linked together. See *13.* and *Rev. xxi. 8.* where *δειδω* & *ἀπιστοι* occur together. When *St. Peter* was frightened upon the Sea, and cried, *Lord, save me*, as he was just sinking; although it was a good Prayer, yet because it proceeded from carnal Fear rather than Faith, our Saviour presently rebuked him, *Wherefore didst thou doubt, O thou of little Faith?* And as Faintheartedness argues Want of Faith, so Patience in Adversity, the Fear of God, and a constant Reliance upon his Promises and Mercy, are inspired, and strengthened by Faith. Some Copies read, *καὶ διπλοῦς*; and such a one the *Vulgate* seems to have followed, rendring *væ duplici corde*; but the present reading seems preferable, as the other is expressed in the latter Part of the Verse. By faint Hands here, we may understand such as are negligent and slothful in the Work of the Lord. The Writer to the *Hebrews* using the same Expression, advises to *lift up the Hands that hang down*, *ταῖς παρεμέναις χεῖρας*, and the feeble Knees, and to make straight Paths, i. e. to go straight forward in the Paths of Holiness. See also *Jerem. xlviii. 10.*

Ibid. *And the Sinner that goeth two Ways...* i. e. Such Sinners as are for serving two Masters, God and Mammon, God in outward Appearance and Profession, but the World in reality, and at the Bottom of their Hearts. God abhors such Hypocrisy and Insincerity, he demands the whole Heart, and undivided Affections; he hath bought us, says *St. Austin*, at so great a Price, to make us his own, and to exclude any Partner, *tanti emit, ut solus possideat.* *Tract. ix.* in *Johan.* And thus God declares, *Zephani. i. 5.* that he will cut off them that worship the Host of Heaven, them that worship and swear by the Lord, and that swear by *Malcham*. Such a double Heart had the People of *Sepbarvaim*, who at the same Time feared the Lord, and served their own Gods, *2 Kings xvii. 28, 29.* 'Twas this double-mindedness which *Elijah* reprov'd, when he said to all the People, *How long halt ye be-*

*tween two Opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him,* *1 Kings xviii.* The Inconsistency of serving two such Objects, or even their subsisting together, is intimated in *Dagon's* falling down before the Ark, and in *Moses's* refusing to sacrifice the Abominations of the *Egyptians* unto the Lord, *Exod. viii. 26.*

Ver. 13. *Woe unto him that is fainthearted, for he believeth not, therefore shall he not be defended.* The *Vulgate* is more explicit, *Væ dissolutis corde, qui non credunt Deo, & ideo non protegentur ab eo*; i. e. such as either disbelieve God's Promises, or that their Prayers shall be heard and answered, and so do not ask in Faith without wavering, such have no good Reason to expect God's Protection, nor will they be so happy to find it; whereas the Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him, yea all such as call upon him faithfully, *Psal. cxlv. 18.* But the Promise is still stronger to them, *Psal. xxxvii. 40, 41.* The Salvation of the Righteous cometh of the Lord, who is also their Strength in the Time of Trouble; and the Lord shall stand by them and save them, he shall deliver them from the Ungodly, and shall save them, because they put their Trust in him. Where the Repetition is not idle nor superfluous, but is purposely introduced to confirm the Truth of the Observation. The Greek is still more observable and full, *καὶ βοηθήσει αὐτοῖς Κύριος, καὶ ῥύσεται αὐτοὺς, ἐξελεύσεται αὐτοὺς ἐξ ἀμαρτωλῶν, καὶ σώσει αὐτοὺς, ὅτι ἠλπίσαν ἐπ' αὐτόν.* If even the Fathers of our Flesh think an Injury done them, when their Children either distrust, or refuse to apply to, or depend upon them, how much greater Affront is offered to God, when after so many Tokens of his Goodness to his Creatures, and of his Readiness and Power to assist them, they fix their Dependence elsewhere, and seek a Foreign Help and Protection? Or the Meaning may be, that such as through a Distrust of God, have Recourse to unlawful Means for their Safety, or place too much Dependence upon any, shall find themselves disappointed, and be taken in their own Craftiness. And thus God by his Prophet, threatens the rebellious Children, that, instead of taking Counsel of God, strengthened themselves in the Strength of Pharaoh, and trusted in the Shadow of Egypt; that the Strength of Egypt should be their Shame, and the Trust in the Shadow of Egypt, their Confusion, *Isa. xxx. 2, 3.*

Ver. 14. *Woe unto you that have lost Patience, and what will ye do, when the Lord shall visit you?* i. e. visit your Offences with the Rod, and your Sin with Scourges. The *Vulgate* reaches not the Force of *ἐπισκέπτεσθαι*, when it renders it by *inspicere*. The Version of the *Arabic* is far preferable, *Quid facturis estis, quum vos invaserit judicium ejus?* And *Junius*, I presume, means the same, when he renders, *cum animadvertet Dominus.* The Sense may either be, If in smaller Evils, which Men here at any Time brought upon you, ye have betrayed great Impatience, and have with Difficulty been kept from Re-

venge



venge, how will ye be able to support yourselves under the mighty and avenging Hand of God, or stand in his Sight when he is angry, and is a consuming Fire? Or, according to *Calmet*, What Answer will ye be able to make him, who have disbelieved his Word, and disobeyed his Commandments, when Inquisition shall be made about your Faith and Practice? The *Port Royal Comment* understands it in this farther Sense, of being weary in well doing, not going on with, or finishing a Course well and happily begun; the suffering the good Seed, which fell neither by the Way-side, nor on stony Ground, nor among Thorns, to bring no Fruit at length, with all these Advantages, to Perfection, through a want of Perseverance, and a patient Continuance in well doing. Such are doubly unhappy, as they not only lose the Benefit of all the Good they formerly have done, but will moreover be punished for their Apostasy in abandoning God, and being ashamed of his Service.

Ver. 16. *They that love him shall be filled with the Law.*] The *Vulgate* has *replebuntur lege ipsius*, which the *Geneva* Version follows, *they that love him, shall be fulfilled with his Law*. Where there seems a small Mistake; the rendring probably was designed to be, *they that love him, shall be fully filled with his Law*. *Syr. Diligentes eum addiscunt legem ipsius*. *Arab. Amici ejus exequuntur voluntatem ipsius*; and *Coverdale* is to the same Effect, *They that love him, shall fulfil his Law*, i. e. they will search into and study his Law to know and find out his Will from thence; and the Holy Spirit shall engrave on their Hearts the Knowledge of the Word of God, because they sought it not merely for Speculation, but to practise it, not for Amusement only, but to be improved by it, not slightly or superficially, but to be filled with it.

Ver. 17, 18. *They that fear the Lord will prepare their Hearts, and humble their Souls in his Sight, saying, We will fall into the Hands of the Lord, and not into the Hands of Men: for as his Majesty is, so is his Mercy.*] The Author seems to have had the Words of *David* in his View, who had the melancholy Option of three great Evils which threatned him, *2 Sam. xxiv. 14. I am in a great Strait, let us fall into the Hands of the Lord, for his Mercies are great, and let us not fall into the Hands of Men*, especially as the Context relates to Adversity. The *Vulgate* renders, *si penitentiam non egerimus, incidemus in manus Domine*, i. e. into the Hands of an angry God. In this Sense the Words respect *Heb. xx. 31*, and indeed *ἐμπεσόμεθα*, which is more properly rendred *incidemus* than *incidamus*, gives some Countenance to this. But the Reflection in the following Part of the Verse, with which the Chapter concludes, plainly determines for the first. The Sense of the whole, as it stands connected, is, that, as terrible as God is, clothed with Majesty and Power, yet there is this pleasing

Consideration, that his Power is tempered with Equity, that he is full of Mercy and Loving-kindness, and therefore to rely upon his Goodness, and submit to what he shall appoint by way of Visitation and Punishment, is far preferable, than to trust to the Injustice, Malice, and revengeful Passions of Men, whose Mercies themselves, as they are falsely called, are often cruel. Whereas all the Dispensations of God are full of Tenderness; when he spares us, 'tis through his Mercy; when he threatens or punishes us, 'tis with a merciful Intent of doing us good, the comfortable Consideration of which glorious Attribute, in some Measure disarms his Thunder, and makes it a less fearful Thing to fall into the Hands of the living God. 'Twas the dreadful Majesty of God, and an Apprehension of his future Wrath, which determined *Susannah*, when straitned on every Side, and in imminent Danger of Death, or sinning, to make this pious Resolution to fall into the Hands of the Elders, rather than sin in the Sight of the Lord, *ψ 22, 23*. The Power of God, considered abstractedly, may fill us with Terror; but that the Mercy of God is as infinite as his Majesty, is a never failing Spring of Comfort. The Author of *the Book of Wisdom*, will help us to conceive aright in this Matter, See *Wisd. xii. 16*. where he observes, that that Power, which in Men is the Foundation of Injustice and Oppression, in God is the Beginning of Righteousness, and because he is the Lord of all, it makes him to be gracious unto all. See also *ψ 18*. and the Note upon both.

### CHAP. III.

Ver. 2. **T**HE Lord hath given the Father honour over the Children, and hath confirmed the Authority of the Mother over the Sons.] i. e. he hath enjoined Honour to be paid them by their Children, or made them honourable with regard to them; and thus the *Tigurin* Version, *Dominus patrem liberis honorabilem reddidit*. His Will is, that their Children should render them Reverence, Honour, and Obedience, having made them as it were his Representatives on Earth, and his supreme Authority is in some Sort vested and lodged in them, to instruct, command, reprove, or punish them. Hence some have asserted an almost absolute Authority in Parents. 'Tis certain, that anciently, and even under the old Law, the Parents had a Power to sell their Children, *Exod. xxi. 7*. if they themselves were reduc'd to extreme Poverty; and in some Cases had a Jurisdiction of Life and Death over them. *Κρίσις μισθός*, which the Margin renders, *Judgment*, and the *Vulgate*, *Judicium*, and our Translators more properly, *Authority*, is a Hebraism, for *Shaphat* in that Language signifies both *to judge* and *to rule*.

Ver. 3. *Who so honoureth his Father, maketh an Atonement for his Sins.*] Our Version follows a Copy which read *ἐξομολογᾷ*, as the  
D Alex.



Alex. MS. also has it; but in most Editions it is ἐξλάσσει, *peccata expiabit*, i. e. shall obtain Remission and Forgiveness of his own Sins when he prayeth: And thus St. Ambrose, quoting these Words, expounds ἐξλάσσει, in the Orationis sue exaudietur, as in § 5. The Tigurin Version has, *votorum quotidianorum compos erit*, which perhaps is the Meaning of the Vulgate, in oratione dierum exaudietur. Some understand this of the Father's Sins, that a dutiful Son will pray for the Forgiveness of his Father's Sins. But the first Sense I think preferable.

Ver. 4. *And he that honoureth his Mother, is as one that layeth up Treasure.*] i. e. he layeth up a Store of good Deeds to recommend him to God's Favour and Blessing. See 1 Tim. vi. 19. Tob. iv. 9. where ἀποθησαυρίζων is used in the same Sense. It has been observed by learned Men, that human Laws generally provide only that due Regard and Honour be given by Children to their Fathers, but take no Notice of the Mother, as may be seen in some Persian Laws mentioned by Aristotle, the Roman ones recited in the Digests and Constitutions, and in several Passages of the Greek Philosophers, which occur in Epictetus and Simplicius; all which consult only the Honour of the Father. But God in his Law takes Care to preserve a just Reverence to both the Parents equally, as the Persons whose Ministry he uses, to bring a young Generation into the World. See Grotius in Decal. Prov. i. 8. And this wise Author, like another Solomon, bred up under the same divine Institution, presses the Duty owing to both very largely in the first sixteen Verses of this Chapter.

Ver. 5. *Who so honoureth his Father, shall have Joy of his own Children.*...] i. e. God shall bless that Man with a numerous Posterity, who pays the Reverence and Respect due to his own Parents; and thus the Arabic takes it, *qui patrem suum honore affecerit, multos habebit filios*; or, God will give such a one obedient and dutiful Children, who by their discreet Conduct, and religious Behaviour, will be a Joy and Comfort to him. The Greek has only in general, ἐν φρονήσει ἐπὶ τέκνοις; our Translators properly enough insert the Words, *his own*, and the Syriac confirms their Sense, *jucunditatem percipiet e filiis suis*. They will prove to him such, as he himself was to his own Parents, "Upon the same Account and Grounds, says a very learned Prelate, that any one expects Obedience from his own Children, he must know that he ought to pay it to his Parents likewise. And where is the Parent that does not think it reasonable that his Children should obey him even against their Inclinations, and prefer his Wisdom and Experience to their own Wills and weak Understandings, and trust to his Affection, Love, and Favour, rather than pursue their own Humours?" Fleetwood's Rel. Dut. p. 26. It was a wise Saying therefore which is recorded of the Philosopher Thales, "Such a Beha-

viour as you shew to your Parents, such expect from your own Children," ὅς ἂν ἐγάνυε εἰσαίτης τοῖς γονεῦσι, τὸς αὐτοῖς προσδέχῃ καὶ παρὰ τῶν τέκνων. Apud Laert. L. i.

Ver. 6. *He that honoureth his Father shall have a long Life.*] This may either be strictly taken according to the Promise in the Fifth Commandment, *Honour thy Father and thy Mother, that thy Days may be long upon Earth, which the Lord thy God giveth thee*; or it may mean, Since long Life is promised to the Observance of God's other Commandments likewise, that dutiful Children shall in general be blessed. Long Life being counted a Blessing, is therefore in Scripture frequently used for it. And the Jews understood it no otherwise, than of being in general blessed.

Ibid. *And he that is obedient unto the Lord shall be a Comfort unto his Mother.*] i. e. he that obeys God's Commandment in this particular, will comfort, support, and succour his Mother under any, or all the Burthens and Necessities of Life, particularly will be tender of, and provide for her in her old Age, when she is helpless: For so I would understand ἀναπαύσει μητέρα αὐτῆς, and in this Sense ἀνάπαυσις is probably taken, Philemon. § 20. Or it may mean that a virtuous good Child will be a Blessing, and occasion much Joy to his Mother. Thus Homer introduces Hector embracing his Son Astyanax, and praying that he may prove virtuous, and be a Comfort to his Mother, χαρὴν δὲ φέρει μητρί. The Oriental Versions understand the Place of the Reward which attends such Obedience. Syr. Optime meretur de Deo, qui matrem honorat; and Arab. Optimum erit premium ejus propter obedientiam matri impensam.

Ver. 7. *He that feareth the Lord. . . will do Service unto his Parents, as to his Masters.*] i. e. he will behave himself towards them with the Fear of a Servant, as well as the Reverence of a Child. See Luke xv. 29. Mal. iii. 17. Gal. iv. 1. Phil. ii. 22. Fathers and Mothers have a Right over their Children by giving them Birth, superior to what Masters have over their Slaves by Purchase. The one is founded on Force and Necessity; the other on Nature, and those numberless Obligations, which Children owe to them that were the Cause of their coming into the World; for next unto God they are the Authors of their Being and Existence, Health, Power, and all the Advantages either of Body or Soul which they possess. A Slave in the Language of Scripture, Exod. xxi. 21. is the Money of his Master; but Children are the Blood and Substance of their Parents. A Slave owes his Labour and Service to his Master; but Children Reverence, Love, Gratitude, Succour, and all the kind Returns which it is possible for them to make. Calnet in loc. Anciently the Authority of the Parent over the Child was almost absolute; the Roman Lawgivers put Children while in the Parents Power, in the same Capacity with Slaves; the Parents were Masters of



of them, and all they had, till they were emancipated, as Slaves are, and had not only Power to expose, or sell them, but in certain Cases to put them to Death. *Simplicius in Epictet.* "But these are Privileges which do not naturally or reasonably attend the Parent's Authority and Relation; and therefore there is great Abatement to be made from all Arguments that conclude only from Customs and Usages, though of wise and civilized People. The Custom and Practice of the Jews, and all the Eastern Nations indeed, sufficiently evidence the Power and Authority that Parents exercised in the Disposal of their Children; but they do not shew the Reasonableness of such Authority, nor is it of the Law of Nature so to do." *Fleetwood's Rel. Dut.* p. 45. *Lactantius's* Observation is close to the present Purpose, *Dominum eundem esse qui sit pater, etiam Juris Civilis ratio demonstrat; quis enim poterat filios educare, nisi habeat in eos Dominipotesatem?* Lib. iv. 3. And thus St. Jerom to Gaudentia, concerning the Education of her Child, *Amet te ut Parentem, subjicatur ut Dominae*: So *Plautus, mater tu, eadem est hera es.* And in another Place, *tuis servi serviutem imperiis, Pater.* *Afinar.*

Ver. 8. Honour thy Father and Mother both in Word and Deed, that a Blessing may come upon thee from them.] The *Vulgate* adds, *et in omni patientia*, i. e. by submitting patiently to their Animadversions and Chastisements. *Kai tñv mñlpa* is omitted in many Greek Copies, as it is also by the *Vulgate*, and *Oriental Versions*; the *Complut.* has it, which our Translators follow, and *Grabe* has inserted it from thence. And very properly is the Mother not only mentioned, but joined as to equal Reverence, that she may not seem to be slighted or over-looked on account of her Sex, which inclines them generally to more Tenderneſs for their Offspring. The Scripture in many Places, *Exod.* xxi. 15, 17. *Deut.* xxi. 18. xxviii. 16. *Exod.* xx. enjoins the same Duty to be paid to the one as the other. And there is indeed equal Reason in most Cases why it should be so, and in some greater. The Mothers undergo most Sorrow and Pain for them, bear all the Fatigue and Trouble of their Infancy and Childhood, attend and do all they can for them in that helpless State, and have the same Interest in their Good and Welfare; and therefore in Reason and Gratitude the Children are obliged to make no Difference between the Parents in their Obedience to them. See Note on c. vii. 27. *τιμᾶν*, which our Translators here render *Honour*, signifies more when applied to Parents, it comprehends likewise the Duty of maintaining them, and in this Sense it is used by St. Paul, *1 Tim.* v. 3, 17. And what St. Matthew expresses, *ὅτι μὴ τιμᾶσθαι τὸν πατέρα;* in St. Mark is, *ἐκείτι ἀφίεσθαι αὐτὸν ὅθεν ποιεῖται τὸ πάτερ;* where ποιεῖν answers to ἀπαδοποιεῖν.

Ver. 9. The Blessing of the Father establishes the Houses of Children, but the Curse of the

*Mother rooteth out Foundations.*] The Prayer of a Parent procures the Blessing of God upon such dutiful Children as have been careful to pay that Honour and Reverence which Religion and Nature require from them; their Blessing is as an Inheritance, or an Estate to their Children, though they should have nothing else to leave them. But such as by their Disobedience provoke their Parents, and thereby draw down their Curse upon them, have felt the terrible Effect of it upon them, and their Posterity. History furnishes but too many Examples of Misfortunes brought upon Children by the Imprecation of Parents. The most ancient we meet with is that of *Noah* upon his younger Son *Canaan*, *Cursed be Canaan, a Servant of Servants shall he be unto his Brethren*; which was accordingly fulfilled, as the Learned agree many Ages afterwards; and of how great Importance a good and dutiful Behaviour towards Parents is, we may learn from the happy Consequences of the Patriarchal Benedictions, which God so confirmed by his Providence in the Event, that it might powerfully prevail upon Children to honour and obey their Parents, and not do any thing whereby they may come in danger of incurring their Displeasure and Imprecation. With this Expectation and View *Isaac* blessed *Jacob*, and *Jacob* the Twelve Patriarchs. *Jacob's* Care in particular not to offend his Father, and thereby bring on him his Curse, is very remarkable, and is an Example to all Children not to make Light of a Parent's Displeasure. *My Father*, says he, *peradventure will feel me, and I shall seem to him as a Deceiver, and I shall bring a Curse upon me, and not a Blessing*, *Gen.* xxvii. 12. And is not the Parent's Curse, which *Jacob* so much dreaded, when forced from a Parent by Undutifulness and ill Usage, as strong and fatal now as formerly, and our Author's Observation as applicable to all Persons at this Time, as heretofore to a Jew and his Children? St. *Austin* mentions a most melancholy Instance of ten Children, who were cursed by their Mother, all of whom for many Years felt the Effect of her Imprecation, by a continual trembling of all their Limbs, *De Civit. Dei*, L. xxii. c. 8.

Ver. 10. Glory not in the Dishonour of thy Father, for thy Father's Dishonour is no Glory unto thee.] St. *Chrysostom*, quoting this Passage, illustrates it by the instance of *Cham*, who exposed his Father's Shame and Nakedness. "Children ought to be exceeding careful to conceal the Faults and Miscarriages of their Parents; the same Piety would have endeavoured to cover *Noah's* Cruelty or Injustice, had he been guilty of them, that was so careful to conceal his Nakedness and Folly; for they are also the Shame and Nakedness of a Man's Understanding; and such Infirmities being no less dishonourable than those of the Body, the like Caution should be used in not discovering, or exposing them." *Fleetwood's Rel. Dut.* p. 77. Much less



less should any assume the Liberty to throw Reflexions upon a Parent, to render him little and despicable in the Esteem of others. We meet with and detest this Behaviour in *Absalom*, who laboured to depreciate *David* his Father in the Sight of his People, and to undermine and weaken him in their good Opinion and Favour, *For when any Man that had a Controversy came to the King for Judgment, Absalom said to him, There is no Man deputed of the King to hear thee; O that I was made Judge in the Land, I would do to every Man Right and Justice.* And by this intriguing and insinuating Address, he stole the Hearts of the Men of *Israel*, 2 Sam. xv. 2, 6. This in any other was criminal, in a Son quite unnatural. There is that near Relation and Intimacy between Parents and Children, that nothing can affect the Welfare or Honour of the former, without being communicated to, and descending upon the latter, the Branches will in proportion share in the good or ill Condition of the Root; if this sickens, they of Course wither. Or the Sense may be according to *Calmet*, Be not ashamed of thy Birth and Original, for this is a Reflexion upon thy Parents, and in consequence a Blot upon thine own self. *Alexander the Great* thought himself more than mortal, and was ashamed to pass any longer for the Son of *Philip*; but when he claimed *Jupiter Ammon* for his Father, he paid so indifferent a Compliment to the Honesty of his Mother *Olympias*, as to render even his own Birth tainted, and suspicious.

Ver. 12, 13. *My Son, help thy Father in his Age, and grieve him not as long as he liveth: and if his Understanding fail, have Patience with him.* Though old Age is generally attended with a Number of Infirmities, yet neither any Weakness of Body, or Decay of Sense and Reason, give any Right to a Child to despise his Parents. With regard to their Children, they always sustain a Character that demands Respect, which neither Age, nor its attendant Evils can, or ought to diminish. And particularly in the last Stage of Life, when they are helpless, and as it were Infants a second Time, they demand all that Care, Compassion, and Tenderness at their Children's Hands, when they are going out of the World, which they themselves happily experienced from their Parents at their first coming into it. All the ancient Philosophers give the same Lesson as our Author; *Plato* says, that he that has in his House a Father or Mother enfeebled with Age, ought to regard them as a Treasure, and to be assured that they can never want a Tutelar Deity so long as they continue with them, and are taken Care of by them. *De Legibus*. *Hesiod* observes, that the Gods will certainly punish the ill Usage of an aged Parent by some great Calamity inflicted on the Child. *Egy. 2. Hmer. 29.* *Mess. du Port Royal* in their Comment on the Place, properly observe, that what is said by our Author of the Fathers of our Flesh, is very applicable to

our spiritual ones, we should respect their Persons, revere their Authority, and cover even their personal Defects and Failings.

*Ibid.* And despise him not, when thou art in thy full Strength.] ἐν πάσῃ ἰσχύϊ σου. We have a remarkable Instance of Reverence to an aged Parent in the Behaviour of *Joseph* to an old blind decrepit Father, when he himself was in the highest Point of Strength, Glory, and Power, *Gen.* xlviii. Nor is the Behaviour of *Jacob*, then in his Prime, towards his aged Sire, *Isaac*, his Pains and Quickness to oblige him, by getting the Venison, and making savoury Meat, such as his Father loved, thereby to win his Favour, and obtain his Blessing, less to be admired, *Gen.* xxvii. *Calmet* understands by ἰσχύς, Riches and Power; and then the Sense is, If thou art more rich, more powerful, more honoured, more vigorous and healthful than thy Father, despise not his Weakness, Obscurity, or Poverty. The marginal Reading in all thine Ability, may seem to comprize all these, but the first seems favoured by the Context. That ἰσχύς is often taken in this Book in the Sense of Riches, see c. ix. 9. which our Translators render, Give not thy Soul unto a Woman to set her Foot upon thy Substance, ἐπιβῆναι ἐπὶ τὴν ἰσχύϊ σου, Ec. xiv. 13. xxviii. 11. xlv. 6. xlv. 8, 12. and then the Sense and Expression here will be equivalent to that in c. xxxvii. 6. μὴ ἀμνημονήσῃς αὐτὴ ἐν χρημασί σου, be not unmindful of him in thy Riches. *Grotius* thinks that there is an Ellipsis here, and makes the Sense to be, endeavour ἐν πάσῃ τῇ ἰσχύϊ, with all thy Power, and as much as possible, not to despise, or any way bring thy Father into Disgrace, nor through any Misconduct be the occasion of Grief to him, by slighting his Advice, and acting contrary to it. And so *Junius*, honorem habe omnibus viribus tuis, and refers to *Gen.* xxxiii. 10. as a parallel Ellipsis: And the *Tigurin* Version is to the same Effect, Illum aspernari summo cave studio.

Ver. 14. For the relieving of thy Father shall not be forgotten.] ἐλεημοσύνη πατρός. *Syr.* Benignitas in patrem præstita. The kind and charitable Relief of a Parent, by attending upon him in his feeble Estate, or, if Need so require, occasionally supplying him with Necessaries, will be so far from being over-looked or forgotten by God, that he will bear the good Deed in Remembrance to reward it suitably. *Homer* mentions it as a calamitous Circumstance in the Death of a young Hero, that he was cut off in his Bloom, before he had made any Retribution to his Parents for their Care and Support of him,

ὅδ' ἐπεὶ πέφνεν

Θερίῳ φίλοις ἀπέδωκε.

And it was a wise and noble Institution of *Solon*, the great *Athenian* Lawgiver, which decreed, that any Child that refused or neglected to support his Parents, when their Age or Infirmities called for Assistance, should be branded with Infamy, and deprived of all the Privileges of Society.

*Ibid.*



# Chap. iii. the Book of ECCLESIASTICUS. 17

Ibid. And instead of Sins, it shall be added to build thee up.] *ἡ ἀντὶ ἀμαρτιῶν προσανοιχομένη θήσει σοι.* Our Translators have rendered this Passage very imperfectly and obscurely; ἀντὶ signifies here *for* or *against*, rather than *instead*. They have made the like Mistake in the rendring of this Preposition, *Wisdom* vii. 10. See Note on that Place. By Sins some understand here the Punishment due to them, and thus it is used *Isai.* xl. 2. And indeed I the less incline to understand this of Sins properly so called, as they are mentioned, *3.* and *15.* of this Chapter, and such a Tautology could not be justified. Others by Sins, understand the Imperfections and Failings of the Patients; and thus the *Vulgate*, *pro peccato matris restituitur tibi bonum*, i. e. for the Peevishness, Impatience, and Moroseness of your Mother, which you have passed over and submitted to, a proportionable and adequate Compensation and Recompence shall be made you by God. Others expound it of the personal Sins of the Children themselves, that, by such Acts of Kindness and Charity done to their Parents, they shall cover and blot out the Multitude of their Sins, which seems to be the Meaning of the *Arabic*, *Beneficium in Patrem non deletur*, imo, *deletur per illud multitudo peccatorum*. According to *Grotius* the Meaning is, his (the dutiful Child's) House shall be built again; God shall bless him with a numerous and flourishing Posterity, who shall be a Comfort through their Piety and good Conduct. In Scripture, building a Man's House is a known Metaphor for raising up Children. See *Gen.* xvi. 2. *Exod.* i. 21. *Deut.* xxv. 9. *Ruth* iv. 11. *Pf.* cxxvii. 1.

Ver. 15. In the Day of thine Affliction it shall be remembred; thy Sins also shall melt away as the Ice in the fair warm Weather.] i. e. such an Instance of Piety shall be remembred to thy Advantage, or God himself ἀναμνησθήσεται σε, shall remember thee. He will not only bless obedient Children here, but he will bless them with heavenly Blessings, of which the Land of *Canaan*, with all the Beauty and Fertility thereof, was but a faint Type and Shadow. The latter Clause *ὡς ἐν δία ἐπὶ παλαιοῖς*, is not literally, nor indeed rightly translated. The true rendring of the *Greek* either is, Thy Sins shall be no more, as the Mildness of the Weather ceaseth in a hard Frost; and thus *Drusus* translates: Or thy Sins shall melt away, as Ice does when fine Weather comes upon or after a Frost; and so *Junius* takes it. The Sense also of the *Arab.* is full and clear, *In afflictione erit tibi adjutor, pelletque a te mala, quomodo pellitur frigus vehementiâ caloris.*

Ver. 16. He that forsaketh his Father, is as a Blasphemer.] By some of the ancient Lawgivers, Parents are styled a sort of Earthly Gods, and by *Philo* they are expressly called so, *De Decal.* And therefore to offend against their Authority, and much more to disregard, desert, or injure them, is not improperly here made a Species of Blasphemy:

or the Sense may be, according to that of the old *Greek* Poet, He that reviles or injures his Father, shews a Disposition wicked enough to blaspheme even the Deity.

Ὁ λοιδορῶν τὸ πατέρα δυσφημεῖ λόγῳ,  
Τὴν εἰς τὸ θεῖον προμελεῖ βλασφημίαν.

Menand.

Our Author uses a Variety of Arguments to enforce the Duty of Reverence to Parents; *Tirinus* reckons up no less than thirteen urged by him in these few Verses.

Ver. 17. Go on with thy Business in Meekness, so shalt thou be beloved of him that is approved.] *ὑπὸ ἀνθρώπων δεκτός* i. e. by all worthy and good Men, such as are themselves, for the like good Qualities, beloved both of God and Men. The *Vulgate* renders, *super hominum gloriam diligaris*, from a Copy probably which had *ὑπὲρ* which the *Oriental* Versions seem also to have followed, and to have mistaken the Sense of *δεκτός*, when they expound it by *præ viro munera largiente*. That of our Translators is more just and proper. We have *ἀνθρώποι δεκτοὶ* to the same Sense, c. ii. 5. See also *Luke* iv. 24. and *Acts* x. 35: *ὁ ἐργαζόμενος δικαιοσύνην, δεκτός αὐτῷ ἐστίν* which differs not much from the Expression before us. As the Author begins here a new Subject about Modesty and Humility; some Copies begin here a new Chapter.

Ver. 18. The greater thou art, the more humble thyself.] *ὅσω μέγας εἶ.* *Vulg.* *Quanto magnus es*, which is a literal rendring of the *Greek*, as that is of the *Hebrew*, which having neither comparative or superlative Degree to compare Things by, makes use always of the positive. There are two Instances of this Construction together in the *ὁ*, *Psal.* cxviii. 8, 9. *ἀγαθὸν ποιῆσαι ἐπὶ Κύριον, ἢ ποιῆσαι ἐπ' ἀνθρώπον*, — *ἀγαθὸν ἐλπίζειν ὅτι Κύριον, ἢ ἐλπίζειν ἐπ' ἀνθρώποις*, which the *Latin* Interpreter is servile in following; but the *Chaldee*, *St. Jerom*, and our Version rightly render by the *Comparative*. See also the like, *Matt.* xviii. 8, 9. and *Gloss. Philol. Sac. Can.* 18: This fine Sentiment is worthy of the Gospel, says *Calmet*. Though the Heathen Philosophers knew a great Number of moral Virtues, Humility was never well understood or practised by them; they could talk plausibly of despising Glory, Honours, Riches, &c. but found it difficult or disagreeable to exert such Self-denial. True Humility, which consists in the Contempt of ourselves and a Deference to others, is no where taught, or so well inspired as by Wisdom or Religion. 'Tis this shews us our Weakness, Imperfection, and Nakedness, and the Value which we ought to set upon the Worth of others. *St. Ambrose* has well expressed the Sense of our Author, *Mensura humilitatis cuique, ex mensura ipsius magnitudinis data est. De Virginit.* c. xxxi. The Measure of our Humility must correspond with that of our Elevation, as a Tree shoots its Roots downwards in proportion to the spreading of the Branches upwards. The higher we are advanced, the more have we



to fear from Pride. "If Humility does not go before, accompany, and follow all the good Actions we do, if it is not the End which we propose, the Guide we follow, and the Weight to balance, or rather sink us, Pride will take away the Merit of our best Actions," *Aug. ad Dioscor. Epist.* 118. It will ever be the greatest Glory of *Titus Vespasian* above the rest of the *Roman* Emperors, that he was moulded by his august Station and Dignity from the worse to the better, from being a very arbitrary and proud Person, to be as eminently mild and humble. The Reflection of our Author is finely exemplified in the Parable of the Trees, *Judg.* ix. 8. The Olive, Fig-tree, and Vine, being desired by the Trees to be respectively King over them, content with their native Sweetness and Fruit, modestly refused the Offer, which the Bramble was ambitious to accept. The Moral of which is, that the more noble any one is by Birth or Education, the more lowly and contented will he be with his Lot and Station, the freer from Envy, Pride, and Ambition, the Stain of base and mean Souls.

Ver. 19. *Mysteries are revealed unto the Meek.*] This is a weighty Reason for the Practice of Humility: for the Truth of the Observation here made; See *Psal.* xxv. 8. where the Psalmist says, *Them that are meek, those he will teach his Way*; and again, *ψ* 13. *The Secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will shew them his Covenant.* It is particularly true of *Moses*, that as no body was more meek than he, so none had more Favours, or more frequent Communications with God than he. And our Saviour says to his Disciples upon account of their Humility, *To you it is given to know the Mysteries of the Kingdom of God*, *Luke* viii. 10. And in another Place, *Thou hast hid these Things*, i. e. the Mysteries of the Gospel, *from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto Babes*, *Matt.* xi. 25. Where Babes, or such as have humble Sentiments, are opposed to *σοφιστοι*, or such as were self-sufficient and wise in their own Conceits. The humble Soul is God's Temple, and the Man upon whom he delights to look, and in whom he is pleased to dwell, is one of a poor and contrite Spirit, *who trembles at his Word*, *Isa.* lxvi. 1, 2. And so *St. Paul*, *Not many wise Men after the Flesh*, but the seemingly foolish and base, *the despised Things of the World are chosen of God*, *1 Cor.* i. 26. This whole Verse is wanting in several Copies, and in the *Vulg.* and *Oriental* Versions.

Ver. 20. *The Power of the Lord is great, and he is honoured of the Lowly.*...] All Greatness compared to that of God is Meanness, but great as he is, he regards the Meek and Lowly chiefly, and chuses such to worship him. Kings and Potentates take a Pleasure in State and Grandeur; to see others crouching at their Feet is an Accession to their Glory, and by binding Kings in Chains and Nobles with Links of Iron, they aggrandize their Triumph. The infinite Majesty

of God delights not in such Pageantry and Shew, he expects no flattering Service, he expects only that every Man should humbly own his Dependence upon him, and his infinite Meanness in Comparison of him. All Worship, devoid of Sentiments of profound Humility, is disagreeable to, and disregarded by him. Hence the Angels consider themselves as nothing in his Presence, and on Earth the most pious Souls are most sensible of their Imperfection, and acknowledge their best Services to be Darkness and Sin.

Ver. 22. *What is commanded thee, think thereupon with Reverence, for it is not needful for thee to see with thine Eyes the Things that are in Secret.*...] This is manifestly translated from the *Vulgate*, *Non est enim tibi necessarium ea quæ abscondita sunt videre oculis*; whereas the *Greek* only has, *ε* γὰρ ἐστὶ σοι χρεία τῶν κρυπτῶν i. e. thou hast no need of, nor Business with, nor will gain any Advantage from intricate and abstruse Speculations, and therefore do not exercise thyself in great Matters, which are too high for thee, nor rashly pry into mysterious Points above the Reach of thy Understanding. Such a Curiosity is criminal, and proceeds from Pride and Self-conceit. Content thyself with plain and necessary Truths, and learn from thence thy Duty, in order to practise it. There are a thousand Things which we cannot learn, and which it does not concern us at all to know; the Ignorance of which will be of no Prejudice nor Disadvantage to us. It is rather a Piece of Wisdom, with regard to such Things as are really *τὰ κρυπτά*, to sit down contented with our Ignorance, and endeavour after such Knowledge as becomes us, and will be useful to us. Believe that there is a God, says one of the *Antients*, and worship him sincerely; but search not into his Nature, what he is, and how he acts, for there is nothing more out of thy reach than such an Enquiry. Our Saviour came not into the World to teach Men swollen and conceited Notions, or the Pride and Vanity of human Science, but that Men should submit every high Thought to the Obedience of Faith, and think upon what is commanded them. A Soul thirsty and greedy after forbidden Knowledge nothing will content, it knows no Ends of its Desires and Pursuits, its Ambition and Curiosity pant after unknown Worlds, tho' the Contempt of one is its truest Glory. A little Knowledge will suffice an humble Soul; it neither aims at human Greatness or Admiration, nor to fathom the Depths of the Wisdom and Power of God; it desires such a Knowledge only of God, as may create a greater Degree of Love towards him, and asks only so much Light as may be sufficient to direct it in its Duty and Conduct in the Ways of Godliness. Our Author probably alludes in this Verse to *Numb.* xv. 39. *Seek not after your own Heart and your own Eyes, that ye may remember, and do all my Commandments, and be holy unto your God.*



### Chap. iii. the Book of ECCLESIASTICUS. 19

Ver. 23. *Be not curious in unnecessary Matters, for more Things are shewed unto thee than Men understand.*]

ἐν τοῖς περισσοῖς τῶν ἑσῶν σὺ μὴ περιεργάζου. Some Copies have τῶν λόγων σὺ, the original Word doubtless was *debar*, which signifies both the one and the other. The Sense is either, Do not endeavour by the Strength of thine own Parts, to search the deep Things of God, since even those that are before us we cannot comprehend, if left to ourselves; and such as we do understand, we came not to the Knowledge of them merely by our own natural Powers. Or be not over curious, for so περιεργάζου is generally understood, or over busy, (see 2 *Thess.* iii. 11.) in Things which do not concern thee to know, and of which no Account will be demanded of thee. The Geneva Version renders not amiss, *be not curious in superfluous Things*. Grotius understands this of prying into the Reasons of God's Laws, which God has not thought fit to discover or reveal; and so does Dr. Spencer, Vol. I. c. 2. God, it is certain, has enjoined the Reach of human Apprehension, and must be resolved solely into his Will. Many, or most of the ritual and ceremonial Laws, are absolute Prohibitions, or Commands, and no reason of their being forbidden, or commanded, at all appears; God only says, *I am the Lord which commanded them*; and this, according to the Jewish Doctors, is sufficient to stop all Doubt and Cavilling about the Use or Importance of such Precepts, or too curious a Search into the Reasons for them. Such are the Laws of not eating Swines-Flesh, not wearing a Garment of Linnen and Woollen, Discalceation, or pulling off the Shoe, Purification of the Leprosy, the Scape-Goat, and that of the Firstling of an Ass, and innumerable others. And if we examine the *Pentateuch* throughout, we shall not perhaps find any Reason set down, or annexed to any such Laws, as if God by his Silence in this respect, would purposely restrain Men from a criminal Curiosity. And indeed it is very notorious, that as soon as the Scope and Intention of a Law among the Jews was guessed at, and presumed to be discovered, it abated of its Force and Authority, and the Sense of it was often perverted to the Hurt and Destruction of such Enquirers. So true is the Observation in the following Verse, that an evil Suspicion, founded upon Men's vain Opinion, hath led them into many and great Mistakes; for so πολλὰς ἐπλάγχθη should be rendred, and not in the present Tense, as our Translators give it.

Ver. 25. *Without Eyes thou shalt want Light: profess not the Knowledge therefore that thou hast not.*]

The literal rendring of the Greek is, without the Pupil or Sight of thine Eye thou shalt want Light, *Pupillas non habens indigebis luce*. Junius. And if thou hast not Knowledge, profess it not; or, according to Drusus, Betray not thine Ignorance by pretending to Knowledge. The

Sense of the Passage is, 'Tis not only a fruitless Undertaking to attempt to explain Mysteries, or fathom the τὰ βάθη τῆς Θεᾶς, but is likewise dangerous, and apt to lead such presumptuous Enquirers into Errors, and sometimes Heresies. It highly concerns every one therefore to think soberly of himself, according to the Measure of Faith and Knowledge which God has afforded him; for as the Eye has a certain Sphere and Boundary of Vision, beyond which all is Darknes and Obscurity, so there are certain Limits likewise to the Understanding, though some may see farther, and understand more than others; but let no Man profess or boast of more Knowledge than God has really bestowed upon him, or his own finite Nature is capable of, see 1 *Tim.* vi. 4. Where a Person of Curiosity in Matters of Faith is termed νοσῶν περὶ ζηήσεως, and evil Surmises, ὑπόνοιαι πονηραὶ, the very Expression here used, are likewise condemned. The Syriac and Arab. Versions understand it, of presuming to give Advice as a Professor or an Adept in any Science, when at the same Time the Person is ignorant and unqualified, *Si doctrinæ careas, ne consilium des hominibus quasi doctus*. This Verse is wanting in the Roman Edition, and the Vulgate.

Ver. 26. *A stubborn Heart shall fare evil at the last, and he that loveth Danger shall perish therein.*]

A hardned and impenitent Heart, such as was that of Pharoah, Antiochus, Judas, and other obdurate Sinners, who are deaf to all God's Calls, or the Warnings of his Ministers, shall experience his Vengeance, and particularly at the Hour of their Death, they shall be seized with such a Dread, as shall fling them into Despair, and too late bewail their Unhappiness and sad Estate. Such as will fetch neither Cattle nor Servants into the House, though kindly forewarned; to them for their Obstinacy it shall happen, as it did to the Egyptians, Vengeance shall come down upon them one Way or the other, as Thunder and Hail, Fire and Lightning, did upon the Despisers of Moses's Warning. Or a hard Heart may signify, one that is devoid of the Sentiments of Humanity, that has no Bowels of Tendernefs and Compassion; such a one shall have cutting Reflexions for his past Cruelty; and as he afforded no Mercy, shall be in Despair of finding any: But the first Sense is preferable. St. Bernard's Description of a hardned and stubborn Heart is very just, *Cor durum dicitur, quod non compunctione scinditur, nec pietate mollitur, nec movetur precibus, minis non cedit, flagellis duratur. Ingratum ad beneficia, ad consilia infidum, ad judicia sœvum, inverecundum ad turpia, impavidum ad pericula, inhumanum ad humana, temerarium ad divina, præteritorum obliviscens, præsentium negligens, futura non prævidens*, i. e. A hard Heart is neither rent with Compunction, nor softened with Pity, nor moved with Prayers; regardeth not Threats, is hardened with

Stripes;



Stripes; in Kindness unthankful, in Counsel unfaithful, in Judgment cruel; without Shame in bad Actions, without Fear in Dangers; in human Matters most inhuman, in divine ones rash; forgetful of Things past, neglecting Things present, careless of Things to come. *De Consider. ad Eugen. L. i.* According to *Calmet*, the Meaning of the last Clause is, that the rash and fool-hardy, who tempt Danger without any Reason, shall at length suffer for their Imprudence. He thinks the Author here indirectly aims at them, who maintain Fate, or Destiny; and on that Account face Dangers, without any Apprehension or Concern; persuading themselves, that, if it is appointed that they shall die upon such or such an Attempt, or Enterprize, 'tis to no Purpose to pretend to guard against it: That the Time and Manner of our Death is fixed by an eternal and irreversible Decree, and if the fatal Hour is not yet come, no Rashness or Accident can hasten it. Against this weak and extravagant Notion, the Author opposes this wise Caution, *He that loveth Danger shall perish therein*; which in the *Roman Edition* makes the former Part of this Verse.

Ver. 27. *An obstinate Heart shall be laden with Sorrows, and the wicked Man shall heap Sin upon Sin.* *Calmet* thinks the two Members of this Verse correspond to each other, and are the same in Sense; accordingly he renders, *Le cœur endurci se chargera de crimes, & le pecheur ajoutera péché sur péché*, i. e. An obstinate Heart shall be laden with Crimes, and the Wicked will heap Sin upon Sin. He conjectures, that in the original Work, composed by the Grandfather *Jesus*; the *Hebrew* Word signified both Crimes and Sorrows, which is not improbable. Πόνος, the Word here used, has likewise such a double Signification, and the Translators very frequently mistake it. See *Psal. vii. 14.* ἰδὲ ὠδίνῃσιν ἀδικίαν, συνέλαβε πόνον, καὶ ἔτεκεν ἀνομίαν, which our Version, following the *Vulgate*, *Concepit dolorem & peperit iniquitatem*, wrongly renders, *He hath conceived Sorrow, and brought forth Ungodliness*; and the like false rendring occurs, *ψ. 16.* in both which Places the Context manifestly determines it to the other Sense; but in *Psal. x.* they render πόνος differently, and rightly understand it in two Places in the Sense of Wickedness. Thus *ψ. 7.* *His Mouth is full of Cursing, Deceit, and Fraud; under his Tongue is κόπῃ & πόνῃ, Ungodliness and Vanity.* And *ψ. 14.* σὺ πόνον & θυμὸν καλانوῖς, *Thou beholdest Ungodliness and Wrong*; in both which Places the *Vulgate* expresses it inaccurately by *Dolor*. See also *Psal. cxxxix. 24.* where the *Hebrew* Word rendred by *Ar. Montanus*, and some *Latin* Versions *Dolor* is in the ὁ, ἀνομία, and *Psal. lv. 10.* where πόνῃ which is coupled with ἀνομία, would be better rendered by Wickedness than Sorrow, as it stands now in our Version. The Sense then of our Author in this Place is, that God permits the Sinner to fall from one Wickedness to an-

other, till he fills up the Measure of his Iniquities. *St. Austin* aptly compares the habit of sinning to a long Chain which keeps the Sinner confined like a Prisoner, he is brought into a continual Bondage by it, and is unavoidably a Slave to it, *Velle meum tenebat inimicus, & indigni mihi catenam fecerat: quippe ex voluntate perversa facta est libido, & dum servitur libidini, facta est consuetudo, & dum consuetudini non resistitur, facta est necessitas.* *Confess. L. viii. c. 5.*

Ver. 28. *In the Punishment of the Proud there is no Remedy.* *ἐν ἐπαισῶν ὑπερηφάνῃς οὐκ ἔστιν ἰατρικὴ.* The marginal Reading is much clearer, The proud Man is not healed by his Punishment; to which *Junius* seems to agree, *Quum inducitur superbo afflictio, non est curatio*, understanding by ἐπαισῶν Affliction, as it is often taken in this Book. i. e. The proud Man, one who is strictly such, is not bettered by any thing that befalls him; he is so self-sufficient and opinionated, that he is deaf to the Admonition of Friends for his Reformation, he defies and laughs at God's Judgments, and is incorrigible under them. The *Arabic* understands this of the proud Scornor in particular, *Irrisoris pœnæ non est remissio, quoniam planta illis pessima plantarum est.* But by the Proud here I would understand the obdurate Sinner, for throughout the Book of *Psalms*, and these Sapiential ones, the Proud and Sinner are synonymous Terms. And such great Offenders as commit Sins with Boldness, and with a Sort of Defiance, are in the Scripture Phrase, called Despisers, according to that excellent Description of them, *Prov. xviii. 3.* as it occurs in the ὁ, which our Version renders very imperfectly, ὅταν ἔλθῃ ἀσεβὴς εἰς βάθος κακῶν, καλᾷ φρονεῖ, ἐπέχλει δὲ αὐτὸς ἀτιμία & ὀνειδῶ, which *Jerom's Bible* well renders, *Impius cum in profundum venerit peccatorum, contemnit, sed sequitur eum ignominia & opprobrium.* The sad Catastrophe of such hardened Sinners is more strongly noted by our Author, That when God visits such Offenders, he does not dally with them, but strikes a deadly Blow, their Wounds are mortal and incurable, and past all Remedy, there is no Balm in *Gilead* that can do them good. The *Vulgate* has *Synagoga Superborum non erit sanitas*, following a Copy probably which had ἐν συναγωγῇ ὑπερηφάνῃς, κ. τ. λ.

Ver. 29. *The Heart of the Prudent will understand a Parable.* To a hard Heart just mentioned, a teachable and docile Disposition is here opposed, one desirous of Learning, that will make Use of the necessary Means of attaining it, viz. hearing, reading, and meditating. Two Things therefore seem here required, a Desire and Eagerness after Wisdom, and the listening to the Words of the Wise, and their Interpretation. Or the Sense may be, as applied to the Teacher himself, that his Wisdom will appear by his apt Discourse, and just Observations, *Cor sapientis intelligitur in sapientia. Vulg.* And the *Port Royal* comment, *Le cœur du sage paroît par sa sagesse*, i. e. the prudent or wise Man



Man will distinguish himself, when he opens his Treasures; as long as he is silent, and his Wisdom confined to his own Breast, he appears like other Men, but when he thinks proper to speak, the Clearness of his Conceptions, the Justness of his Sentiments, and the Usefulness of his Maxims stand confessed and admired, and every judicious Ear will listen with Greediness and Pleasure.

Ibid. *And an attentive Ear is the Desire of a wise Man.*] *ὁ ἀγαθὸς ἐπιθυμῶν τοῦ φρονίμου* i. e. A wise Man will wish to have such Disciples as will mind and regard what he says, and treasure up his wise Reflexions, in order to improve by them. And thus the *Tigurin* Version, *Sapiens aurem attentam expetit*; and *Junius*, *Auris ejusmodi auditoris a sapiente exoptatur*. See c. xxv. 9. and the Note on it. There may also another Sense be given, that the Ear, desirous of Instruction, longs to hear and attend to the Discourse of wise Men; and so the *Vulgate*, *Auris bona audiet cum omni concupiscentia sapientiam*; and the *Arab*, *Auris auscultans delectatur sapientibus*.

Ver. 30. *Water will quench a flaming Fire, and Alms maketh an Atonement for Sins.*] To this Purpose is that Counsel of *Daniel*, *To break off Sins by Righteousness, and Iniquities by shewing Mercy to the Poor*, iv. 27. See *Luke* xi. 41. *1 Pet.* iv. 8. *Prov.* xvi. 6. *Tob.* iv. 7. xii. 9. But at the same Time that they press this Duty, they generally lay down this Restriction, that Men must not think, because Sins are taken away by Alms, that by their Money they may purchase a Licence to Sin; for all Alms are too little to atone for a Sin, if the Person resolves to continue in it. Alms must be accompanied with Repentance, for God's Justice is not venal, nor the sovereign Judge to be bribed into a Toleration of Sin. *St. Cyprian* quotes this Passage, and illustrates it by the following Comparison, *Sicut Lavacro aqua salutaris Gehennæ ignis extinguitur, ita eleemosynis atque operibus justis, delictorum flamma sopitur*. De Opere & Eleemos. Alms, according to the Fathers, is as a second Baptism, and has the Advantage of it in some respect, as the former can be often repeated, but Baptism can be performed but once. See *Ambr. Sermon* ii. Tom. 2. *St. Chrysostom*, speaking of Charity, urges the Duty upon the same weighty Consideration, *μὴ παροξύνωμεν τὸ κρέδον ἡμετέρον ψυχῶν* κ. τ. λ. *Ne prætereamus lucrum nostrarum animarum & remedium nostrorum vulnerum; hoc enim, hoc maximum pharvacum ita curabit & abolebit ulcera animarum nostrarum, ut neque vestigium neque cicatrix aliqua apparitura sit, id quod in corporis vulneribus non est possibile*. *Hom.* lvi. in c. 29. *Gen.* Tom. ii. See also *Hom.* xliii. in c. 19. *Gen.* And *Apost. Constit.* L. xvii. 13. *Lactant.* L. vi. 12.

Ver. 31. *He that requiteth good Turns, is mindful of that which may come hereafter.*] *ὁ ἀνταποδίδως χάριτας μέμνηται εἰς τὰ μετὰ ταῦτα*. The *Syr.* and *Arab.* understand this of the beneficent and charitable Man, who, for his Readiness to succour others, shall himself find

Help in Time of Need. Others apply *ὁ ἀνταποδίδως* to God himself, who requiteth all good Turns, i. e. all Instances of Loving-kindness shewn to those that are in Misery and Distress. Accordingly some *Greek* Copies read, *ὁ Κύριος, ὁ ἀνταποδίδως χάριτας, μέμνηται* κ. τ. λ. which the *Vulgate* follows, *Deus prospector est ejus qui reddit gratiam: meminit ejus in posterum*; and *Junius*, *Domini qui reddit gratiose facta, in posterum recordaturus est*. He looks upon what is given to the Poor as done to himself, and keeps an account of good and charitable Deeds, to return them with Encrease. God is as the Debtor, to speak in the Language of *St. Chrysostom*, of such as give Alms; and to assist the Poor with our Substance, is putting out our Money wisely, and on the most valuable and certain Security. *Hom.* liii. ad *Pop.*

#### CHAP. IV.

Ver. 1. **D**E FRAUD not the Poor of his Living.] *ὁ ζῶν τῷ πτωχῷ μὴ ἀποστερήσῃς*. *Bi* is used in the like Sense by the *Greeks*, and *Vita* by the *Latins*; thus *Terence*, *Cui opera vita erat*. This is a Continuation of the former Chapter concerning Alms-giving; the *Vulgate* accordingly renders, *Fili, eleemosynam pauperis ne defraudes, i. e. refuse not a poor Man that Charity which you owe him, and is his Due; for you commit a Sort of Robbery or Fraud, when you keep from him that which he wants, and you can well spare; Non minus est criminis habenti tollere, quam, cum possis & abundas, indigentibus denegare*. *Ambr. Sermon* 81. To deny a poor Man when you can relieve his Necessities out of your Abundance, is not a less Crime than to rob. *St. Austin* has the like Thought, *Superflua diviti, necessaria sunt pauperi; aliena retinet, qui ista tenet*. *Psa.* cxlvii. *St. Chrysostom* quotes the Passage, and reasons upon it in like Manner, *ὁ ἀποστερῶν, τὰ ἀλλότεια ἀποστερεῖ* κ. τ. λ. *Qui spoliat, aliena tollit; nam spoliatio quædam dicitur, cum aliena detinemus: quoties eleemosynam non præstiterimus, pari cum his qui spoliant, supplicio afficiemur*. De Lazaro, *Sermon* ii. Tom. 5. By Living, we may understand here his Bread, for the Bread of the Poor is his Life, he that detains it is a Man of Blood, See Note on c. xxxiv. 21, 22. or more largely, Food in general, Raiment, Lodging, and all that Nature demands, for the Preservation and Support of Life; to refuse such Necessaries is the same Thing as to take Life away, *Hoc est hominem occidere, vitæ suæ ei subsidia denegare*. *August.* in *Psa.* cxviii.

Ver. 3. *Add not more Trouble to a Heart that is vexed.*] Poverty is of itself a sore Affliction enough, without adding to it any fresh Occasion of Complaint. The Soul of a poor Man, already uneasy and dejected, and pinched with Grief and Hunger, is of all others the most sensible of a Slight, and more ready to lay every supposed Injury to Heart.



If you give therefore, give cheerfully; if you refuse, do it without Insult or Upbraiding, and add not Contempt or Outrage to your Denial. We are hence also instructed not to insult the Misery of the Unfortunate, whether such by Accident, or made so through their own Folly or Wickedness, not to call even condemned Criminals, by any harsh or opprobrious Names, however undeserving of our Regard or Pity. We have a remarkable Instance of this Tenderness towards the Afflicted in pious *Abraham*: When the rich Man applies to him, to send *Lazarus* to dip the Tip of his Finger to cool his Tongue; he does not reproach him in any sharp or bitter Language for his past Life, he does not shew any Anger or Repentment against him, but speaks to him in Terms of Kindness, and even vouchsafes to call him Son. St. *Chrysostom* has the like Remark, upon this Part of the Parable, ὅρα φιλοσοφίαν δικάζει· ἔκ εἰπεν, ἀπαιθεῖν τε, κ. τ. λ. *Vide humanitatem Justi: non dixit, Inhumane, crudelis, sceleratissime; sed filium illum appellat. Satis est animæ dejectæ suus cruciatus, ut ne illius calamitatibus insultemus.* De Lazaro Conc. ii. Tom. 5. See *Eccles. c. vii. 11.* It is observable that our Author in a very short Compass, three times repeats the Precept of not turning away the Eyes from a poor Man, to enforce it the more strongly, and make the deeper Impression on the Memory.

Ver. 6. *If he curse thee in the Bitterness of his Soul, his Prayer shall be heard of him that made him.*] The Sense is much the same with that, *Prov. xxviii. 27. He that giveth to the Poor, shall not lack; but he that hideth his Eyes, shall have many a Curse.* And *Exod. xxii. 22, 23.* God says, *Ye shall not afflict any Widow or fatherless Child; if thou afflict them in any wise, and they cry at all unto me, I will surely hear their Cry, and my Wrath shall wax hot, &c.* And that, *Prov. xxi. 13.* is much to the same Effect, *Whoso stoppeth his Ears at the Cry of the Poor, he also shall cry himself, and shall not be heard.* Homer in a very beautiful Manner represents Prayers as so many living Persons; the Daughters of *Jupiter*, which when slighted and disregarded by Men, carry their Complaint before his Throne, and beg of him that he would send after such Persons the Goddesses *Ate*, to revenge the Affront and Injury done them, See *Il. x. v. 493.* The fine Allegory, and useful Moral couched under it, cannot fail of pleasing every judicious, and pious Reader. This Fiction, says *Calmet*, represents and illustrates the wise Man's Meaning here. Though the Poor may appear mean and despicable in the Eyes of the World, and their importunate Requests disagreeable and troublesome, yet are they dear to their Maker, as his Creatures, and equal Objects of his Love. See *Prov. xiv. 31. xvii. 5.* But in their distressed State, when they look for some to have Pity on them, and no Man will know them, they are then his more peculiar Charge, and Ob-

jects of his Pity. The good Wishes, the Prayers, and the Blessing of the Poor, we allow to be regarded of God, and their Intercession to be powerful with him; if God then favourably hears their Prayers and Petitions for Rewards and Blessings upon their Friends and Benefactors, we may be assured he will not be less disposed to hear their Complaints for Vengeance, on such as deride, reject, or oppress them, and that their Curses will be fatal to the Hard-hearted.

Ver. 7. *Get thyself the Love of the Congregation, and bow thy Head to a great Man.*] i. e. Be courteous and affable to the poor and meaner Sort: And thus the *Vulgate*, *Congregationi pauperum affabilem te facito*; and so the *Oriental Versions*, *Concilia tibi amorem turbæ, & principibus urbis adhibe reverentiam.* Study to be popular, complaisant, and agreeable to the common People, and dutiful and submissive to the Prince or Magistrate, and such as are above thee. According to *Dru-sius*, the Sense is, Endeavour to get the good Opinion of the whole Sanhedrim, and shew a more particular Respect and Regard *μεγαλῶν*, to the President of it.

Ver. 9. *Be not faint hearted, when thou sittest in Judgment.*] If thou art in a public Post, as a Judge or Magistrate, hear willingly the Complaints of the Poor, suffer his Defence, weigh his Reasons, render Justice impartially, and neither through fear of Disobliging, or hope of Advantage, be prevailed upon to condemn the Innocent, or absolve the Guilty. It was one Part of *Jethro's* Character of a good Magistrate, *Exod. xviii. 21.* that he should be a Man of Courage. Hence some conjecture, that every Step to *Solomon's* Throne of Judgment, is represented as supported by Lyons, *1 Kings x. 20.* to teach Kings and Magistrates, that Courage and Resolution is necessary for all those that sit on the Tribunal of Justice.

Ver. 11. *Wisdom exalteth her Children.*] ἡ σοφία ἡς ἐαυτῆς ἀνύψωσε. See *Prov. iv. 8.* The Fathers who quote this Passage, read and understand it very differently. *Clem. Alex.* has ἐνεψύωσε τὰ ἐαυτῆς τέχνα, *Strom. Lib. 7.* As if his Meaning was, either that of St. Paul, *Knowledge puffeth up*, or rather, that Wisdom inspires noble Sentiments into Men; and *Tertullian*, if in Truth he intends this Passage, renders more strangely, *Sophia jugulavit filios suos*, In *Scorp.* as if the Copy he made Use of, had ἐνεθυσίασε. The *Vulgate* has quite the contrary, *Sapientia filius suis vitum inspirat*, from a Copy which probably had ἐψύχωσεν, i. e. breaths a spiritual Life into them, transforms their Nature into a better and more heavenly, and infuses a Perfection approaching to that of Angels.

*Ibid.* *And layeth hold of them that seek her.*] ἐπιλαμβάνεται, i. e. helpeth, and taketh under her Protection them that seek her. She catcheth hold of them, as *Camerarius* understands the Word, and recovers them as from



from falling, snatching them by the Hand out of Mischief or Danger, as it were out of the Fire. See his *Myrothecium*, p. 304.

Ver. 13. *He that holdeth her fast shall inherit Glory, and wheresoever she entreteth, the Lord will bless.*] See *Prov.* iii. 35. *The Wise shall inherit Glory, but Shame shall be the Promotion of Fools*, where the reading of the *ó* is remarkable, *οἱ δὲ ἀσεβεῖς ὑψώσαν ἀτιμίαν*, the Wicked exalt Disgrace and Shame; whereas Wisdom, or the Practice of Religion, exalts such as walk in her Ways unto Glory and Happiness, and makes them blessed in the Life that now is, and in that which is to come; which I take to be the Meaning of the *Vulgate*, rendering, *Qui tenuerint illam, vitam hereditabunt*. The Observation in the latter part of the Verse, is particularly verified in the History of *Jacob* and *Joseph*, whom God's Blessing went along with, and prospered their Master's Family and Substance for their Sakes; but probably this Writer alludes to God's Blessing the House of *Obed-Edom*, and all that pertained unto him; because of the Ark of the Lord, which continued in his House three Months, *2 Sam.* vi. 11, 12. In like Manner will God bless a Soul, into which Wisdom vouchsafes to enter, and by her Indwelling, prepares a fit Temple for his Reception.

Ver. 14. *They that serve her, shall minister to the Holy One.*] *καὶ λειτουργοῦσιν αὐτῇ*. The Manner of the Expression here seems to confine this to the House, rather than the Person of God, to the *Sanctum Sanctorum*, or Holy of Holies, as it was called, and so the marginal Reading has it. What may seem to confirm this is, that *αὐτῇ* is here used without an Article; as it is likewise, *Psal.* xx. 2. where it means a sacred Place; whereas when God himself is meant or referred to, he is the *ó áγιος*, the Holy One *καὶ ἔξοχόν*, See c. xxiii. 9. But in either Sense, it furnishes a very useful Reflexion, that none should minister to the Holy One in the sacred Office, or execute the ministerial Function, but such as are truly wise, and strictly religious, for such the Lord requires only to serve at his Altar. The *Vulgate* will admit this Sense, *Qui serviunt ei, obsequentes erunt Sancto*; and the Oriental Versions require it, *Ministri ejus sunt sancti ac puri*, Holiness unto the Lord, is their Motto.

Ver. 15. *Whoso giveth Ear unto her, shall judge the Nations.*] See *Wisd.* iii. 8. and the Note on it, where the like Privilege and Authority is said to belong to the Faithful; and *St. Paul* affirms the same of the Saints, *1 Cor.* vi. 2. Or the Sense may be, that such as hearken to Wisdom, are fittest to rule and judge; accordingly the *Syriac* renders, *Qui me audit, judicabit veritatem*. And in fact such have been appointed by God to preside over his People, who have been thus qualified, as *Moses*, *Samuel*, *David*, *Solomon*, &c. and in particular the last, with much Earnestness and Importunity applied to God, at the Beginning of his Reign, for the Gift of

Wisdom, as the most necessary Help to judge the Nations. According to *Calmet* the Sense is, that Wisdom is the Source of true and solid Greatness, and that a wise Man shall not only serve as a Priest, as mentioned in the former Verse, but as a Judge and Prince of the People; he shall at once merit and wear the Honours both of the Pontificate and Regale. Almost all the Editions read, *ó ὑπακύνων αὐτῆς, κρινεῖ ἔθνη, καὶ ὁ προσελθὼν αὐτῇ, κ. τ. λ.* The *Vulgate* which renders, *Qui intuetur illam, permanebit confidens*, probably followed a Copy, which had *προσορῶν*. The true reading seems to be that which is followed by our Version, *ó ὑπακύνων αὐτῆς, κρινεῖ ἔθνη καὶ ὁ προσέχων αὐτῇ καὶ ἀσκηνώσει πεποιθώς*, which is a strong Expression. See c. xiv. 24, 25, 26, 27. where the like Security is promised, and described.

Ver. 16. *If a Man commit himself unto her, he shall inherit her, and his Generation shall hold her in Possession.*] Various are the Readings of this Place, the truest seems to be, *ἐὰν ἐμπιστεύσῃ, κληρονομήσει αὐτήν, καὶ ἐν καταστάσει ἔσονται αἱ γενεαὶ αὐτῆς*. The Sense is, If a Man asks of God Wisdom, with Faith and Trust in him, he will give her to him, and his Posterity. Or if a Man is faithful and sincere in his Enquiry for her, and constant and persevering in his Search after her, he shall find and obtain her, and leave her as an Inheritance to his Posterity; *Sa posterité la possedera*, says *Calmet*; and the Oriental Versions make the Possession to be perpetual, *in omnes mundi Generationes*. *Bossuet* expounds, that a Man's Posterity shall be established by her, *Ipsa ejus soboles consistet firmius*. Some have forced the Words to another Sense, That a faithful Enquirer shall inherit her, and her Fruits, *αἱ γενεαὶ αὐτῆς*, as some Copies have it, or the Advantages which attend upon, and go along with her, shall be in his Possession. But I think though *γεννήματα αὐτῆς* would give this Sense, the present reading will not admit it.

Ver. 17. *For at first she will walk with him by crooked Ways.*] i. e. The Way that leads to Wisdom is rough at first setting out, and has several Difficulties and Turnings to perplex and discourage the Traveller. The ancient Philosophers have well represented this by the Emblem of two Roads; that which leads to Virtue, which is another Word for Wisdom; and Happiness at the End of it, is described at the Entrance as rough and unpleasant; the other, which terminates in a Precipice, or Destruction, and is the Way of Wickedness, is wide beaten, and easy. See *Tab. Ceb.* Our Saviour represents the good and evil Courses of Mankind under the same Image of two Roads, the one strait and difficult, leading to Life, the other opening wide to Ruin and Destruction, *Matt.* vii. 13, 14. If we understand this of Science, *Quintilian's* Observation will hold true, *Liberiora studia incipientibus aspera, progredientibus onerosa, proficientibus jucunda, perficientibus beata*.



Ibid. *She will bring Fear and Dread upon him, and torment him with her Discipline, until she may trust his Soul, and try him by her Laws.*] Wisdom will prove the Disciple that addresses her, before she is familiar with, or communicates herself to him, and particularly at the beginning, or at his first Approach, when he attempts to woo or gain her, she appears distant to him, and will make Trial of his Constancy by Hardships and Sufferings, and the Sincerity of his Love to her by his Readiness to execute her Commands. And thus *Abraham, Jacob, and Moses*, and all the Worthies mentioned *Wisd. c. x.* were proved by Sufferings, for her Sake, and at length saved through Wisdom. The Design of the Author here is to encourage young Candidates at their first setting out; and he compares the Procedure of Wisdom in this particular to a wary Man, proving the Integrity of a new Acquaintance, before he ventures to take him into his Bosom, or make him his Confident,—or to a coy Mistress, who at first scarce admits her Lover into her Company, delights to disappoint, teaze, and cross him, and often seemingly slights him on purpose to try his Temper, and the Sincerity of his Passion, and how much he is ready to do, and undergo for her Sake.

Ver. 19. *But if he go wrong, she will forsake him, and give him over to his own Ruin.*] *παράδωκεν αὐτὸν εἰς χεῖρας πλάνων αὐτοῦ.* Our Translation here does not reach the Spirit of the Greek. To deliver into the Hands of Ruin, is a Hebraism, not much unlike that Phrase in Scripture, *The Hand of Adversity, the Hand of Hell, and of the Grave.* So God is said sometimes to give Men over into the Hands of their own Counsel, which is in Effect giving them, *εἰς χεῖρας πλάνων.* The Author still continues the Metaphor of two Roads, that of Virtue is called the strait, comfortable, and delightful Way; the other crooked, wrong, deceitful, and dangerous.

Ver. 20. *Observe the Opportunity, and beware of Evil.*] *συνιέναι καὶ φοβέσθαι.* Here a new Subject begins. We may understand this, either as a Maxim of Prudence only, Be careful to do every thing in its proper Time and Seasons; or it may mean in a moral Sense, Observe the Time, *i. e.* be apprized of the Badness of the Times, and the Wickedness of the Age, that you be not led away by evil Examples, or sinful Customs; like that of *St. Paul, See that ye walk circumspectly, because the Days are evil.* This Sense seems confirmed by the Context; and because when the Times are bad, and Vice fashionable, there is Danger through a false Modesty, which often hinders Men from doing what a good Conscience requires of them, for fear of disobliging, or being thought singular; it therefore follows very properly, *Be not ashamed, when it concerneth thy Soul.*

Ibid. *Be not ashamed, when it concerneth thy Soul.*...] The *Vulg.* adds, *dicere verum*, not

improperly. If by *ψυχὴ* we understand Life, the Sense may be, Be not afraid to speak the Truth even at the Hazard of Life, See *γ' 28.* *Grotius* expounds it, Do not affect an Indifference or Unconcern for Life, or brave Death rashly; but when thy Life is in danger, use thy own and Friends Interest to preserve it; but this seems harsh and forced. If *ψυχὴ* be taken strictly, to mean the Soul, as our Translators rightly understand it, the Meaning then is, that we must not at any time be ashamed of what is right, nor omit any Duty through a faulty Modesty, whereby our Conscience may be offended, and our Salvation endangered. We must not only be ready to confess and bear Testimony to the Truth ourselves, but also dare to reprove any Falsehood or Vice in others. *St. Chrysostom* accordingly applies it to admonishing an offending Brother. *Hom. xlvii. in S. Julian.* There is also another Instance of faulty Shame, wherein our Souls are immediately concerned, which is, when we are ashamed, and loth to examine our own Consciences, to accuse and condemn ourselves, to confess and bewail our Sins, and to entreat for the Pardon of them.

Ver. 21. *There is a Shame that bringeth Sin, and there is a Shame which is Glory and Grace.*] As he that should die of Hunger through a foolish Shame of asking for necessary Food, would be justly thought guilty of his own Death, so he that complies with evil Company, or sinful Customs, out of a vicious Modesty of offending, or contradicting others, who, when Sinners entice him, sheepishly complies even against his own Sentiments and Conscience, or, to please them, owns and adopts Vices he has never been guilty of, such a criminal Compliance in a Man is a Sin against his own Soul. There is also a Shame which bringeth Sin, when a Man is laughed out of his Modesty, when he is discouraged from doing any good Action, or going on in the way of Godliness, through others Raillery or profane Jokes, which a Soul steadily fixed, is resolute enough to despise and withstand. Thus *David, The Proud have had me exceedingly in Derision*, yet have I not shrunked from thy Law, *Psal. cxix.* This was the great Commendation of *Noah*, that he went on in building the Ark, and doing what God had appointed him, notwithstanding the Sneers of an Infidel Multitude about him, See *St. Chrysostom, in Cap. vi. Gen. Hom. xxiii.* who produces this Example to illustrate the Passage before us. An Instance of a commendable Shame, and which brings Credit and Glory to a Man is, when he blushes to do any base or unworthy Action, when he is ashamed of a past mispent Life, and shews by his great Penitence and Contrition, that he is determined not to offend in the like Instances for the future; and thus *St. Bernard* comments upon this Place. Our Author resumes this Subject, *c. xli. and xlii.* and gives Instances himself, when Shame is faulty or commendable. See *Prov. xxvi. 11.* where



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where there is the like Division, and the Words in the  $\phi$ , are exactly the same as here,  $\epsilon\sigma\iota\nu\ \alpha\iota\chi\upsilon\nu\eta\ \epsilon\pi\alpha\gamma\mu\sigma\alpha\ \alpha\mu\alpha\rho\tau\iota\alpha\nu\ \kappa\alpha\iota\ \epsilon\sigma\iota\nu\ \alpha\iota\chi\upsilon\nu\eta\ \delta\acute{o}\xi\alpha\ \kappa\alpha\iota\ \chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$ .

Ver. 22. *Accept no Person against thy Soul.*] Those that understand  $\psi\upsilon\chi\eta$  of Life, make the Meaning to be, when it concerns your Life, Reputation, or true Interest, defend yourself against all Opposers, without respect of Persons. But the Sense seems rather to be, Pay no Man so great a Compliment as to commit a Sin to please him; nor let any Man persuade thee, or his Authority induce thee, to do any thing against thy Duty and Conscience; but should even a Friend solicit thee to an infamous and wicked Action, to engage in a bad Cause, to bear a false Testimony, to lie in wait for the Innocent, &c. prefer the great Virtues of Truth and Justice, and a Regard for your own Character, before every other Consideration.

Ver. 23. *Refrain not to speak when there is Occasion to do Good.*] i. e. When you have an Opportunity of doing Good, either to Religion if it is attacked, or to thy injured Neighbour, or if thou hast Hopes to reclaim the Guilty. St. Chrysostom extends this brotherly Reproof to all that are inconsiderate or faulty in ones Family, or Neighbourhood; he expresses himself very strongly,  $\kappa\alpha\iota\ \tau\eta\nu\ \gamma\upsilon\ \nu\alpha\iota\kappa\alpha\ \delta\iota\sigma\theta\eta\kappa\epsilon\nu\ \kappa\alpha\iota\ \tau\acute{\omicron}\varsigma\ \omicron\iota\kappa\acute{\epsilon}\tau\alpha\varsigma\ \kappa\alpha\iota\ \tau\acute{\omicron}\varsigma\ \gamma\epsilon\iota\tau\omicron\nu\alpha\varsigma\ \kappa\alpha\iota\ \tau\acute{\omicron}\ \phi\iota\lambda\omicron\nu\ \kappa\alpha\iota\ \tau\acute{\omicron}\ \epsilon\chi\theta\epsilon\rho\acute{\omicron}\nu\ \alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\nu$  in c. ix. Gen. Hom. 29. And in another Place, his Concern for a lapsed Brother, and his Warmth to reclaim him are truly noble,  $\alpha\delta\epsilon\lambda\phi\acute{\omicron}\nu\ \epsilon\iota\pi\epsilon\ \beta\acute{\alpha}\lambda\omicron\mu\alpha\iota\ \sigma\acute{\omega}\sigma\alpha\iota\ \kappa\alpha\iota\ \tau\omicron\ \lambda\omicron$ . *Dic saluum volo facere fratrem, pereuntem animam cerno, neque cognatione junctos possum contemnere; reprehendat qui velit, accuset qui velit; imo vero nemo reprehendet, omnes laudabunt, quod apud nos tanta sit vis Charitatis.* Hom. xlvii. in Julian. We are also obliged to break Silence, when we may save an innocent Man's Life or Property by speaking seasonably, and when it may do Service,  $\epsilon\nu\ \kappa\alpha\iota\rho\omega\ \sigma\omega\tau\eta\rho\epsilon\iota\alpha\varsigma$ ; though the Versions render this, *in tempore salutis*, yet undoubtedly tis a Hebraism, and should be rendered, *in tempore salubri*, i. e. on a proper and fit Occasion, the Perfection of Speech being in the well timing of it. *A Word spoken in Season, how good is it?* as Solomon observes.

Ibid. *And hide not thy Wisdom in her Beauty.*]  $\mu\eta\ \kappa\epsilon\upsilon\phi\eta\varsigma\ \tau\iota\omega\ \sigma\omicron\phi\iota\alpha\nu\ \sigma\acute{\alpha}\ \epsilon\iota\varsigma\ \kappa\alpha\lambda\lambda\omicron\nu\eta\nu$ . This whole Sentence is wanting in the Roman Edit. and Alex. MS. Syr. and Arab. omit the Words,  $\epsilon\iota\varsigma\ \kappa\alpha\lambda\lambda\omicron\nu\eta\nu$  only, which make the Difficulty. The Vulgate turns them to an easy Sense, *Nec abscondas sapientiam tuam in decore suo*, i. e. Hide not the Beauty of thy Wisdom, when it ought to be displayed, and may do Service. Grotius takes it in the same Sense, but supposes an Ellipsis here. Possibly the true reading of the Greek may be,  $\mu\eta\ \kappa\epsilon\upsilon\phi\eta\varsigma\ \tau\iota\omega\ \sigma\omicron\phi\iota\alpha\nu\ \sigma\acute{\alpha}\ \omega\varsigma\ \kappa\alpha\lambda\lambda\omicron\nu\eta\nu$ , i. e. Hide not thy Wisdom as Beauty, which is carefully guarded from the Sun and Weather. The Author may be supposed here to attack

another Sort of false Modesty, which hinders a Man from exerting the Skill and Learning he is possessed of, even upon Occasions when it is really wanted, and will be useful to others, and for his own Reputation and Honour to display; for though Ostentation should be avoided, yet the good of the Church or State, a Regard for Truth, ones own Preservation, or the Defence of injured Innocence, are always Reasons sufficient, to engage even the most reserved and timorous to speak and act.

Ver. 25. *Be abashed of the Error of thine Ignorance.*] i. e. Ingenuously own those Mistakes and Falshoods, and even Sins, for so the Oriental Versions extend it, which thy Ignorance, Prejudice, or Passions, have led thee into, and do not obstinately defend them, or encrease their Guilt through any Lie or Equivocation. A pertinacious maintaining of an Error is the Effect of an immoderate Self-Esteem, as well as a Token of Ignorance, and is attended with this bad Consequence, that it disqualifies Men from the Means, and even the very Endeavours of Improvement. 'Tis a wise Observation of Cicero, *Multi ad scientiam pervenissent, nisi se jam pervenisse credidissent*. To own a Mistake, and Failing, either in Matter of Science or Morality, is the Way to amend; and it will ever be remembered to the Honour of St. Austin, that he ingenuously acknowledges his Errors in many Points of Doctrine and Practice, in his Books of *Retractions* and *Confessions*.

Ver. 25. *Be not ashamed to confess thy Sins; and force not the Course of the River.*] The Sense of this whole Verse, as it stands in the present Greek Copies, seems to be, When your Conscience is pricked with a Sense of your Sins, and would vent and ease itself by a Confession of them, do not, through a faulty Shame, suppress them, nor offer Violence to it by stifling its Motions, and turning it out of its good Course. According to Grotius the Meaning is, Acknowledge your Sins when you are admonished of them, and do not offer to justify or defend wicked Actions, which it would be fruitless in you to attempt. *Force not the Course of the River*, probably is only a Proverb for a vain Endeavour. The Syr. and Arab. wholly omit this Sentence, and instead of it render, Contend not with a Fool, which perhaps may be a Paraphrase of the Proverb, Strive not against the Stream, for the one Attempt is as fruitless as the other, according to that of Solomon, *If a wise Man contend with a Fool, whether he rage, or laugh, there is no Rest*. The Vulgate puts this Sentence at the End of the next Verse, where indeed it would be better placed, *Noli resistere contra faciem potentis, nec coneris contra iectum fluvii*, which Sentences are well connected; for a Man has little Prospect of Success, who contends with one very powerful. And thus all the ancient Versions expound,  $\mu\eta\ \lambda\acute{\alpha}\beta\eta\varsigma\ \pi\rho\acute{o}\sigma\omega\pi\omicron\nu\ \delta\upsilon\nu\acute{\alpha}\tau\epsilon\varsigma$ . St. Jerom's Bible changes the Comparison, and renders, *No*



coneris contra illum fulminis, which places the Folly of engaging with a mighty Man in a much stronger Light. St. Austin reads in like Manner, *in speculo*. 'Tis the Way to draw upon ourselves some Mischief, which is no Instance of Wisdom. *Frustra niti, & nihil aliud laborando, quam odium querere, extreme est dementia*. Sallust.

Ver. 28. *Strive for the Truth unto Death, and the Lord shall fight for thee.* Daniel, the Maccabees, and the Saints, Martyrs, and Confessors under their several Trials, are laudable Instances of adhering firmly and resolutely to the Truth. Calmet observes, that the Author adds this by way of Restriction of the former Sentence, lest the Power and Authority of the Mighty should induce or force us to any sinful Compliance against our Conscience; for there are certain Cases, in which we ought with a becoming Temper and Deference to oppose them, as when they openly attack Religion, or break in upon Justice, or Truth; for this Precept may without Violence be extended so far, as to mean the being zealous for the Lord of Hosts, not seeing or hearing with Patience, much less with Approbation, his Honour or Ordinances exposed or ridiculed; the shewing a proper Dislike and Resentment upon such an Occasion, even beyond any Insult, that may be offered to ourselves. St. Chrysostom reasons finely upon this Subject, *τα μὲν εἰς ἡμᾶς ἀμαρτήματα ἀπεγνέμεναι, κ. τ. λ. Si quid in nos peccatum fuerit, remittamus; quando autem ad Deum pertingit, tunc penas exigamus*. And then he piously laments, *Sed nescio qui sit, ut peccata quæ ad Deum pertingunt, prorsus inulta esse sinimus; si quis autem parum quid in nos peccaverit, ejus graves sumus uliores*. In cap. viii. Gen. Hom. xxvi.

Ver. 30. *Be not as a Lion in thy House, nor frantic among thy Servants.* *ὁ φαντασισαύων ἐν τοῖς οἰκέταις αὐτοῦ*; i. e. be not imperious or tyrannical towards thy Servants, or Inferiors, nor affect to appear terrible to them; avoid flying out into intemperate Sallies of Anger, beating, or threatening them even upon slight Occasions, *Ne scutica dignum horribili sectere flagello*. A learned Critic understands *φαντασισαύων ἐν οἰκέταις*, of one that prideth himself in a numerous and magnificent Train of Servants; and this he thinks suits best with the foregoing Sentence, *Be not as a Lion in thy House*; the Pride of the Lion, and his stately Gait, being as observable, as his Terribleness. Grotius prefers *φαντασισαύων*, which he explains of a Master, who is jealous and suspicious of his Servants, and takes and resents Things which exist only in Imagination, as if they were real Facts and Grievances. The Vulgate and Oriental Versions understand it in the Sense of our Translators; the Arab. in particular, is very full and strong, *Ne sis morosus, clamorifer domus tue; tetricus, asper in operibus tuis*. The Port-Royal Comment applies this Advice, not only to Masters of Families, but spiritual Governors, who are hence warned

to govern those who are under their Charge, with a Spirit of Love and Meekness, as being Part of God's Family, and of the Household of Faith.

Ver. 31. *Let not thine Hand be stretched out to receive, and shut when thou shouldst repay.* Or as the Margin has it, *When thou shouldst give; and thus St. Cyril expounds, quoting this Passage, ἵνα μὴ εἰς τὸ ἐργάζεσθαι*. Be not fonder of receiving Gifts, which betrays an avaritious Temper, than of giving to others from a Motive of Generosity and Charity, as it is more blessed to give than to receive. The former lays a Man under fresh Obligations, the latter procures him new Friends. Or, according to the Port Royal Comment, Let not your Hand be always open towards God, always ready to receive from him such Favours and Graces as you have need of, and shut, or backward to return to him any Proof of your Acknowledgment and Thankfulness for Mercies already conferred upon you.

## CHAP. V.

Ver. 2. **FOLLOW** not thine own Mind, and thy Strength to walk in the Ways of thy Heart, and say not, *Who shall controul me for my Works? for the Lord will surely avenge thy Pride.* As in the first Verse an immoderate Trust in Riches, especially in such as are unjustly gotten, is condemned; in which Sense the Vulgate takes it, because Riches especially so procured, are uncertain in their Continuance, not having God's Blessing attending them, see Luke xii. 19. James i. 11. So here Pride, and an imagined Self-sufficiency upon account of them; the pretending to an Independance, and a Reliance upon our own Power, are forbidden, as dangerous and displeasing to God. Imitate not, says this wise Writer, the wicked Boasters, nor the Tongue which speaketh proud Things; nor yet the haughty Pharaoh, in saying, *Who is the Lord that I should obey his Voice?* For the Lord will punish such Presumption, as he revenged the Pride of that Prince by a signal Overthrow. Neither exalt thyself upon the Greatness of your good Fortune, or the Success of your Enterprizes; but remember who gave thee the Power to get Wealth, Honour, or Victory. Sennacherib boasted, that he had subdued all the Nations and their Gods, but the true God shewed him his Weakness by the prodigious Slaughter of his Army, Isa. xxxvi. 37. The like may be observed of Nebuchadnezzar, *For the Kingdom departed from him, because he set himself up for a God, and prided himself in the Strength of his Works*, Dan. iv. 31.

Ver. 4. *Say not I have sinned, and what Harm hath happened unto me? for the Lord is long-suffering, he will in no wise let thee go.* This is not justly translated, for the long-suffering of God seems rather a Reason to encourage the Sinner's Hopes of an Escape, rather than to imply any Certainty of his Punishment:



nishment; it rather means, and should be rendred, Though the Lord is long suffering, he will not absolutely spare and acquit thee, but will punish thee at last. The *Tigurin* Version gives the full Sense, *Dominus patiens quidem est, sed impune te non dimittet*, and the *Vulgate*, though more concisely, by *Patiens redditor*. We have an Instance of the like Inaccuracy, *Wisd.* i. 6. See Note on that Place. Many Copies omit the last Clause, *He will in no wise let thee go*, as the *Roman*, *Alexandr.* and *Drusius* in his Edition. And if we omit this Clause, the whole may then be considered as a Continuation of the Sinner's Plea, and as a farther Motive for going on still in his Wickedness; and so the *Syriac* and *Arabic* represent it; for the two principal Things which encourage Men in Sin, are a Delay of God's Vengeance, and a fond Presumption upon his Long-suffering and Mercy. Supported with such broken Reeds, wicked Men flatter themselves, and say, What Ground or Reason is there for the threatening of Preachers against such and such Actions? God is not so hasty as they would make him, nor yet so ready to strike as they represent him. I have hitherto found him favourable, I have escaped unpunished, though I have delighted in Wickedness, and practised all Uncleanness with Greediness. But take Heed, says the wise Man, of such false Reasonings and Conclusions; God's Forbearance is no sufficient Reason to overlook his Justice, he often spareth a wicked Person, or Nation, not because he will not smite, but because he meditates a sorer Payment, and a more dreadful Vengeance. He suspends his Judgments till the Wickedness of the *Amorites* is full, and when Iniquity is at the Height, he unbare his Arm, and destroys them at once in his Justice. St. *Chrysostom* finely exposes this kind of false Reasoning, *εἰ δὲ λέγεις, οἶδα μὲν ὅτι ἄξιός εἰμι πολάσις, κ. τ. λ. Si dicas scire quidem te quod pœna sis dignus, interim tamen quod non statim in te animadvertatur, nihil pendas; timere potius, & tremere te ob hoc oportet. Quod enim nondum dederis pœnas, id non tibi accidit ut nullas, sed ut graviores luas pœnas.* *Homil. de Peccat. & Confess.*

Ver. 5. Concerning Propitiation, be not without Fear to add Sin to Sin. *πειρὶ ἐξίλασμι μὴ ἀφοβῶ γίνε.* Do not presume too much upon Pardon, and thereby be induced to sin the more frequently, in Expectation of it, which seems the Sense of the *Arab.* Version, *De venia ne presumas, ne adaugeas peccata tua*; or, Do not go on in a Course of Wickedness, because thou hast hitherto escaped through the Mercy of God; which the *Syr.* seems to favour, *Super data venia ne confidas, ne peccata peccatis accumules*; or, as a learned Prelate explains it, After Forgiveness be not bold or confident to sin afresh; like that Precept in the Gospel, *Behold thou art made whole, sin no more, lest a worse Thing come unto thee.* Bishop Taylor's *Un. Necess.* The wise Man does not here discountenance a well-grounded Assurance of Par-

don, which Religion even encourages us to hope for and expect, and has appointed Sacraments, and other means of Reconciliation, and bids Men rely upon God's Promises; Grace, and Mercy, for their Acceptance; he only condemns an over Security, a criminal Excess in our Confidence, which may betray us into Presumption. Lastly, if *πειρὶ ἐξίλασμι* be understood of the Act by which God is appeased, viz. the Offering, the Expiation, by whatever Means it is made, as *ἐξίλασμι*, *ἐξίλασμα*, and *ἐξίλασις*, are generally, I believe taken; then *ἀμαρτία* which follows, may signify, a Sin-Offering. See *Lev.* iv. 21. *Rom.* viii. 3. and so the original Word in the *Hebrew*, and *Piaculum* in *Latin*, signify both the Crime and Expiation of it. But the Sense either way comes to the same Thing: A Caution to be fearful of provoking God by many Sin-Offerings, or Propitiations for Sin, means no more, than to be afraid of provoking him by repeating the Acts of Sin. Some Copies read, *πειρὶ ἐξίλασμι μὴ ἀφοβῶ γίνε ἐν πλεονασμῷ προσηναι ἀμαρτίας ἐφ' ἀμαρτίας.* *De propitiatione ne esto securus in abundantia, ad addendum peccata super peccata.* The Meaning of which additional Phrase either is, that we should not be too confident, or so abundantly secure, *ἐν πλεονασμῷ ἀφοβος*, that our Sins shall be forgiven, as to take a Handle from thence to commit them with the greater Liberty. Or the Sense may be, That we ought not to be so secure, or trust *ἐν πλεονασμῷ*, in Abundance, or Riches, as to imagine, that by them we shall have our Sins redeemed, and taken away; and so under the Notion of being able to purchase Forgiveness, be tempted to sin the more freely. If *πλεονασμός* may be taken in this last Sense, as some Commentators, and *Latin* Versions take it; this Passage, which the *Romanists* have abused to their Purpose of Indulgencies, will be found to conclude directly against that Doctrine.

Ver. 8. Set not thine Heart upon Goods unjustly gotten, for they shall not profit thee in the Day of Calamity. *μὴ ἔπρεχε ἐπὶ χερίμασιν ἀδικαίς.* Almost all the Editions have *ἐδὲν ὠφελήσει*, but the Reading followed by our Translators, *ἐδὲν ὠφελήσει σε*, seems preferable. *Solomon* confirms the Truth of the Observation, when he says, *Treasures of Wickedness profit nothing*, *Prov.* x. 2. When the Author here asserts, that Riches unjustly gotten, will profit nothing in the Day of Calamity, he either means, that they will neither prevent nor alleviate any Illness; or that they will be of no Service to a Man at the Time of his Death, because he must then quit all his large Possessions, nor will the sovereign Judge have any Regard to, or Consideration of the Power, Dignity, or Estate, of such Offenders, as have enriched themselves by repeated Acts of Injustice; but naked shall they descend unto the Grave, and naked shall they rise from thence, to appear at the great Tribunal: According to that of the *Psalmist*, *Be not thou afraid, though one*



be made rich, or if the Glory of his House be increased, for he shall carry nothing away with him when he dieth, neither shall his Pomp follow him, Psal. xlix. 16, 17. Or else the Meaning may be, that Riches gotten by Deceit, shall add to Man's Torment, and be the Fuel to increase it, which is finely exemplified in the Parable of the rich Man, Luke xvi. 19. But may we not understand χρηματα ἀδίκᾳ in the Sense of the Mammon of Unrighteousness, Μαμωνᾶ τῆς ἀδικίας, Luke xvi. 9. so called by our blessed Saviour; not only because Riches are often the Effect of Fraud, and the Fruits of Unrighteousness, but because they often lead Men into Sin, by filling their Owners with Pride, and put them upon doing some violent or unjust Action; or they may be so called on account of their Deceitfulness, in Contradistinction to spiritual good Things which are true, and more durable. See August. in Psal. xlviii. or because they are more generally the Portion of the Wicked; or lastly, because Men are apt to set too immoderate a Value on them, and sacrifice to them as their God: The Psalmist has expressed all, or most of these Senses, Psal. lxi. 10. O Trust not in Wrong and Robbery, give not yourselves unto Vanity, if Riches increase set not your Heart upon them.

Ver. 9. *Winnow not with every Wind.*] This is a proverbial Expression, *Plautus* has one very like it, *Ubi ventus est, velum verte.* The Advice seems nearly the same with that of *Ephes. iv. 14.* Not to be tossed to and fro, and carried about with every Wind of Doctrine; see also *Heb. xiii. 9.* *Plutarch* expresses himself in like manner, μη παντὶ λόγῳ πλάγιον, ὥσπερ πνεύματι, παραδίδες ἐαυτόν. *Calmet* understands this of one, who is inconstant in his Sentiments, and wavering in his Conduct, who judges not for himself, but is apt to receive all Impressions. One who is so complaisant, as to say and do every Thing to ingratiate himself; and, as *Theophrastus* describes such Sort of Men, will, if a Dispute arise, espouse both Sides, to give no Offence, *Ηθικ. Χαρ. περὶ ἀγένης.* Whereas a prudent and wise Man will seriously and impartially weigh on which Side the Truth lies, and continue stedfastly and firmly attached to it; and not imitate those double Dealers, who having no steddy Principles of their own, are just what other People would have them. According to that of the Poet, *Negat quis? nego. Ait quis? aio.* Ter.

Ibid. *Go not into every Way.*] Truth is uniform, and but one; to fall in with every Opinion is the way to miss of it. *Seneca* has a Thought like this, *Qui quò destinavit, pervenire vult, unam sequi viam, non per multas vagari debet. Non ire istud, sed errare est.*

Ver. 10. *Be stedfast in thy Understanding.*] i. e. Search narrowly into the Truth, and resolutely maintain what thou knowest to be true; and to avoid the Inconvenience of winnowing with every Wind, and changing your Opinion upon almost every Occasion, have a well informed Judgment, and a Stedfastness

and Constancy of Mind, to act according to it. A Man of this Character will not be too easy or credulous; but when any new Opinion or Doctrine offers itself, or is proposed by others, will strictly examine the Grounds thereof, and if upon a due and serious weighing of it, he finds Reason to approve it, as a solid Truth, will gladly acquiesce in it, and not be soon shaken in Mind. There is a Passage in *Seneca*, much to the same Purpose, *Cogitationes vagas, ac veluti somno similes, non recipies, quibus si animus tuus se oblectaverit, tristis remanebis. Sed cogitatio tua stabilis & certa sit. . . Sermo quoque tuus not sit inanis.* The *Vulgate* renders, *Esto firmitus in via Domini*, following perhaps a Copy which read, ἱσθὶ ἐν ὁδῷ κυρίου, or συνέσει Θεῷ, a Corruption I presume of εἰ. But the Sense however of it is good, and the Advice useful.

Ibid. *And let thy Word be the same.*] εἰς ἓν εἶδος λέγῃς, let thy Word be one, i. e. Let thy Speech or Discourse be of a Piece, consistent with itself, according to *Grotius*; or let thy Words be according to the inward Sentiment of thy Mind, and alter not out of Fear or Affection. According to *Calmet*, the Sense is, Let thy Sentiments continue the same, and do not shuffle or equivocate in thy Words or Actions, that Men may know how to depend upon thee, and have, or continue an Esteem and Regard for you, for there is no Safety or Dependence upon a double Tongue, & 9.

Ver. 11. *Be swift to hear.*] This is agreeable to the Apostle's Advice, *Be swift to hear, slow to speak*, *Jam. i. 19.* i. e. Be swift to hear, not every Sort of Communication, but such as is profitable to the Use of edifying, *Ephes. iv. 29.* Accordingly *Junius* renders, *Esto celer ad bene audiendum*; and *St. Jerom's* Bible more strongly and explicitly, *Esto mansuetus ad audiendam verbum Dei, ut intelligas*, to which agrees the *Geneva* Version. The Sentence that follows, viz. let thy Life be sincere, i. e. without Artifice or Hypocrisy, is scarce in any of the Greek Copies; 'tis omitted also in the *Vulgate* and *Oriental* Versions. The *Complut.* indeed has it, from whence our Translators, and *Dr. Grabe* took it; but it seems improperly placed here, for it disturbs the Sense, and spoils the Connection.

Ibid. *With Patience give Answer.*] *St. James* expresses the same by *ἑαδὲς εἰς τὸ λαλῆσαι*, i. 19. See also *Prov. xxix. 20.* in the *LXX* Version. It is a Sign of great Weakness for a Man to answer hastily and unadvisedly, and without having any Regard to Time, Place, or Persons, or perhaps even Truth itself. Some Greek Copies therefore very properly read, *ὀδύσῃ ἀνάνησιν ἀπερνῇ*, i. e. give a true and right Answer. The *Vulgate* is very full, *Cum sapientia proferas responsum verum.*

Ver. 12. *If thou hast Understanding, answer thy Neighbour; if not, lay thine Hand upon thy Mouth.*] *Digito compesce labellum;*



as the *Latin* Phrase is. *Isocrates* has a Maxim very like this, δύο ποιῶν καὶ εἰς τὴν λέγειν ἢ περὶ ὧν οἶδα σαφῶς, ἢ περὶ ὧν ἀναγκαῖον εἰπεῖν, ἐν δὲ τοῖς ἄλλοις ἀμεινον σιγᾶν, ἢ λέγειν, i. e. Observe two Rules with respect to Speech, to speak only of such Things as thou understandest, or of such as you are under a Necessity to speak to; in all other Cases 'tis better to be silent; which is intimated by the Phrase of laying the Hand upon the Mouth. There is the like Expression, *Job* xxi. 5. xxix.

9. Accordingly among the *Egyptians*, *Harporates* the God of Silence, is pictured with his Finger on his Mouth, to recommend σιγὴ Ἐκαιρος, a well timed Silence, or the true Government of the Tongue. The *Vulgate* inserts a Reason for such a Caution in Speech, *Ne capiaris in verbo indisciplinato, & confundaris.*

Ver. 13. *Honour and Shame is in Talk.*] *Solomon* has more fully expressed this, when he says, *Life and Death are in the Power of the Tongue*, *Prov.* xviii. 21. Nothing is more serviceable, and at the same Time more mischievous, than the Tongue; it advances Men to Honour, or exposes them to Shame, according to the good or ill Use that Men make of the Blessing of Speech. It is the Seat of Persuasion in some, and a World of Iniquity in others; it shines in, and recommends the Orator, eloquent in a good Cause, and disgraces the Libertine labouring in a bad one. When employed to bless and praise God, it is the best Member we have; when abused to blaspheme its Maker, and curse Men, it is set on Fire of Hell, and will sink Men into it. It is therefore of the last Importance to know how to govern the Tongue, for without a discreet Conduct of it, a Man can neither be useful in social Life, nor esteemed religious before God.

*Ibid.* *The Tongue of Man is his Fall.*] This is rather too laxly expressed; the *Vulgate* very properly adds, *lingua imprudentis subversio est ipsius.* *Euripides* has a Sentiment very like this, ἀχαλίνων σωμαίων τὸ τέλαρον δυσυχία.

Ver. 14. *Be not called a Whisperer, and lie not in wait with thy Tongue.*] Whispering, is the speaking ill of our Neighbour privately, and doing him an ill Turn by a secret and fly Insinuation to his Prejudice. This Sort of Slander is a poison'd Arrow that flieth in the dark, that wounds covertly, when a Man is not aware of it, and is very properly called by this Writer, lying in wait with the Tongue. Καλαλασία and ὕβρις, backbiting and railing, differ from this Vice only in Degree. *Solomon* has admirably described the Character of the Whisperer, *Prov.* xxvi. 20, 22. *Where no Wood is, there the Fire goeth out, so where there is no Talebearer, [in the Heb. Whisperer,] Strife ceaseth.* — *The Words of a Talebearer are as Wounds, and go down into the innermost Parts of the Belly.* Such insidious Persons are with Reason compared to the Serpent, which bites without giving any Warning; one feels the

Sting without knowing from what Quarter the Mischief came. *Solomon* uses this Comparison, *Ecclesiast.* x. 11. *Surely the Serpent will bite without Enchantment, and a Babler is no better,* according to our Translation; but the *Hebrew* Words truly rendred, are much closer to the Purpose; A Serpent will bite without any Warning, *Vulg.* *in silentio*, without the least Noise or Intimation, and a Babler, *Vulg.* *qui occulte detrahit*, is no better.

*Ibid.* *For a foul Shame is upon the Thief, and an evil Condemnation upon the double Tongue.*...] The *Vulgate* renders, *Denotatio pessima super bilinguem*, and *Junius*, *Bilingui pessima condemnatio*, as if it were worse to be a Whisperer than a Thief. And indeed there is some Reason to think so; for the Thief or Cheat aims only at Money, and is generally so scandalous and notorious, that one may either avoid him, or by chance take him; but the base and secret Whisperer one cannot possibly guard against, nor even know who, or where he is. The Thief too is often forced upon Robbery, and stealing through Want and Necessity, and in such a Case can plead a Sort of an Excuse, *Prov.* vi. 30. but the Whisperer does as great, if not a greater Injury to his Neighbour, without any Advantage to himself. And whoever considers the great Value which *Solomon* sets upon a good Name, making it preferable even to great Riches, *Prov.* xxii. 1. cannot think the taking away a Man's Property, to be the greater Crime, See *Rom.* i. 29, 30. where Whisperers and Backbiters are ranked amongst the vilest of Persons, and such as are worthy of Death.

Ver. 15. *Be not ignorant of any thing in a great Matter, or small.*] If this be understood strictly, such a Perfection as this is not possible in our weak State, and short Continuance here; the Meaning rather is, Endeavour to get as much Knowledge and Insight into Affairs as you can, whether they be Matters of Speculation, or Practice. The *Vulg.* seems to understand the Words in a judicial Sense, *Justifica pusillum & magnum similiter*, as if the Meaning was, that in any Suit or Controversy, the same fair and impartial Judgment should be pronounced in the Cause of a poor, as well as a much richer, or more powerful Person, according to that Charge of *Moses*, *Deut.* i. 17. There is also another Sense of this Passage, Fall not into any Sins of Ignorance, or Inadvertency, commit not any Sin either great or small, but have such a Guard over yourself, as not to be surprized into them, by any great or little Occasion. And thus the *Syr.* understands it, *Multum, vel parum ne delinquas.* And so ἀγνοεῖν is often used by the Hellenists for *Errare*, *peccare*, *imprudenter agere*, and as equivalent to ἀμαρτάνειν; and so it is often to be understood in the *ó*, see *Numb.* xii. 11, &c. 1 *Esdr.* viii. 77. and by this Writer himself it seems to be so used, c. xxiii. 3. xxviii. 7. The learned *Hooker's* Remark upon this



Passage is, "That we should be diligent Observers of Circumstances, the little Regard whereof is the Nurse of vulgar Folly; and Solomon's great Attention thereto was what made him so eminent above others; for he gave good Heed, and pierced every Thing to the very Bottom, and by that means gained more Knowledge, and became the Author of many Parables." *Eccl. Pol.* p. 189.

## CHAP. VI.

Ver. 1. **I**NSTEAD of a Friend become not an Enemy.] The whole of this Verse has been thought by many to belong to the fifth Chapter, because the Conclusion of that Chapter seems abrupt, consisting only of one Period or Sentence, contrary to the general Method of this Writer. 2. This Chapter, it is observable, begins in the Greek Copies with a Conjunction, *καὶ ἀντὶ φιλίας μὴ γίνῃ ἐχθρὸς*, which implies some Connection with what went before. 3. Some Copies, particularly the Latin ones, do actually so connect them; and according to *Rabanus*, this sixth Chapter does not begin till the 5<sup>th</sup> Verse in the common Editions. Lastly, The Context, according to others, seems to require it, being probably a Continuation of the same Subject: For the Words, *Instead of a Friend, become not an Enemy*, may very well refer to the Sin of Whispering, or Backbiting, which is the more aggravated, as they who are guilty of it, pretend Friendship for another, that they may traduce him more effectually, and under that Mask undermine him more successfully, *καὶ τοὺς διαβολῆς τρόπος*, *κ. τ. λ.* A new way of Accusation, says *Polybius*, to hurt a Man by affecting to praise him, and by sweet Speech to introduce the Poison that is to follow. An artful Device this! that while a Man would pass for a Friend by the Praises he lavishes on another, and the Regard professed for his good Qualities, he may sily insinuate something to his Disadvantage, and by an open Declaration in his Favour, may the more easily be believed when he secretly spreads his Faults, and starts some ill-natured Exception. Like the Man in *Horace*, who was glad to hear of his Friend *Capitolinus*, whom he knew so well, and had received such Favours from; but, to undo all, and cast some Slur upon him, could add by way of an invidious Reflexion,

*Sed tamen admiror, quo pacto iudicium illud Fugerit.*

Ibid. For thereby thou shalt inherit an ill Name, Shame, and Reproach.] Our Version follows a Copy which read, *ὄνομα γὰρ πονηρὸν, αἰσχύνῃ, καὶ ὀνειδῶ κληρονομήσεις*. *Hæschelius* has, *κληρονομῆσαι*, in the third Person, and so the *Vulgate*, *Impetrium & contumeliam malus hereditabit*, understanding by *ὄνομα πονηρὸν*, not an ill Name, but a wicked Person. And so indeed *ὄνομα*

is sometimes used. See *Acts* i. 15. *Rev.* iii. 4. xi. 13. and *the Hebrew Noun*, is taken in like Manner, *Num.* iii. 40, 43. xxvi. 53, 55. and other Places.

Ver. 2. Extol not thyself in the Counsel of thine own Heart, that thy Soul be not torn in Pieces as a Bull [straying alone.] *ἵνα μὴ διασπαρῇ ὡς ταῦρος ἡ ψυχὴ σου*. There are many Difficulties in this Passage: 1. It may be enquired whether *ψυχὴ σου* be rightly rendered *thy Soul*. The *Vulgate* has, *Ne virtus tua elidatur*, to which agrees the *Oriental Versions*; but what follows in the *Syriac*, *Ne quasi Taurus robur tuum querat*, is so flat and inexpressive, that I suspect some mistake in the writing or translating the *Syriac* Word, and possibly the true rendering should be, *Ne quasi Taurus robur tuum quatjat, folia tua excutiat*, &c. 2. It is not altogether certain, that *διασπαρῇ* signifies *to tear in Pieces*, either in the *ὁ*, or apocryphal Books, but rather *to spoil or plunder*, tho' *diripio* signifies both. 3. The Words *straying alone* have nothing in the Greek to answer them in any Edition. And though the Translators sometimes inclose thus [ ] what they found in some particular Copies, yet this, I believe, is in none. It seems to have crept into the Text, through some Mistake, or from a marginal Note, or to be added by the Translators themselves (for they venture on greater Liberties in making Additions in the apocryphal Writings) for Illustration Sake, and to throw some Light upon the Obscurity of the Passage. 4. The Words as now inserted, may be applied differently. I would suppose the Translators rather meant them of the Soul, and its Danger through Conceit, and wandering by itself; for why a Bull should be in more Danger, to be torn in Pieces by straying alone, than amidst the Herd, where a Contest often does arise; or why a Bull should be pitched upon at all, rather than some weaker Animal, to be torn in Pieces, whose Nature is such, especially in its Rage, as to rend, tear, and over-turn all before him, is not so clear. To avoid this Difficulty therefore some have fancifully understood this Passage of Mount *Taurus*, because there happened by good Luck to be a Mountain of that Name; and since Trees, Leaves, and Fruit, are mentioned in the next Verse, they must undoubtedly belong to, and grow upon it. *Drusus's* Conjecture, that the Grandfather might write *ἸΝ*, meaning a Turtle, *ὡς τεύλων*, and the Grandson take it in the *Chaldee* Sense, as equivalent to a Bull, is ingenious enough; and *Psal.* lxxiv. 19. may seem to give some Colour to it; but this Conjecture is countenanced by no MS. printed Edition, or ancient Version. If *ταῦρος* be indeed the true reading, understanding it of the Animal, possibly it may refer to Bulls being torn in Pieces by Lions, which we may presume to have happened often, if not in *Jerusalem*, at least in other Places: A Bull being pitched upon for the Simile, rather than a weaker Creature, as being more likely to trust in his own Strength, which an-



swers to a Man's extolling himself in the Counsel of his own Heart. Upon the whole, I can conceive no good Sense arising from our Version, and yet I apprehend a natural one from the Greek, viz. Lift not up thyself in the Desires or Lusts of thine own Heart, lest thy Soul be distracted, hampered, or pulled contrary ways, like a Bull in Toils. 'Tis a proverbial Saying, and not an uncommon one, that a Man who is governed by his own unruly Passions and Lusts is like a wild Bull in a Net: And to this the Arabic seems to accord, *Libidines animæ tuæ ne sequaris, ne te in miseriam impellant, viresque tuas debilitent, quasi Taurus cui Pabulum ob-jicitur*. Here I suspect a Mistake in that Version, for in what Sense can *Pabulum* stand here; or what Light does it afford to the Comparison? But if the original Word be rendred by *Tragula*, *plaga*, *indago*, or some such Term, then the above Interpretation will be compleat, and the Simile much improved. Nor is *Badwell's* Interpretation of the Mind being hurried away by its own Passions and Desires, like a wild and lustful Bull, to be despised; but there may be some doubt whether *διαπάζω* be so used; at least *Epietetus*, who gives the like Advice, *μη συν-απαζτω σε η φαντασια*, uses a different Preposition. *Grotius* renders the Words of our Author, *Ne forte animus tuus (præfractus & contumax) diripiat te, ut Taurus*; and so the Geneva Version, *Lest thy Soul rend thee as a Bull*. If *διαπάζω* be the true reading here, and has the Authority of some Greek Copy, probably *σε* followed it originally, and was absorbed afterwards in the preceding *ον*, or *σε* being understood here, *ον* might be changed into *γν* to make Sense. Some have thought the Passage before us an Imitation of *Psa. vii. 2*. But if our Author alludes to this, why should it not have been a closer Imitation, and preserved *ως λεων*, instead of substituting *ως ταυρε*? It was scarce worth while, as *Bochart* observes, to allude to that Place, only to pervert the Sense of it. But there may possibly be some help found out to restore the true Reading and Sense. For are not the Words *as a Bull*, at least disjointed, and out of their true Place? The *Vulgate* certainly countenances this Conjecture, and so does *Jerom's Bible*, placing these Words at the End of the first Sentence, *Non te extollas in cogitatione animæ tuæ, velut Taurus*, i. e. Extol not thyself in the Counsel of thine own Heart, as a Bull that is incontrollable, and headstrong. The Simile is very just in this Light, and properly enough applied to a heady, obstinate, and over-bearing Temper; and if other Editions concurred to support it, would at once remove most, if not all the Difficulties. See ch. v. 2, 3. If none of these Solutions be satisfactory, I shall only observe farther, that the whole Sentence which occasions all the Perplexity, is entirely omitted in *Ald.* and the *Basil* Editions.

Ver. 3. *Thou shalt eat up thy Leaves, and lose thy Fruit, and leave thyself as a dry Tree.* *Grotius* contends that the reading here should be in the third Person, *καταφάγεται, ἀπολέσει, &c.* and he is countenanced herein by the Syriac Version. Leaves, are a Figure for the promising Prospect of Success; it is a beautiful Metaphor, taken from the Management of Trees, whose Leaves, if pulled off, either kill or starve the Fruit. See *Hales's Veget. Stat.* p. 323, 4, 5. So the *Psalmist*, *His Leaf shall not wither, and whatsoever he doth, [Heb. putteth forth] it shall prosper*. By losing thy Fruit is meant, Thou shalt defeat thine own Ends, blast thine own Hopes, and fail of the Success thou aimest at. The becoming a dry Tree, which is the next particular, is the natural Consequence of the Loss both of Fruit and Leaves, i. e. thou shalt be good for nothing. A proper Description of the Man, who is ruled and carried away by his own Lusts; or thus, Be not proud of any Excellency, natural, or moral, for by such a Behaviour thou wilt take away from the Merit of what would otherwise recommend thee; thy good Qualities will lose all their Grace, and be no longer an Advantage, or Ornament to thee; for Modesty should both conceal and perfect thy Goodness, as Leaves both shade and meliorate the Fruit. Self-opiniatry is to Merit what the Worm was to *Jonas's* Gourd; it decays and ruins the Root, and thereby destroys what was most beautiful and promising.

Ver. 5. *A fair speaking Tongue will encrease kind Greetings.* *Isocrates* has well expressed this, *τῷ μὲν τρόπῳ γίνε φιλοπροσέστον, κ. τ. λ.* "Be polite in your Manner and Address, and courteous and affable in your Words; it is an Instance of Politeness civilly to salute those one meets with, and of Affability to speak to them in an agreeable and engaging Manner." *Ad Damon*. *Cicero* has the like Observation, *Difficile distu est, quantopere conciliet animos hominum comitas, affabilitasque Sermonis*. De Offic. This may also be applied to Friendship, which the Context warrants; for a Person of a sweet and obliging Temper will always promise most to be a real Friend. There are a thousand Endearments and Compliances in the Exercise of Friendship, that make Good-nature as necessary as rigid Virtue and Honesty. "Strict Virtue in Friendship, says a learned Writer, is like the exact Rules of Mathematicks in musical Compositions, which indeed are necessary to make Harmony true and regular; but then there must be something of Air and Delicacy in it too, to sweeten and recommend it, or else it will be but flat and heavy," *Norris's Theory of Love*, p. 129.

Ver. 6. *Be in Peace with many, nevertheless have but one Counsellor of a Thousand.* i. e. Be kind and courteous to all, but intimate only with a few; there are several Degrees in Friendship. One ought to live upon good



good Terms with all the World, and to endeavour to have all Persons in it, as far as may be our Friends, at least to be careful not to have them our Enemies, according to that of St. Paul, *If it be possible, live peaceably with all Men*, Rom. xii. 18. There are other Friends and Acquaintance who are still nearer to us, with whom we live and converse in a more familiar and free Manner; and yet even among those, there is scarce any, to whom one can safely open and unbosom himself without Reserve, as we cannot be sure of their Prudence, Honour, Integrity, and sincere Attachment to us. It would be Imprudence therefore to disclose and lay open the Secrets and Recesses of our Hearts, before all Sorts of Friends, as all are not fit to be entrusted with Affairs of Consequence and Importance. The Moralists are upon no Subject more copious, than this of Friendship, their Sentiments agree with those of our Author. "Marriage, says the learned Writer above, which is the strictest of Friendships, admits but of one, and inferiour Friendship admits not of many more; for besides that the Tide of Love, by reason of the Contractedness of our Faculties, can't bear very high, when divided among several Channels, 'tis great odds but among many, we be deceived in some, and then we must be put upon the Inconvenience of retracting our Choice, which in nothing is so uncomely and inconvenient as in Friendship." *Ibid.* p. 130. Lucian mentions, that among the Scythians a Number of Friends was as scandalous as a Number of Wives. *In Toxar.* And though this may seem overstraining the Point, yet has it a good Moral, and intimates the Sense of our Author. *Isocrates* too has a pertinent Observation on the Occasion, *ἡδέως μὲν ἔχει πρὸς πάντας, κ. τ. λ.* "Live friendly with, and behave civilly to all; but be intimate with a few of Worth and Merit; by this means you will not have many Enemies, and only valuable Friends." *ad Damon.*

Ver. 7. *If thou wouldst get a Friend prove him first; and be not hasty to credit him.* i. e. Have him for some Time, according to the Oriental Versions, upon Trial. The Margin furnishes another Sense, Get him in the Time of Trouble, *ἐν πειρασμῷ*, and so *Junius* renders, *Si comparaturus es amicum, in afflictione compara eum.* We do not now use the Word *Credit*, in the Sense it is here taken; the Meaning is, Be not hasty to trust him. *Arab.* *ne cito fidas ei*, or to trust thyself to, or with him. And so the *Complut.* reads, *μὴ ταχὺ ἐμπιστεύῃς σιαυλὸν αὐτῷ.* And so the *Syriac*, *Ne temere te concedas illi*; to which agrees *Jerom's Bible*, and that of *Junius*; and so *πιστεύω* is used, *John* ii. 24. *ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἐν ἐπιστεύειν ἑαυτὸν αὐτοῖς.* That Precept of *Solon*, *Φίλος μὴ ταχὺ κλῶ, δεῖ δ' ἂν κλίσῃ, μὴ ἀποδοκίμαζε,* *apud Laert.* is not very unlike this.

Ver. 9. *There is a Friend, who being turned to Enmity and Strife, will discover thy Re-*

*proach.* *ἔστι φίλος μεταλθέμενος εἰς ἐχθρὸν, ἢ μάχην ὀνειδισμὸς οὗ ἀποκαλύψει.* *Μάχη* ὀνειδισμὸς is an unusual Expression, and wants an Authority to confirm it, except it may receive some Countenance from *1 Sam.* xxv. 39. according to the *ο*. But I think *μάχην* joined with *ἐχθρὸν*, as our Translators seem to understand it, a more proper Construction; only it may still be asked by what ὀνειδισμὸς is governed. Probably this is a Mistake. *Hæschelius* from some authentic Copy, as I presume, and not by mere Conjecture, reads *ὀνειδισμὸν οὗ*; and why might not some other ancient Copy formerly have *ὀνειδισμὸς*, for it is used in the Plural, to signify Shame or shameful Things? as *Isai.* xlvii. 3. *Φανήσονται οἱ ὀνειδισμοί σου*, and the *ς* might easily be absorbed in that which follows. The *Vulgate* seems to have read *ὀνειδισμὸς*, rendring, *Convitia denudabit.* The Sense of the Passage is, A quondam Friend changed into an Enemy, will reveal all the Faults which he knows, has heard, or observed, during his Acquaintance; and the more intimate and longer the Friendship has been, the more is the Breach and Rupture to be dreaded, the more Noise will it also make, and the more fierce and implacable will be the Hatred; according to that wise Observation of *Pliny*, *Arctissima necessitudo, si quando contingat dirimi, in summam vertitur similitatem; & ex arctissimis fœderibus, si semel rumpantur, maxima nascuntur dissidia*, L. xxxvii. c. 4. This, and the two following Verses, are wanting in the Oriental Versions.

Ver. 13. *Separate thyself from thine Enemies, and take Heed of thy Friends.* i. e. Avoid suspected or declared Enemies, and be aware of pretended and false Friends, in whom you can place no certain Confidence, such as are described, *γ* 8, 9, 10. Companions only of the Table, Flatterers, and occasional Attendants upon great Fortune or Power, who will discover a Coldness and Indifference, and perhaps openly or secretly do you some ill Turn, when you are reduced to Misfortunes. Count therefore none real Friends, but such as you have proved, and found faithful in Adversity. *Phocylides* describes the *τραπικονόρους κόλακας*, almost in the same Terms, whose Maxims very often agree with those of our Author. King *Antigonus's* Wish or Prayer, as recorded by *Plutarch*, is agreeable to the Advice of this wise Writer, and proceeded from a like Sentiment, "The Gods keep me from pretended Friends, against open and avowed Enemies I can guard and provide myself." *Clemens Alexand.* has the like Observation, *ἐχθρὸν ἀνδρα ῥᾶον φυλάξας, ἢ φίλον.* *Strom.* L. 6.

Ver. 16. *A faithful Friend is the Medicine of Life, and they that fear the Lord shall find him.* Friendship is the very Life and Soul of a Man, as necessary to his Subsistence, and well being, as Medicines are to preserve Health. Nay other Medicines are profitable only to the Sick, and superfluous



to those that are in Health, but Friendship is necessary to both. The *Latins* have well intimated this by terming Friendship, *Necessitudo*, and Friends, *Necessarii*. For all is feeble and tottering without this firm Support; all flat and insipid, till Friendship seasons, and gives a Relish to all Enjoyments. For what Pleasure is there in Life, except one has a Friend to whom he can unbosom himself, on whom he can rely, who will divide his Griefs, and double his Joys? What Felicity is not ungrateful, if we have none to share with us in it, and what Calamity is not lessened by the Sympathy and Condoling of a Friend? See *Ambr. de Offic. L. 3.* but a right and true Friendship, must be founded upon Virtue, and so all the Moralists have determined it.

Ver. 17. *Whoso feareth the Lord shall direct his Friendship aright, for as he is, so shall his Neighbour be.* To be blessed with a sincere and valuable Friend, is a particular Gift of God, a Reward of a Man's Piety and Virtue. Such was *Jonathan* to *David*, which is the most perfect Instance and Pattern of Friendship recorded in Story; the Scripture describes it in the fullest and most sensible Manner, when it says, that the Soul of *Jonathan* was knit with the Soul of *David*, *1 Sam. xviii. 1.* A good Man will direct his Friendship in so wise and useful a manner, as either to choose those that are like himself, or by proper means to make them such, *Amicitia similes invenit, aut facit.* Between good Men, Friendship is, as it were natural; there is a Correspondence of Manners, a like Disposition to do good, which directs them to fix upon each other, and a Friendship so founded, without self-interested Views, cannot but be lasting. *Tully* accordingly observes, that the most excellent and perfect Friendship is that which is formed and subsists in a Society of virtuous and well-disposed Persons; there is the most compleat Union and Harmony arising from such a Resemblance and Similitude of Manners, and the greatest Things are to be expected from a Fraternity of such, whose joint Aim and Endeavour is, to promote the common Good. When Hearts and Affections are so uniformly and commendably joined, each rejoices, and takes as much Pleasure in his Friend, as in himself, and so becomes as it were one with him, *Unus fit ex pluribus*, and thereby compleats *Pythagoras's* Description of Friendship, *Cic. Lib. i. De Offic.*

Ver. 18. *Gather Instruction from thy Youth up, so shalt thou find Wisdom till thine old Age.* The first Impressions, those which are made in the Time of Youth, are of great Force and of long Continuance; they not only help to prevent, or curb the Impetuosity of dangerous Passions, but have an Influence upon the whole Life. This is exactly agreeable to the Adage of *Bias*, *ἐφ' ὅδιον ἀπὸ νεότητος εἰς γῆρας ἀναλαμβάνει σοφίαν*, i. e. furnish yourself with Wisdom, as with a *Viaticum*,

which may continue with you from Youth till old Age, *Ap. Laert. L. i.* Here a new Subject begins, in which the Author, the young Candidate for Wisdom, not to be discouraged at the Hardships, which at first attend the Undertaking, not to complain of the Roughness and Unpleasantness, or Length of the Way, nor despair of at length attaining the desired End, notwithstanding the many Labours and Difficulties that necessarily will occur, but to imitate rather, the faithful and diligent Husbandman, who sows in Hope, and spares no Pains, in Expectation of a future plentiful Harvest. *St. James* uses the same Comparison, and well expresses the Sense of the next Verse, *Behold, the Husbandman waiteth for the precious Fruit of the Earth, and bath long Patience for it, until he receive the early and latter Rain; be ye also patient and establish your Hearts*, ch. v. 7. And so *St. Paul*, *The Husbandman that laboreth first*, *ἐργαζόμενος πρῶτον*, must (afterwards) partake of the Fruits, *2 Tim. ii. 6.* For so I would render the Words, and not, as our Version has it, *The Husbandman that laboreth, must be first Partaker of the Fruits*, which is preposterous and absurd. This is agreeable to the marginal Reading, and *Beza* and *Junius* both confirm it, who have, *Agricolam oportet, prius laborando fructus percipere.*

Ver. 21. *She will lie upon him as a mighty Stone of Trial.* This by the Prophet *Zechariab*, c. xii. 3. is called a burdensome Stone; and *St. Jerom* upon the Place observes, that the Expression is taken from an Exercise kept up in *Palestine* in his Time, where young Men used to make Trial of their Strength by lifting great Stones as high as they could, and adds, that he saw one of these mighty Stones of Trial himself at *Athens*. In this Exercise, if Men attempted to lift a Stone too ponderous for their Strength, they were in danger of its falling upon them, and crushing them to Death. In this Sense some understand, *Matt. xxi. 44.* *On whomsoever this Stone shall fall, it will grind him to Powder.* To this Stone of Tryal, our Author here compares *Wisdom*, which many endeavour at, and have a fancy to be engaged with, but few have Resolution and Constancy enough for it; but after a slight Attempt, and faint Wishes, they give it over presently, *καὶ ἔχουσι ἀποπίπτειν*, as despairing of managing so superior a Weight, and desist from the Trial, to their own Shame or Hurt. To some the very Sight of it is sufficient to deter them, and they go away without making any Attempt at all to exert themselves. Some understand by the Stone of Tryal, a Touchstone, by which the Goodness of Metals is proved and tried. And this the *Vulgate*, the *Geneva*, and *Coverdale's* Version seems to follow. But the first Sense seems preferable.

Ver. 22. *For Wisdom is according to her Name, and she is not manifest unto many.* The original Text of this Work, whether it were *Hebrew* or *Syriac*, not being extant any where



where, one is at a Loss now to know to what particular Word he refers in this Place. Had he given the original Word first, and then the Meaning of it, the Allusion would have been plainer and better understood. 'Tis probable, the Translator derives the Greek Word σοφία from an Eastern Root, and that the Elder Jesus writing in Hebrew, his Translator, who was skilled in that and the Greek Tongue, endeavours to preserve in this Version an Allusion to some Hebrew Word, which signified covered or hid. If there was then in the Hebrew Tongue a Word like σοφία, signifying Wisdom, used also for Secrecy and Concealment, which was its primary Sense, the Name might then metaphorically be translated to Wisdom, for some relation it had to Things hidden and covered. Possibly there was a Syriac, or Chaldee Noun formed מַשְׁכֵּן (whence σοφία) from מִשְׁכָּן Dan. i. 20. *Magus, Sapiens*, which by Aphærellis would be in Greek, σοφός. It is well known that the wise Men in the earlier Ages used to communicate their Knowledge by dark Parables, and figurative Expressions. Hence the Learned have contended, that they were then called *Assaphim*, or Σοφοί, a Name which the Emperors of Persia retain to this very Day, See Bishop Chandler's *Def. of Vindic. of Christ*. p. 61. Vol. I. I cannot agree with those who would derive the later Meaning of σοφία from the Greek, and would have it so called from Ζόφω, caligo, since our Author confessedly wrote in the Jerusalem Tongue, and has elsewhere made the like Allusions to Words, see ch. xliii. 8. xli. 1. The Scripture too has Instances of the same Nature; thus the Name of Elymas, Acts xiii. 8. which in the Hebrew is derived from a Root, which signifies *hidden*; by interpretation is the *hamez* among the Persians, answering to σοφός, or the wise Man among the Greeks. The contrary Character we have likewise in the Word Nabal. Nabal, says Abigail, is his Name, and Folly is in him; as his Name is, so is he, 1 Sam. xxv. 25. Nabal in the Original signifying a Fool; and though these Etymologies were not altogether exact, yet it was sufficient that they were probable and known, and warranted among those to whom they were spoken: So that we are not to be surprized, that this Writer should derive σοφία here from a Hebrew Root, which signifies hidden. As to the Truth of the Observation itself, that Wisdom is concealed, he intimates it, ch. i. 3. and xxiv. 4. where he elegantly describes the Throne of Wisdom to be in a cloudy Pillar. And the sacred Penmen, particularly Solomon, use a Term for Wisdom no less expressive, viz. *Chachma*, which means and implies Obscurity, both in the Hebrew and other Eastern Languages. Job confirms it in the following Words, which are parallel to those of our Author, *Whence then cometh Wisdom, and where is the place of Understanding, seeing it is hid from the Eyes of all Living*, xxviii. 20.

The Philosopher therefore spake not amiss, when he asserted, that Truth, which is another Word for Wisdom, lay hid and concealed in the bottom of a great Deep. Ver. 24. *Put thy Feet into her Fetters, and thy Neck into her Chains*. The wise Man represents Wisdom here as a sovereign Queen of such great Worth, that her Service, and even her Chains are honourable, see Prov. i. 7, 8, 9. Calmet says, he alludes to an ancient superstitious Custom of the Babylonians, See Herod. L. i. Baruch vi. 42. and of the Egyptians, see Tab. Isar. of Germans, who put Chains about them, or round them, and in that manner presented themselves before their Deities, to testify their close and inviolable Attachment to them. *Dum licetum Divis sacrum ingrederentur, vinculis se obligant, ut se Divis obstrictos profiterentur*. Tacit. De Moribus German. And perhaps the next Verse may have some such Allusion too, see Bar. vi. 26. Isai. xlvii. 7. Or the Meaning may be, that by her thou shalt be advanced to great Honour and Dignity. See Note on v. 29. Ver. 28. *For at the last thou shalt find her rest, and that shall be turned to thy Joy*. The rendering of our Translation is harsh and inaccurate; the Geneva Version is clearer and preferable, *For at the last thou shalt find Rest in her*, &c. And Coverdale's is to the same Effect, following probably the Vulgate, *In novissimis invenies requiem in ea*, i. e. in the End of your Pursuit, or as others understand it, at your last Hour thou shalt find Comfort and Refreshment in, and by her, for so ἀνάπαυσις signifies in various Places of this Book. The Syriac takes it in this latter Sense, *Tandem requiem atque delicias invenies, & in extremis tuis gaudebis*. St. Jerom has not expressed this amiss, *Vincula Domini sunt voluntaria, & vertuntur in amplexus, quique his fuerit, colligatus, dicit, Laeva ejus sub capite meo, & dextera illius amplexabitur me*. We have an Instance of the Truth of this Observation in Joseph, whose Advancement on account of his singular Wisdom, was so glorious, notwithstanding his former Hardships and Imprisonment, that Pharaoh arrayed him in Vestures of fine Linnen, and put a gold Chain about his Neck, and they cried before him, *Bow the Knee*, Gen. xli. 42. Ver. 29. *Then shall her Fetters be a strong Defence for thee, and her Chains a Robe of Glory, &c.* i. e. By her thou shalt be advanced to great Dignity and Glory, for so Chains are sometimes understood, in a good and more honourable Sense, as equivalent to a Collar, or Chain of Gold, See Dan. v. 7. And 1 Esdr. iii. 5, 6. which comes nearer to this Place, where the Reward to him that excelled before the King in wise Sentences or Speeches, is to be honoured with a Garment of Purple to drink in, and to sleep upon Gold, to have a Head-tire of fine Linnen, and a Chain about his Neck. Our Author seems to allude to Prov. iv. 8, 9. where Solomon says



says of Wisdom, by way of Encouragement to the Study of it, *Exalt her, and she shall promote thee; she shall bring thee to Honour, when thou dost embrace her; she shall give to thine Head an Ornament of Grace, a Crown of Glory shall she deliver to thee; when thou goest, thy Steps shall not be straitned; and when thou runnest, thou shalt not stumble.* The Accomplishments and Advantages of Wisdom, are finely and magnificently described in this, and the two following Verses, under the *Insignia* and Ornaments of the Jewish People in general, and the High-Priest's Vestments in particular. That Wisdom will not only be a resplendent Ornament, but also be *ἀλφειά* & *ἀλγίστη*, Light and Perfection, a faithful Oracle to direct a Man right, will remind him of his Duty, and distinguish him from others more effectually than the *κλῶμα ἰαυίνθινον*, mentioned *ῥ 30. i. e.* the Fringes and Lace upon the Borders of the Garments could. See *Num. xv. 38.*

Ver. 34. *Stand in the Multitude of the Elders, and cleave unto him that is wise.*] The Roman, and some other Greek Copies read with an Interrogation, *ἢ τίς σοφός; αὐτῷ προσκολληθήσῃ*, Is there a wise Man? Cleave unto him. The Sense is, that to attain Wisdom, Men should seek the Company of the Wise, and attend upon their Lectures and Instructions; or by standing, may be meant the Reverence to be observed towards them, that as a Mark of great Deference and Respect, we should stand in their Presence. By Elders, we are not barely to understand such as are aged, though Reverence to them is required, but such whom Time and Experience have taught Wisdom and Knowledge, and are so called from their Prudence and Abilities. And so the *Vulgate*, *In multitudine Presbyterorum prudentium sta*, and thus *Senatus* and *γερουσία* are usually taken. According to *Philo*, it was the Custom of the Jews every Time they went to the Synagogue, that the youngest should place themselves at the Feet of the Aged, and in profound Silence give Attention to what was delivered; that one of the most learned stood up, and either read the sacred Books, or some excellent Instructions of Morality, how to behave themselves wisely through the several Stages and Callings of Life. *De Septen.*

Ver. 36. *If thou see a Man of Understanding, get thee betimes unto him, and let thy Foot wear the Steps of his Door.*] *ὁρθεῖς πρὸς αὐτόν.* This is agreeable to the Advice before given to seek Wisdom early, *c. iv. 12.* It also signifies to seek diligently. See particularly *Jerem. xxv. 3.* where God says, *ἐλάλησα ὁρθεῖζαν*, which *Theodore* expounds by *ἐπιμελῶς ὁρθεῖζαν* is applied to such as carefully attend upon any Person, or solicit with more than ordinary Diligence any Business. See *Prov. xi. 27. xiii. 24. Psal. lxxiii. 1. Isai. xxvi. 9. Hosea vi. 1. Eccles. xxxii. 11. xxxix. 5.*

Ver. 37. *He shall establish thine Heart, and give thee Wisdom at thine own Desire.*] *Ἐνδομῖα ὃ σοφίας οὐ δόξασίαι σοί.* So the Roman, and some other Editions; but the more correct ones omit *ὃ* which only perplexes the Sense. The literal rendring is, The Desire of Wisdom shall be given thee; and thus the *Vulgate*, *Concupiscentia sapientie dabitur tibi*, which is a *Hebraism*, and equivalent to *concupita sapientia*. The Sense is, The Wisdom which thou desirest shall be bestowed upon thee; and so the *Tigurin* Version, *Et quam desideres, sapientia tibi dabitur*; and the *Syriac* is to the same Purpose, *Ipse vias tuas diriget, & quicquid optaveris, te docebit*; or, in the Words of the *Psalmist*, *He will inform thee, and teach thee in the Way wherein thou shalt go, and guide thee with his Eye*, *Psal. xxxii. 9.* I shall only observe farther, that our Author in the latter Part of this Chapter, sets down five Means or Helps for the Attainment of Wisdom: 1. A willing Mind. 2. Care and Diligence. 3. Hearing useful and profitable Things read, and attending upon the Expositions of such Teachers, as can best explain the great Truths and Mysteries of Wisdom, or Religion. 4. Meditating upon them seriously, and drawing useful Reflexions from them. 5. To crown all, begging God's Blessing and Assistance, to go along with, and prosper our own Endeavours.

#### CHAP. VII.

Ver. 3. *SOW not upon the Furrows of Unrighteousness, and thou shalt not reap them Sevenfold.*] The Scripture often uses this Comparison in speaking of Sin. See *Hosea x. 13.* And the Prophet uses the like Expression in the foregoing Verse of Righteousness, *Sow to yourselves Righteousness, and reap in Mercy.* *Job* has the same Observation in the like Terms, *They that plow Iniquity and sow Wickedness, reap the same*, *ch. iv. 8.* But the rendring of the *ὃ* is more express, *ἰδοὺ τὴν ἀρετὴν ὡς τὰ ἀτοπα; οἱ δὲ σπείροντες αὐτὰ ὀδυνοὺς θερίσονται ἐν αὐτοῖς.* And thus *Solomon*, *He that soweth Iniquity shall reap Vanity*, *Prov. xxii. 8.* which the *ὃ* give more properly and fully, *ὃ σπείρων Φαῦλα θερίσεται κακὰ, πληγὴν δὲ ἔργων αὐτοῦ συνιλέσεται.* And *St. Paul*, *Whatsoever a Man soweth, that shall he also reap; he that soweth to his Flesh, shall of the Flesh reap Corruption*, *Gal. vi. 7, 8.*

Ver. 4. *Seek not of the Lord Preeminence, neither of the King the Seat of Honour.*] The Design of the wise Man in this, and the two following Verses, seems to be, to check the ambitious Spirit of such aspiring Persons as are full of themselves, are fond of Titles, and forward to thrust themselves into Places of Power and Authority, and perhaps are not able to fill them with Sufficiency. Like the Sons of *Zebedee*, they have the Vanity to ask to sit the one on the right Hand,



Hand, the other on the left in the Kingdom, whose Forwardness our Saviour reprov'd, *Matt. xx. 22.* It is observable, that those who are most pushing for Preeminence, and the Seat of Honour, are generally such as are least qualified for it. 'Tis the most promising Circumstance in a Man's Favour, and the surest Sign of Merit, when he is chosen into an Office of Importance, or raised to some Dignity against his own Will and Inclination, or however without his seeking or applying for it. Such a one we may be sure is devoid of Ambition, and contents himself rather with deserving, than seeking Preferment. This is well shadowed in *Jotham's* Parable, *Judg. ix. 15.* wherein the Bramble is represented, as more ambitious than either the Olive, Fig-tree, or Vine, and presently accepts of that Power and Sovereignty, which the rest had the Modesty to decline. This is applicable to Preferments in the Church, as well as State. And accordingly *Mess. du Port Royal* and *Rabanus* extend it even to the Episcopate, to which high Dignity Humility is no little Recommendation: Such a self-denying and modest Temper, as *St. Cyprian* commends in *Cornelius*, *Episcopatum nec voluit, nec postulavit, sed quietus & modestus, & quales esse consueverunt, qui ad hunc locum divinitus eliguntur, non vim fecit, ut episcopus fieret, sed ipse vim passus est, ut episcopatum coactus acciperet*, L. iv. Epist. 2. ad Anton.

Ver. 5. *Justify not thyself before the Lord, and boast not of thy Wisdom before the King.* The former Part seems to be an Imitation of *Prov. xxi. 2.* at least the *Vulgate* so understands it, adding the latter Part of that Verse, (*Quoniam agnitor cordis ipse est*) to this Passage; and indeed the Addition contains a substantial Reason against spiritual Pride, because a Man, however plausible or sanctified he may appear in the Sight of others, cannot hope, or think to impose upon God, who knows the Imperfection of our best Services, and that no Flesh should glory in his Presence. As Merit cannot be pleaded before God, so neither must it be pretended to before the King, whether it consists in the Excellency of either Body or Mind. Our Author only instances in Wisdom, by which he condemns an Affectation of shewing it before great Personages, and an Ambition to be distinguished by it in their Presence, and, above all, an Attempt either to equal or outshine them. As Princes, and those that are about them, would be thought as considerable for their Parts and Capacity, as they are elevated above others in point of Rank and Dignity, they have a Sort of Jealousy, a kind of secret Dislike against such as make a Figure, and appear any way to rival them. If Persons beneath them have a Train of Followers, and much Court and Deference is paid to them, and great Things are said in their Commendation; even Merit, when so distinguished, be-

comes frequently disagreeable to the Great, and an Object of their Hatred. *David* did not draw upon himself the Indignation of *Saul*, till his great Valour appeared, was confessed, and extolled; nor could Envy bear that depreciating Song, *Saul has slain his Thousands, and David his Ten thousands.* *Alexander* betrayed a Sort of Impatience, when the Victories of *Antipater*, or any of his Generals, were mentioned to him with Applause and Commendation; not but that he was always glad, that his Enemies were vanquished, but then he was jealous and grieved, that it was done by another Hand than his own, *Vinci quidem hostes volebat, sed Antipatrum vicisse indignabatur, suæ demptum gloriæ existimans, quicquid cesseret alienæ.* Q. Curt. L. vi. *Demosthenes* mentions the like Temper in his Father *Philip*; and how Envy and Discontent work in the Great, we may see in a much lower Instance mentioned by *Xenophon*, That the young *Assyrian* Prince killed *Gobrias's* Son, merely because he had outdone him in Dexterity, and being a better Marksman had slain a Lyon, and a Bear, which the Prince's Javelin had missed. *Koponaid. L. 4.*

Ver. 6. *Seek not to be a Judge, being not able to take away Iniquity.* i. e. To break through or withstand all the secret Artifices of Iniquity, to pervert you; for great are the Dangers and Temptations to which a Judge's Office exposes him, either from the Attempts of designing Men, or the Importunity and Solicitations of Friends. But an upright and uncorrupt Judge will guard against all these, as likewise against all Bribery, Injustice, Fear, Favour, and even Compassion, and Tendernefs itself, and will make every Consideration give Way to Justice and Truth. And he who enters upon that important Office, without a Mind resolutely determined to resist all Allurements, that may any ways blind his Eyes, and prove Stumbling-blocks in the way of his Uprightness, ought not to accept, much less seek and apply for, so weighty a Trust; for they who thrust themselves into the Tribunal, and through Ambition, Covetousness, or any prevailing Interest, betray its sacred Oracles, and make Truth itself venal, are accountable to God and the Publick, for every Instance of Negligence, Corruption, and want of Judgment. The judicious *Hooker* applies this Direction to the high Stations and Functions in the Church, "For with respect to these it always behoveth Men to take good Heed, lest an Affection for the Dignity, without a due Regard for the Difficulty, should sophisticate that true and sincere Judgment, which they ought to have of their own Abilities, an Inattention to which has, to many forward Minds, been the occasion of Repentance instead of Contentment." *Eccles. Pol. L. v. p. 346.*

*Ibid.* Lest at any Time thou fear the Person of the Mighty, and lay a Stumbling block



*in the Way of thy Uprightness.*] i. e. Should commit an Offence against thy Uprightness, by being awed through the Power, or sway-  
ed by the Authority of the great. For this Reason, among the *Jews*, the Judges of less Authority and Character were to give their Opinion first, lest they should be biased by the Judgment of those of greater. And this seems to be the Meaning of that Precept, *Exod. xxiii. 2. Thou shalt not decline after many, to wrest Judgment*; and the Charge to *Joshua* is, who had the Care of God's People after the Death of *Moses*, *Be strong, and of a good Courage, be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed*, ch. i. 9. Good-nature and Tenderness, which are commendable Qualities in a private Person, often become criminal in a Magistrate; his Silence, Easiness, or Indifference, is as it were, a Consent to the Crimes of others, and he commits an Evil as often as he does not hinder, or punish one. A Judge, says *Plato*, ought to be both wise and resolute; wise, so as to judge for himself, and not be influenced by others in giving his Determination; and resolute to pronounce his Sentence without Fears, and execute it without Concern or Partiality, L. ii. *De Leg.* *Mess. of Port Royal* apply this Passage to the Governors of the Church, in whom Courage is an essential Qualification, *They ought to be instant in Season, and out of Season, to reprove and rebuke with all Authority, such as oppose the Truth*, or occasion its being spoken against, through an evil Conduct. *Athanasius*, *Chrysostom*, and other primitive Lights of the Church, were as remarkable for their Resolution and Courage on such Occasions, as for their Charity and Meekness on others. And the Prayer of *St. Peter* and *John*, is, *Lord, behold their Threatnings, and grant unto thy Servants, that with all Boldness they may speak thy Word*, *Acts iv. 29*. If the Heart be wanting, all other Qualifications lose their Influence; even the finest Understanding without this, will make but slow Progress in the Work of the Lord.

Ver. 7. *Offend not against the Multitude of a City, and then thou shalt not cast thyself down among the People.*] The Words (*and then*) inserted without Authority, by our Translators, perplex the Sense. The meaning according to *Calmet* is, *Provoke not the Multitude or People by rough Language, or a haughty and imperious Behaviour, or by an odious and disagreeable Law, or a hard and oppressive Sentence, which may stir them up to Mutiny or Rebellion; nor run into the other Extreme by an abject Flattery, or mean Compliance, which will make them insolent and assuming; but preserve a Medium between Pride, which irritates, and Abjectedness, which occasions Scorn and Contempt.* Nothing is more difficult than so to temper Severity and Complaisance, as to preserve the Love and Affection of the People, and at the same Time not to relax Disci-

pline, or lose Authority; which *Tacitus* remarks as a particular Happiness in *Agricola*, *Nec illi, quod est rarissimum, aut facilitas auctoritatem, aut severitas amorem diminuit.* In *Vit. Agric.* *Rehoboam* is a signal Instance of the Danger of offending the Multitude: By following the Advice of the young Men, he answers the *Israelites* roughly; and by threatening to chastise them with Scorpions, he endeavours to frighten them into Obedience. Nor was he less imprudent in sending *Adoniram*, as his Ambassador to them, who had the principal Care of those Tributes, of which they complained, the Consequence of which was that they stoned him; and the King himself was obliged to provide for his own Safety by Flight, *1 Kings xii. 11, 18.* *Vatablus* understands the Passage of mixing in popular Tumults and Quarrels. And so the *Syriac* seems to take it, *Ne reum te reddas inter turbam Civitatis, Et in judicia ejus ne te precipites.* And *Coverdale's* and the *Geneva* Versions favour this Sense, *Cast not thyself among the People.* *Grotius* expounds it of offending with the Multitude, and stooping so low as to imitate their Vices. *Mess. of Port Royal*, according to their Custom, apply this to the Pastors of the Church, who should be careful of their Charge, and not by an indiscreet Behaviour offend, or an evil one, mislead their Flock, and so forfeit their Character, and cast themselves down among them.

Ver. 8. *Bind not one Sin upon another, for in one thou shalt not be unpunished.*] The literal rendering of the *Greek* is, *Bind not Sin twice, either by repeating the same Sin, or committing different Sins, one after another.* According to the *Geneva* Version, *Bind not two Sins together*, we may understand complicated Sins, such as are usually attended with, and draw on the Commission of others; or if this be applied to Judges and Persons in a public Character, the Advice to them is, that they should be particularly circumspect as to their Conduct, because, besides their own, they are answerable for the Sins of others, whom their Examples or Influence, may have induced to offend. The wise Man here imitates the Phrase of the sacred Penmen, who often compare a continued Course of Sin to a Chain composed of many Links. See *Prov. v. 22.* *Isai. v. 18.* *Aug. Conf. L. viii. c. 5.*

Ver. 9. *Say not, God will look upon the Multitude of my Oblations, &c.*] As God is all-sufficient, the Earth and the Fulness thereof belonging unto him, he has no need of a Multitude of Oblations; 'tis the Heart which he chiefly regards, and looks upon the number or richness of the Presents which a Man brings, only in proportion as the Person himself is agreeable to him. As God requires us to serve him in Spirit and in Truth, we must not content ourselves with such outward Marks of Piety only, nor place any such Merit in them, as to imagine that they can purchase Pardon, or procure Acceptance.



ceptance. Superstition indeed hath fondly dreamt, that even the Deity may be won by Gifts; and therefore *Porphyry* hath well defined one Species of it to be, ὑπόληψις τῆς δευάζειν δύναμτος τοῦ Θεοῦ. L. ii. Περὶ ἀποχῆς. An Apprehension that the Deity may be bribed, which he observes was the Cause of all those bloody Sacrifices among the Heathen, who imagined, by Virtue of them, to be released from their Sins. *Plato* makes one Species of Atheism, to be a Persuasion, that even wicked and unjust Men will be accepted for their Gifts; but he wisely observes, that God is not to be dealt with, ὡς ποικίλης, as a greedy Usurer in this Manner. *De Leg.* L. x. *Simplie. in Epiſt.* c. 38. *Eccles.* xxxiv. 19. This irreligious Temper in supposing, by Gifts or Money to purchase Heaven, *Lucian* well exposes in his Treatise *De Sacrificiis*, nor is *Juvenal* less facetious, with a superstitious Egyptian, in the following Lines:

*Illius lacrymæ mentitaque munera præsent,  
Ut veniam culpæ non abnuat, ansere magnæ  
Scilicet & tenui popano corruptus Osiris.*

*Sat. vi.*  
Ver. 10. Be not faint hearted when thou makest thy Prayer; and neglect not to give Alms.] Be not discouraged in thy Prayers, nor fall into Despair about the Success of them, if they are not immediately answered, or in the manner thou wouldst have them; if God defers giving what you ask of him, he sees perhaps that it is not proper or expedient for you to have it; or imagine that you have some way asked or done amiss, and comfort yourself, that he will at length reward your Patience and Trust in him. To your Prayers add Alms, as the most effectual Means to redeem past Transgressions. The Words are also capable of this farther Sense according to *Calmet*; Be not afraid of asking too much of God, who is infinitely rich, and has Gifts of immense Value to bestow; but covet earnestly the best Gifts, and do not ask Trifles of him, which are beneath his Majesty to be acquainted with, or grant. Imitate *Salomon* herein, who asked not long Life, Honour, or Riches, which in the Opinion of Men are of great Worth; but only true Wisdom, a Gift worthy of God to bestow, and of such a Prince to ask.

Ver. 11. Laugh no Man to Scorn in the Bitterness of his Soul.] i. e. Insult not any poor or unfortunate Person, for he that insults such a one, affronts God that made him so; according to that of *Solomon*, *Who so mocketh the Poor, reproacheth his Maker; and he that is glad at Calamities, shall not be unpunished,* *Prov.* xvii. 5. If a Man falls into Disgrace, or comes to Misfortunes through his own Fault, or Mismanagement, even then one should spare Reproaches, and consider that he has probably suffered enough for his Folly and Imprudence, without our increasing his Confusion, or adding to the Load of his Misery: But as to such as lie under natural

Infirmities, either of Body or Mind, who perhaps are born blind, or deficient in Understanding, or such as are reduced to Poverty, through some sad Accident, and not thro' any real Fault or Negligence of their own; to sport with such unhappy Objects, to pronounce their Calamities Judgments, and to suppose, or represent them or their Parents as Sinners above all others, whom we ought rather to pity and to comfort, is not only an Instance of rash Censure, but of great Cruelty. True Humanity and a generous Compassion, rather sympathizes with the Afflicted, and weeps with those that weep, especially such as Providence has visited in so severe a manner, for its own wise Ends. We have an Instance of this unkind Behaviour, and rude Insult in *Shimei* cursing *David*, when he fled in great Anguish and Grief from the Face of his Son *Absalom*, *2 Sam.* xvi. And in that scornful Taunt of the *Babylonians* to the *Israelites* in their Heaviness, *Sing us one of the Songs of Sign*, *Psal.* cxxxviii. *Isocrates* has just the same Sentiment with our Author, and assigns the like strong Reason against upbraiding others in their Distress, μηδέν, συμφορὰν ἀναιδίστως, καὶ νήγαν ἢ τύχην, καὶ τὸ μέγα λον ἀόρατον. *Ad Demon.*

Ver. 12. Devise not a Lie against thy Brother.] μὴ ἀρεσκία ψεύδεσθαι. See the like Expression, *ψ 3.* *Calmet* thinks the original Word was, *Cbarasch*, which signifies to invent, as well as to plow. There is the like Advice, *Prov.* iii. 29, where the Hebrew Word is the same, which makes it probable that the Author here alludes to that Passage. The *ο* have well rendred the Place, μὴ τελέῃς ἐπὶ τὸν φίλον κακὰ, παροικῶντα καὶ πεποιθότα ἐπὶ σοί, which our Version gives but imperfectly. The Sense is, Do not invent any false Accusation, or raise any Calumny, evil Suspicion, or Slander against thy Friend or Brother; an Injury of this Sort done to so near a Relation, and one that puts his Confidence in thee, will aggravate the Guilt; or, if we understand this of Lying, strictly so called, the Phrase then denotes the secret and clandestine Manner of it. 'Tis a Hebraism, which signifies to work under Ground, that, as the Husbandman toils in ploughing up the Ground, to raise an Encrease from it, so a wicked Man labours in his Mind, and turneth over his Heart to invent a Lie, which he may do Mischief with. *Ibid.* Neither do the like to thy Friend.] μὴδὲ φίλῳ τὸ ὁμοίον ποιεῖς. This differs very little from the former Clause, and all the ancient Versions explain it as meaning the same Thing. Our learned *Fuller* only gives a different Sense to this Passage, "Do not secretly forge a Lie, nor, while you are devising or propagating it, act the false Friend, by behaving outwardly as a Friend of "would do, that you may spread the Falshood more securely, and do Mischief more successfully." *Miscell. Sac.* p. 37.

Ver. 13. Use not to make any Manner of Lie.] In the foregoing Verse the wise Man cautions



cautions against calumniating a Friend or a Brother by false Accusations, and lest any should infer from thence a Liberty to traduce and abuse others not so related; and that Lying is sometimes allowable, he very properly adds, *Use not any Manner of Lie, i. e. Speak Truth upon all Occasions, in Affairs of little as well as of greater moment.* Some ancient Philosophers indeed, and even some Fathers have thought, that an occasional Lie was innocent in some certain Cases, as when told, for instance, to avoid a greater Evil, as Poisons are given to expel Poison. St. *Austin* absolutely maintains the contrary in a set Treatise on the Subject; it is likewise forbidden in the Law without Exception, and by our Saviour in the Gospel.

*Ibid. For the Custom thereof is not good.]* It will by Degrees lead you to other bad Acts, as Perjury, and false swearing. Thus *Cicero*, *Qui mentiri solet, pejerare solet: quem ego, ut mentiatur, inducere possum; ut pejeret, exorare facile potero.* Pro Rosc.

Ver. 14. *Use not many Words in a Multitude of Elders.]* If by Elders, we understand ancient Men, there is exactly the same Advice, c. xxxii. 9. *When ancient Men are in Place, use not many Words,* for before such, Reserve and Silence is always commendable, especially in the younger Sort: But if by Elders we mean Senators, and Persons of a public Character, *Senatus potentum*, as the *Oriental* Versions have it; the Advice then is to speak gravely, weightily, ἐν ὀλίγοις πολλά, much in a little; not to affect a Shew of Learning, or sport with Turns of Fancy, not to wander from the Matter in Debate, or tire the Audience by a tedious Harangue, which is wasting the Time of such a solemn Assembly, where only Matters of the greatest Consequence are attended to, and come under their Cognizance.

*Ibid. Make not much Babbling, when thou prayest.]* Use not vain Repetitions by asking the same Things in thy Prayers. The Scripture represents the Worshippers of *Baal* as much addicted to this, who cried from Morning until Evening, *O Baal, bear us;* and it is the Character of the Heathen in general, that they thought to be heard for their much speaking. Such Repetitions our Saviour condemns, but he does not thereby forbid us to pray often; but that we should not be always making the same Requests, through Distrust or Infidelity, as if God would not otherwise attend to our Prayers, or they would be ineffectual without them, See *Eccles. v. 2.* St. *Chrysostom* understands this Passage of frequent Relapses into Sin, and asking Forgiveness often for the same Faults, as if the Advice was, Repent sincerely of your Sins, that thou mayst not be obliged to mention them often in your Confession to God; and walk so circumspectly, as not to be every Day asking Pardon for repeated Transgressions. In *Psal. lxxxiv.*

Ver. 15. *Hate not laborious Work, neither Husbandry which the Most High hath or-*

*dained.]* The Words, *Gen. iii. 19. In the Sweat of thy Brow thou shalt eat Bread, until thou return unto the Ground,* are not only a Curse, but they seem to carry in them the Force of a Precept, enjoining *Adam*, and all his Posterity, to take Pains for their Livelihood, and to employ themselves diligently in their several Generations for their own Support, and the Profit of others, who may stand in need of their Help. It plainly appears to be a Precept of divine Institution, and not merely a Curse, because *Adam*, before he had deserved a Curse, was yet enjoined this Task, to dress and keep the Garden, and not merely to enjoy the Pleasures of it. And though its Fertility was such as perhaps not to need any Husbandry; yet God, by thus employing *Adam*, intended that he should be a Law and an Example to his Posterity. And as *Adam* lived himself, so we may presume he bred up his Children in like Manner; his two first-born, though Heirs Apparent to all the World, had yet their peculiar Employments, the one in Tillage, the other in Pasturage, *Gen. iv. 2.* According to the learned *Bochart*, the Improvement of Soil was at first by the Direction and Instruction of the most High himself; and *Cain*, a Tiller of the Ground, had the Rudiments of Husbandry communicated to him by Inspiration. *Hieroz. p. i. L. ii.* Anciently the greatest Men esteemed nothing more honourable and worthy their Study than the Art of Husbandry; this was the Occupation of the Patriarchs of the *Old Testament*, and of the first Founders of Kingdoms and States. Among the *Jews, Persians, Greeks, and Romans*, Kings, Consuls, Dictators, Generals, were not ashamed of this Employment. Not to mention *Cato, Varo, Virgil, Pliny*, and other great Names, who tempered the Severity of their Studies with the pleasing Toils of Agriculture: Some of the first Note among the *Romans* in the military Art, and of the greatest Service to the Commonwealth, such as *Camillus, Regulus, Fabius, Cincinnatus* were fetched from the Plough, as *Gideon* was among the *Israelites* from the Threshing-floor; and *Elisba* was called to the high Office of a Prophet, as he was driving one of the twelve Ploughs his Father had going in the Field.

Ver. 16. *Number not thyself among the Multitude of Sinners, but remember that Wrath will not tarry long.]* i. e. Join not thyself to, nor be ranked with the Congregation of wicked and ungodly Men; but be assured, that God will take speedy Vengeance of all such as know not him; or possibly it may mean, Do not comfort thyself with the great Number of Sinners that are concerned jointly with thee, or that are to be found at large in the World, as if a Society in Wickedness was any Alleviation of thy Fault, or was any Safeguard or Security to thee. The *Alex. MS.* agrees with the Copy which our Translators follow, and so does the *Vulgate.* Most other *Greek* Copies transpose part of this



this and the following Verse thus, *μη προσλογίζεσθαι τὸν ἐν πλῆθει ἁμαρτιῶν ταπείνωσιν σφόδρα τὴν ψυχὴν σου. Μνήσθητι ὅτι ὁρῇ ἡ χρονία ὅτι ἐκδίκησις ἀσεβῶς πῦρ καὶ σκώληξ* which Coverdale's Version follows. The Syr. and Arab. in rendring *ψ* 17. take no Notice of the Vengeance of the Ungodly, nor the Punishment here assigned them; the Reason there given for Humility is general, and affects every Man, *Quoniam postremus omnium hominum finis ad vermes & corruptionem tendit.*

Ver. 17. *The Vengeance of the Ungodly is Fire and Worms.* Some understand this Passage of the dead Bodies of Criminals, that were denied Burial, and consumed by Worms, but more commonly by Fire, lest they should infect the City by their Stench; but it seems as if a greater and more intense Punishment than that in the Valley of *Hinnom*, was here to be understood. It has been variously controverted among learned Men, what this Fire and Worm is; whether they be real and material, or are only to be understood in a metaphorical Sense; whether under the Name of *Fire* any thing more is meant than sharp burning Pain, and by *Worms* than Remorse of Conscience, and the Despair of Sinners in another Life. The Fathers are greatly divided in their Sentiments on this Point, and the same Father often differs from himself, particularly St. *Jerom* and St. *Austin*. Those who maintain the former Opinion support it, 1. By some Texts of Scripture taken according to the latter, particularly *Isai. lxvi. 24. Mark ix. 43, 44, 45, 46, 48.* 2. They quote *Judith xvi. 17.* where we read, *That the Almighty will take Vengeance of the Wicked in the Day of Judgment, by putting Fire and Worms into their Flesh, and they shall feel them, and weep for ever, κλαύσουσιν ἐν αἰδήσει ἕως αἰῶν*; or if we read *καύσουσιν*, with a late learned Editor of *Justin Martyr*, (which Conjecture is confirmed by the *Syriac* rendring of the Place) the Sense will conclude much stronger for a material Fire. 3. They urge the *Vulgate* Translation of the Passage before us, *Quoniam vindicta carnis impii, ignis & vermis*, which Explicitness denotes say they, according to St. *Austin*, not only that the Wicked shall be punished, but that the Seat of the Punishment shall be their Flesh, and in it they shall suffer both by Fire and Worms. Lastly, they say, that the concurrent Sense of the *Latin Church* is for a real Fire; on the other Side it is answered, that the Texts of Scripture above, are to be understood metaphorically, and refer to the Punishment in the Valley of *Hinnom*, the Figure and Picture of Hell, 2. That the Quotation from *Judith* is apocryphal, and may likewise have the same Reference. 3. As to the *Vulgate* rendring of this Place, 'tis arguing only from a single Translation, we meet with no Mention of the *Flesh* in any *Greek* Copy, nor in the *Syriac* or *Arabic* Versions. 4. The Testimony of the *Greek Church* is as strong for the contrary Opinion; but I

see no Reason why both these may not be admitted, and reconciled in the following Manner, *viz.* That corporal sensible Pain, such as that of Fire and Worms, shall torment the Bodies of the Wicked, and Stings of Self-Condernation, and the Horror of Despair shall wound and gnaw their Conscience. Take the Expression either way, sufficient unto the Sinner is the Evil thereof, and dreadful is his Portion.

Ver. 18. *Change not a Friend for any good by no Means.* *μη ἀλλάζης φίλον ἕνεκεν ἀδιαφόρου.* This is inaccurately rendred, *ἀδιαφορος*, signifying rather indifferent and ordinary, than precious or valuable; and so the *Tigurin* Version has it, *Ne permutes amicum re vulgari.* But the Place is probably corrupt, and the true Reading is, *διαφορου*, and so one MS. actually does read. *Grabe* has so restored it from Conjecture; and *Casaubon* makes the same Emendation. See Notes on *Theoph. Char. p. 89.* where the Definition of Sordidness is, *φειδωλία τῷ διαφορῶν ὑπὲρ τὸ καιρὸν.* We have *διαφορον* in the Sense of Riches, *2 Mac. i. 35. iii. 6. iv. 8.* and the *Oriental* Versions expound it by *Pecunia* in this very Place. It should also be so corrected, *ch. xxvii. 1. xlii. 7.* *Euripides* expresses himself upon the Subject like this Writer,

Ὅστις δὲ πλεον ἢ θένος μάλλον φίλων,  
Ἀγαθῶν κεκλήσθαι βέλεται, κακῶς φρονεῖ.

And *Plato* speaks to the same Purpose, *βελούμεν φίλον ἀγαθὸν μάλλον ἢ τὸ Δαρείν χροσίου κλήσασθαι.* This Writer's Sentiments upon Friendship are much to be admired; he sets the like Value upon it, *ch. vi. 14, 15.*

Ver. 19. *Forego not a wife and good Woman, for her Grace is above Gold.* *μη ἀσώχει γυναῖκος σοφῆς καὶ ἀγαθῆς, i. e.* Miss not of a good and valuable Woman, but let such a one be thy principal Aim and Mark to choose for a Wife, and take Care not to err or mistake in a matter of such Importance. The Metaphor is taken from shooting at a Mark, See the like Expression, *ch. viii. 9.* A Woman of such Qualities as are here described, *viz.* Discretion and Goodness, is a Gift that cometh of the Lord, and ought to be esteemed beyond all Riches, and preferred before what the World calls a *Great Fortune*. She is such a peculiar Blessing, that this Author says, *She shall be given in the Portion of them that fear the Lord, ch. xxxvi. 3.* The *Vulgate* understands this of not divorcing a Person of such Accomplishments; but this Advice seems useless, with Regard to one so well qualified to make a Man happy, and is given more fully, *ψ 26.*

Ver. 20. *Whereas thy Servant worketh truly, entreat him not Evil, nor the Hireling that bestoweth himself wholly for thee.* *διδόντα ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ, i. e.* Who wastes and impairs his Life, his Health, and Strength in thy Service, exposed to a Variety of Dangers, and particularly to Heat and Cold, and the Inclemency of the Seasons, *Gen. xxxi. 40.* Some of them following such laborious Occupations,



cupations, as insensibly ruin their Health, and others such as render them continually liable to Hurts and Accidents. The Author seems to make a Difference between a Servant and a Mercenary, the Work imposed upon the latter being generally more intense and severe, but he requires Diligence in both, not merely an Eye-service, and orders a proportionable Recompence and Return to be made to them. Not to entreat them Evil by Menaces or Blows, nor to exercise any act of Inhumanity or Injustice towards them; not merely to consider what strictly and rigidly, but what may fairly and equitably be done to them. *Seneca* seems well to have settled this, *Servis imperare moderatè laus est; & in mancipio cogitandum, non quantum illud impune pati possit, sed quantum permittat æqui bonique natura, quæ parcere etiam Captivis, & pretio partis jubet.* Lib. i. De Clem. ch. xviii.

Ver. 21. *Let thy Soul love a good Servant, and defraud him not of Liberty.* The Author is not here speaking of a Slave taken in War, or bought with Money at a Market, but of a native Jew, who serves a Jewish Master; the Law appointed, that such a one should have his Liberty in the Sabbatical Year, *Exod. xxi. 2. Deut. xv. 12.* The Sense of the Passage is, Refuse him not his Liberty at the stated and appointed Time, and as he has risked his Health and Life in thy Service, treat him not as a Slave, but with the Tenderness of a Friend, or Brother. Some of the Heathen Moralists have expressed the same favourable Regard for good Servants. Thus *Seneca*, *Servi sunt? imo homines. Servi sunt? imo contubernales. Servi sunt? imo humiles amici. Servi sunt? imo conservi, si cogitaveris tantundem in utrosque licere fortunæ.* Epist. 47. *Euripides* says, the Name of a Servant carries something of a Disgrace in it, but a good Servant in all respects is not inferior to a free Man.

Ἐν τοῖς δούλοις αἰσύνῃν φέρει,  
Τὸ νομα, τὰ δ' ἄλλα πάντα τ' ἐλευθέρων  
Οὐδεὶς κακίων δούλου, ὅστις ἐσθλὸς ᾖ.

We have a remarkable Instance of Regard shewed to a good Servant by the Centurion, *Luke vii. 1.* but *St. Paul's* Tenderness for *Onesimus* cannot be paralleled, whom he vouchsafes to call *his own Bowels, not a Servant, but above a Servant, a Brother beloved, both in the Flesh, and in the Lord.* Ep. Phil. 12, 16. See also *Apost. Constit. Lib. iv. ch. 12. Eccles. xxxiii. 30, 31.*

Ver. 24. *Hast thou Daughters, have a Care of their Body, and shew not thyself cheerful towards them.* i. e. Be not too indulgent, or over fond of them, nor ready to grant them every Liberty they may wish to have, for Liberty often terminates in some bad Consequence. Too much Indulgence was the Ruin of *Dinah*; her Curiosity to visit the Daughters of the Land at a festival Time, and to partake of their Amusements and Sports, was the occasion of her Defilement,

*Gen. xxxiv. Juvenal* advises to keep young Men out of the Way of all Company that may corrupt their Morals, but this Caution is much more necessary with respect to Women, whose Sex being so delicate, their Modesty should be principally attended to and secured, and the Carriage of all about them be more circumspect, and reserved before them. *Cato* the Censor carried his Resentment very high for a Salute only given in the Presence of his Daughter. *In Vit. Cat.* The wise *Solon's* Saying, *Θυγατέρι μὴ προσμειδιάσῃς, ἵνα μὴ ὕστερον δακρύσῃς,* is very like that of our Author. And *Phocylides*, to prevent any Accident abroad by Company to young Virgins well advises;

Παρθενικὴν ὃ Φύλασσε πολυχλείστοις θαλάμοις,  
Μηδὲ μιν ἄλλει γάμων πρὸ δόμων ὀφθῆναι εἰσῆς.  
203.

As to the Care necessary to be observed towards Children in general, expressed in 23. the like Particulars are insisted on in the *Apostolical Constitutions*, *Ἐκδιδάσκετε υἱῶν τὰ τέκνα τὸν λόγον Κυρίου, εὐφραίνετε δὲ αὐτὰ πηλυσταῖς καὶ δαρμοῖς, καὶ ποιείτε ὑποτακτικά· ἀπὸ βρεφὸς διδάσκοντες αὐτὰ ἐν τῇ γραμμᾷ, καὶ τ. λ.* L. iv. ch. 11. and at the Conclusion, the same Direction is given about fixing them in Marriage soon, and wisely. The Education of Daughters among the Jews, was formerly very strict and severe, they seldom let them be seen abroad, and for this Reason a Daughter is called in *Hebrew*, *Alma*, i. e. one concealed, or shut up.

Ver. 25. *Marry thy Daughter, and so shalt thou have performed a weighty Matter, but give her to a Man of Understanding.* The Jews had a high Opinion of the married State, and matched their Children early, which they did to fix their Inclinations, but were very cautious about the moral Qualifications of their intended Son-in-Law. And indeed in marrying Daughters, Regard ought chiefly to be had to those which are likeliest to promote their best, and truest Interest. For Happiness is not possible to be attained in the conjugal State without true Worth and Virtue in the Associate, which are not always the Attendants of high Birth, Wealth, or Honour. Parents therefore in settling their Children, should not make Avarice or Ambition the Motives of their Choice and Conduct; but rather Virtue, Sobriety, and Discretion, which afford a much more reasonable Prospect of Happiness in that State. These Accomplishments, the Emperor *M. Antoninus* prefer'd in the Disposal of his Daughter *Lucilla*; for he gave her, as the Writer of his Life observes, *Non satis quidem nobili, sed egregiæ tamen virtutis viro; quippe qui generum non pro opibus aut prosapia dignitate, sed ex merito, & virtute æstimandum censuit.* And the like is recorded of *Themistocles*, *Malle se virum Pecunia, quam Pecuniam viro indigentem.* If we take Understanding here in a larger Sense, as meaning Religion, as in these *Didactical Books* it



is sometimes used, the Direction then may also be extended to forbid unequal Marriages, the Marriages of Believers with Infidels, and of the Religious with the Loose and the Prophanes; as when *Jehosaphat* matched his Son with *Abab's* Daughter, 2 Chron. xxi. 6. For it is a Law of Marriage that should never be broken, that it be in the Lord, i. e. with his Liking, and in his Fear. That Exception which *Abraham* took against the Daughters of the Country, and his express Commandment for a Wife to be taken to his Son, out of the Faithful, teaches us plainly, to prefer Religion, and the true Fear of God, to Honour, Wealth, Nobility, and all other Considerations, in all Marriages that we shall make either for ourselves, our Friends, our Children, or such as are under our Guardianship and Charge. See Gen. xxviii. Deut. vii. 3. 2 Kings viii. 18.

Ver. 26. *Hast thou a Wife after thy Mind, forsake her not, but give not thyself over to a light Woman.* Our Translators seem to have understood this Passage of Unfaithfulness to the Marriage Bed, and leaving a valuable and agreeable Woman for stolen Embraces: But *ἐκκαλεῖται*, (which probably is a forensic Term) seems to relate rather to casting out by Divorce; which is confirmed by *μισομενῶν*, which follows, and is properly rendred by the *Vulgate*, *Odibili*, and in the Margin, a *bateful Woman*, one that is disagreeable in her Person, or odious for her bad Qualities. According to the Law of *Moses* one might put away a Wife not beloved, provided there was a legal Cause for so doing; but Divorce, though tolerated among the *Jews*, was never approved, or commended by the wisest of that Nation, unless some urgent Cause made it necessary. This wife Author accordingly advises, to prevent coming to such an Extremity, not to marry a Person whom one cannot love, or has such forbidding Qualities, as to create Disgust: to take a Woman so unpromising, is paving the Way for a Divorce, or, which is as bad, condemning a Man's self to live with an odious and disagreeable Partner for the Term of Life, but to choose rather one that is agreeable and amiable, who will sweeten Life, from whom, as there can be no Occasion, so there ought to be no Inclination to part.

Ver. 27, 28. *Honour thy Father with thy whole Heart, and forget not the Sorrows of thy Mother: Remember that thou wast begot of them, and how canst thou recompence them the Things that they have done for thee?* The Advice of *Tobit* to his Son, is very like that here given, *My Son, despise not thy Mother, but honour her all the Days of thy Life, and do not grieve her; remember she saw many Dangers for thee, when thou wast in her Womb.* St. *Ambrose* has some Sentiments upon the Occasion, which one cannot sufficiently admire; after having enumerated what the Mother undergoes for the Child, as Sickness and Loathing during the Time of Gestation;

the strict Regimen she is obliged to submit to; the great Confinement and Self-denial, in many other Instances, and the Danger and Difficulty of Child-birth; the certain great Pain, and often Death itself attending the Birth, and the constant Fears for the Child's Life and Safety, immediately adds, *Si paveris matrem, non reddidisti ei cruciatus quos pro te passa est, non obsequia quibus te gestavit, non alimenta quæ tibi tribuit, vero pietatis affectu immulgens labris ubera: non famem, quam pro te ipsa toleravit, ne quid quod tibi noxium esset comederet, ne quid quod lacti noceret hauriret: tibi illa jejunavit, tibi manducavit, tibi illa cibum quem voluit non accepit, tibi quem noluit, cibum sumpsit, tibi vigilavit, tibi flevit. Illi debes quod habes, cui debes quod es.* Com. in Luc. xviii. See Note on ch. iii. 8. By *Plato*, Parents are styled, *θεοὶ ἐπιγινώσκοντες*; and *Philo* gives the Reason why they are so called, as being a Sort of visible Gods, imitating the Invisible in bestowing Life; he has the same Observation with our Author upon the Occasion, *ἐπεὶ τοῖς γονεῦσιν ἰσὺς ἀποδίδωται χάριτας ἐνδέχεται, ἀνιγνέσθαι γὰρ ἐκ οἴοντε τὰς αἰτίας.* Allegor. L. ii. *Aristotle* mentions three Sorts of Persons to whom we can never make a suitable Return, viz. the Gods, our Parents, and our Instructors, L. ix. *Ethic.*

Ver. 31. *Fear the Lord, and honour the Priest, and give him his Portion as it is commanded thee; the first Fruits, and the Trespas-offering, and the Gift of the Shoulders, and the Sacrifice of Sanctification, and the first Fruits of the Holy Things.* There is the like Advice, *1. 29. τὰς ἱερὰς ἀντὶ θάουμαζε*, where *θάουμαζε* is to be taken in the Sense of *τιμῶν*. It is so used *Lev. xix. 15. Deut. xxviii. 50. 2 Kings v. 1. 2 Chron. xix. 7. Job xiii. 10. xxxii. 22. Jude xvi. Δοξάζειν*, the Term here used, is sometimes taken in a larger Sense, than to respect or honour, and probably here means Maintenance. The Duty of Maintenance is expressed in various Terms by this Writer, as, Not forsaking his Ministers, (See the like Command, *Deut. xii. 19.*) honouring his Priests, and giving them their Portion; and to ascertain what belongs to them, he enumerates five Particulars, mentioned also in the Law. 1. *ἀπαρχή*, or the first Fruits of the Land and Trees, as Corn, Wine, Oyl, Figs, &c. *Deut. xxvi. 2.* To which some add, the first Fruits of Animals. These were also called *προλοσηνήματα*. 2. The offering *ᾠεὶ πλημμελείας*, or such Portion of the Victim, or Trespas-offering, as usually belonged to the Priest, which indeed was the whole of it, except the Kidneys, and the Rump, and the Fat upon the Inwards, which were burnt upon the Altar. *Levit. vii. 2, 3, 4, 5.* It may not be improper here to distinguish between a Trespas-offering, and a Sin-offering. Trespas-offerings were for Sins of less Note and Importance, Sins of Ignorance or Omission, through Forgetfulness; as the not observing the legal Washings and Purifications,



fications, &c. Sin-offerings were for greater Offences, for voluntary Crimes, and wilful Violations of the Law. 3. The Gift of the Shoulders in the Peace-offerings, *Exod. xxix. 27, 28. Lev. vii. 34. i. e. the Wave-breast, and the Heave-shoulder.* 4. The Sacrifice of Sanctification, called *Mincha*, which was of Things without Life, as Flower, Cakes, Wafers, &c. The Greek sometimes preserves the Hebrew Name, *Manaan*, See *Ezek. xlv. 5, 7, 11.* and often uses *θυσία* simply for it. *Lev. ii. 13. vi. 14, 15. Ezek. xlv. 15. Amos v. 25.* Sometimes it is called *προσφορά*, *Psal. xl. 7. Heb. x. 5, 8, 10.* And by this Writer *θυσία ἀγιασμένη*, as being the most holy of the Offerings of the Lord made by Fire; and according to the Heb. is *Holiness of Holinesses.* See *Lev. ii. 3, 10. vi. 17.* The Remnant of this was *Aaron's* and his Sons, and was in part for their Maintenance. 5. The first Fruits of holy Things; this differs from *ἀπαρχή* before mentioned; it seems to be the Tythe of the Tythes, *Sanctitatum decima*, which the *Levites* themselves paid the Priests, *Neb. x. 48. Num. xviii. 28. 2 Chron. xxxi. 6.* They are called holy Things, because all the Tythe, whether of the Land, or of the Fruit of the Trees, being the Lord's, it was holy unto him. *Levit. xxvii. 30. Eccus xxxv. 8, 9.*

Ver. 32. *And stretch thine Hand unto the Poor.*] That nothing may be wanting to recommend thy Service, join Works of Charity and Mercy; invite the *Levite*, and the Poor to partake with you, as the Law appoints, *Deut. xiv. 26, 29. xvi. 11. xxvi. 11.* In this general Sense many understand this Place; but I presume from the Context, that it relates to the poor Man's Tythe on the third Year, which Year is termed a Year of Tythes, *Deut. xxvi. 12.* which the Husbandman carried not to *Jerusalem*, but spent it at Home within his own Gates, upon the *Levite*, the Fatherless, the Widows, and the Poor, *Deut. xiv. 18.* as it was paid to the Poor every third Year, reckoning from the Sabbathical Year, on which the Land rested, it was called *שְׁלֵשָׁה שָׁנִים*, or the poor Man's Tythe, and in *Tobit i. 8.* the third Tythe, where the several Sorts are enumerated, and well distinguished. I have the Pleasure to find *Grotius* agreeing with me in this Sense of the Place, which the other Expositors seem not to have attended to.

*Ibid.* *That thy Blessing may be perfected.*] Some render, That thy Liberality may be compleat, which is the Sense of the Margin; others, That thou mayst be completely blessed, *2 Cor. ix. 10.* The *Vulgate* has, *Ut perficiatur propitiatio, & benedictio tua*, that thy Atonement may be perfected, *Eccus xxxi. 11. xxxv. 11.* The *Arab.* *Ut mendici pro te precatio exaudiat*, i. e. that the poor Man's Blessing may rest upon thee, and his Prayer be heard in thy Behalf. *Grotius* by *ἐλεησιν* understands Riches, in which Sense it is used, *Jud. i. 15. 1 Sam. xxx. 26. Ec-*

*clus xxxiv. 17.* According to him the Meaning is, Thy Riches will be sanctified hereby, and blessed by God that gave them, *1 Tim. iv. 5.* or made holy and acceptable to him, by thus applying them; to which *Coverdale's* Version agrees, *Reach thine Hande unto the Poore, that God may blest thee with Plenteousness.*

Ver. 33. *A Gift bath Grace in the Sight of every Man living, and for the Dead detain it not.*] Having spoken of Provision and Maintenance for the *Levite*, Charity to the Poor, and kind Actions to be done to the Living, the wise Man proceeds to shew his Regard and Concern for the Dead. The Sense of the Place is, Be liberal and charitable towards all, and let even the Dead have a Share of thy Goodness. The *Geneva* Version of it is clearer, *Liberality pleaseth all Men living, and from the Dead restrain it not.* Pay thy last Offices, by decently interring them, respecting their Memories, and comforting their disconsolate Relations, by giving the usual Funeral Entertainment to them, and the Poor. That this was the Custom among the *Jews*, see *Jer. x. 7.* and particularly *Tob. iv. 17.* where *Tobit* gives exactly the same Advice, for having enjoined his Son to give his Bread to the Hungry, and Garments to them that were naked, and Alms according to his Abundance; it immediately follows, *Pour out thy Bread on the Burial of the Just.* The primitive *Christians*, many of whose Customs, 'tis well known, were derived from the *Jews*, expressed in the same Manner their pious Regard to the Saints and Martyrs, by pouring Wine upon their Tombs, and celebrating the sepulchral Feast over them. *St. Austin* mentions this to have been the Practice of his Mother *Monica* in particular, and that it was at length dropt, *Ne ulla occasio se ingurgitandi daretur ebriosis, & quia illa quasi parentalia superstitioni Gentilium essent simillima*, lest they should administer to Intemperance, and because they favoured of Pagan Superstition, *Confess. L. vi. ch. 2.* It is surprizing, that both these Texts should be abused by *Bellarmino*, and the Popish Writers, in Favour of Masses and Prayers for the Dead; whereas they undoubtedly relate to the sepulchral Feasts usually given for the Comfort of the disconsolate Relations and Friends of some good Man deceased; and respected such as mourned and wept, rather than those who had no Sense, and could not be benefited by such posthumous Expressions of Kindness.

Ver. 35. *Be not slow to visit the Sick, for that shall make thee to be beloved.*] This is not rightly translated, the Greek is, *ἐκ τῶν τριῶν*, i. e. By these, and such like Offices of Humanity and Charity, as are just mentioned, thou wilt gain the Hearts and Affections of others, especially such as you have laid under an Obligation by your Kindness. To visit the Sick does not mean the bare seeing of them, which may be Matter of Curiosity only,



only, but enquiring into the Nature of their Disease, discoursing them about Patience and Submission, binding up their Wounds; and, if our own Circumstances will permit, giving them Medicines. *Greg. Nazianz. Orat. 27. De Cura Paup.* St. Chrysostom finely observes, That if we have nothing, by reason of our own Indigence and Poverty that we can assist the Sick with, we must give him our Company at least, and the Comforts of our Conversation, imparting to him our best Wishes, and the Benefit of our Prayers, so shall we hear at the last great Day, *I was sick, and ye visited me.* This Advice more nearly concerns God's Ministers, whose Attendance upon a sick Bed is the more necessary, as, besides ordinary Help, they can administer spiritual Relief to the disturbed Conscience, and be the happy Means perhaps of saving a Soul from Death, and everlasting Ruin. And nothing makes a Pastor more beloved than his Attendance at such a Season, when the Powers of Darkness tempt Men to Despair, especially by those who have a Sense of their spiritual Danger, and would hallow their last Moments by the best Preparation their Time or Condition will admit.

Ver. 36. *Whatsoever thou takest in Hand, remember the End, and thou shalt never do amiss.*] Our Translators seem to have understood this, as a Piece of Advice never to undertake any thing but for some good End, to have that Mark principally in View, and to direct all our Actions and Affairs accordingly: But I do not think this to be the only Meaning of the Place, or that it is a Maxim of mere Prudence only. The Greek is, *ἐν πάσιν τοῖς λόγοις σὲ μνησθε τὰ ἐσχάτα σου, i. e.* in all thy Words and Actions; (for *Debar*, the original Word, as I presume, signifies both) Remember thy latter End, and frequently meditate on Death; and so the Arab. *Memor esto mortis in omnibus operibus tuis*, or more fully, Reflect on the *Quatuor novissima*, the four last and most important Things, as they are called, viz. Death and Judgment, Heaven and Hell: If we had always these in our Eye, and attended to them with that Seriousness, which Matters of such Moment require, we should be the more careful not to offend, at least not to sin wilfully. If we considered every Action as perhaps the last of our Lives, and ourselves as upon the Brink of appearing before the great Tribunal of God, how powerful, and how happy a Restraint should we live under? but so long as we stifle the disagreeable Thoughts of Death, and consider Eternity, as at a vast Distance, we are not much affected with so wide a Prospect, nor induced to prepare ourselves for our great Change. St. Jerom points out the Vanity of Men's Hopes, and the Greatness of human Folly, when he says, *Quotidie morimur, quotidie commutamus, & tamen æternos nos esse credimus.* Ad Heliodor.

## CHAP. VIII.

Ver. 1. **S**TRIVE not with a Mighty Man, lest thou fall into his Hands.

Ver. 2. *Be not at Variance with a rich Man, lest he overweigh thee.*] As in the former Chapter the Author laid down several positive Precepts, how we ought to act with respect to different Person, and Cases therein mentioned, so here he gives several negative ones, how we ought not to act. And the first is not to fight or contend bodily with an Adversary superior in Strength, for fear of coming to some Mischief, by falling into his Hands, and suffering through them. This may likewise be understood in a Forensic Sense, not to go to Law with, or commence any judicial Process against a very rich Man, lest he preponderate, or get the Balance on his Side, by his Interest, Power, and great Fortune, and prove too much for thee, and incline the Judges to give the Cause against you. Literally the Greek is, *Lest he overbalance thy Weight*; the Metaphor is well known and beautiful. The Vulgate accordingly renders, *Ne litiges cum homine potente, ne incidas in manus illius, ne contendas cum viro locuplete, ne forte contra constituat litem tibi.* Calmet too understands the Place in this latter Sense: The following Lines exactly agree with our Author,

Ἀφ' ὧν ὅς κ' ἐθέλει πρὸς κρείσσονα ἀνίσταται,  
Νίκης τε σέβεται, πρὸς ἀίχρην ἀλγυῖα πάσχει.

Ver. Poeta.

i. e. It is a Folly to contend with one mightier than one's Self, for you are sure to be vanquished, and, besides the Disgrace, to be exposed to Injuries, and evil Treatment.

Ver. 3. *Strive not with a Man that is full of Tongue, and heap not Wood upon his Fire.*] 'Tis a great Instance of Prudence to know how to be properly silent before one that loves to talk, and not to give occasion to him by Question, or Opposition, to be more troublesome. Such a loquacious Person is aptly compared here to a Fire, which always burns the fiercer in Proportion as you put on Fuel. To continue Discourse with him, is to furnish fresh Matter for more Impertinence; and to differ from him, or attack him in any matter of Dispute, is to make him more fierce and outrageous. The best Way to impose Silence upon him, and to be easy one's Self, is to let him alone, and take no Notice of him, and then, like the Fire which is not stirred, the Flame will of Course go out. And if such a one be also of an evil Tongue, as the Margin understands it, civil Words, and obliging Things, will produce the quite contrary Behaviour from him, and besides being verbose and noisy, he will be abusive and scurrilous, or privately asperse and blacken thy Character. The Author may with great Reason be supposed to allude to *Prov. xxvi. 20, 21.* where Solomon has



has the like Comparison upon the same Subject, *Where no Wood is, there the Fire goeth out, so where there is no Talebearer, the Strife ceaseth; as Coals are to burning Coals, and Wood to Fire, so is a contentious Man to kindle Strife.*

Ver. 4. *Jest not with a rude Man, lest thy Ancestors be disgraced.*] Vulg. *Non communices homini indocto*; and so Coverdale's Version, *Kepe no Company wyth the Unlearned, lest he geve thy Kynred an evil Reporte*, i. e. Have no Acquaintance, Friendship, or Intimacy, ἀπαίσχυντο, with a raw, undisciplined, uninstructed Person, lest it bring a Reflexion upon yourself and Family, as if your own Education had been bad, or neglected by your Choice of such a Companion. All Acquaintance with the Unlearned and Uninstructed, is not here forbidden, for there is an Ignorance that is not faulty, such as has Humility and Ingenuity enough to acknowledge its low State, and Inclination and Readiness to attend to Means, to alter and improve it: but such are here condemned, and their Company to be avoided, whose Ignorance is wilful, and who obstinately persist in it; who consider Knowledge as a Burden, and Truth as their Enemy, and hate to be set right and informed, lest their Ignorance and Weakness should be discovered. As we are sure by telling such the Truth, and kindly admonishing them of their Mistake, to have them for our Enemy, 'tis better to have no Converse or Society with them, lest by our honest Freedom, either to instruct or reform them, they should think themselves affronted, and turn their Spleen and Malice against our Family and Relations, and report something to their Disgrace and Prejudice, which may affect and wound us thro' their Sides. But the Sense followed in our Version seems preferable, and more agreeable to the Greek, μὴ πρόσποιε ἀπαιδέω, i. e. Joke not with a Man that is rude, and wants good Breeding; for if he knows any Family Misfortune, which Persons of Politeness would be tender of mentioning, he will be sure to expose it, and make their Failings and Infirmities to be the Subject of his coarse Raillery.

Ver. 5. *Reproach not a Man that turneth from Sin, but remember that we are all worthy of Punishment.*] As 'tis a Sign of Humility and Grace to turn from Sin, so 'tis an Instance of great Degeneracy, to reproach or ridicule any one for becoming better. A good Man will not revile a Sinner, even while he continues such, nor insult over his Fall, but rather shew a generous Pity and Concern for him, and endeavour to restore such a one in the Spirit of Meekness. Instead of superciliously upbraiding an offending Brother, he considers his Fall as an Instance of human Frailty, and it serves to remind him how liable he himself is to miscarry every Moment. To convince him that he stands in as much need of God's Help to continue him

in a State of Grace, as the Sinner does of his Mercy to restore him to it; and that if God should proceed against him with Rigour, and strict Justice, he deserves nothing but Punishment. He is therefore tender of the returning Prodigal; he goes out to meet him, he embraces him with Joy, and as he finds him thoroughly sensible, and ashamed of his past Folly, he encourages him to Perseverance, quickens and invigorates his Resolutions, infuses pleasing Hope, by opening unto him the Riches of the Goodness and Mercy of God.

Ver. 6. *Dis honour not a Man in his old Age, for even some of us wax old.*] Coverdale's Version seems preferable, *for we wax old also*, i. e. Shall come, if we live, to the same State, and may as reasonably expect the like Scorn ourselves, when the Infirmities, which are inseparable from that Stage of Life, shall overtake us. And so the Arab, *Ne derideas senem decrepitum; scito nos, si vixerimus, grandævos ac senes futuros.* Consider also, as the Geneva Version has it, *that they were as we which are not old*, were once in their Prime and Vigour, though now the Objects of Ridicule, and that we are hastning to the same Period, to partake of what they suffer. Are not all Men desirous of long Life, and is it not looked upon as a particular Favour of Heaven, when extended to any great Term? How then can old Age be dishonourable, which is not an Evil in itself, and all covet to arrive at? If to cut be off in the Midst of our Days is a Misfortune or Punishment, to live to be full of Days, especially if Time has been well improved, must surely be a Good, and a Blessing. According to Gellius, Age was so honourable among the Romans, that neither Birth nor Fortune were more respected: That a kind of Veneration was paid to Persons advanced in Years, as to so many Gods, and Fathers. *Apud antiquissimos Romanorum, neque generi neque pecuniæ præstantior bonos tribui, quam ætati solitus; majoresque natu a minoribus colebantur ad Deum prope & Parentum vicem, atque in omni loco, inque omni specie honoris, priores potioresque habiti.* Noët. Attic. L. ii. c. 15.

Ver. 7. *Rejoice not over thy greatest Enemy being dead.*] One should not rejoice at any Accident, or ill Fortune, that happens to an Enemy, even in his Life-Time; Charity enjoins this, but Humanity commands rather a Concern for him when he is dead, and it is out of his Power to injure us any more; 'tis both decent and just to spare his Ashes, and not to insult his Memory. Hatred is always odious, but should never be immortal, and pursue a Man into the other World. Our Author probably alludes to Prov. xxiv. 17. *Rejoice not when thy Enemy falleth, and let not thine Heart be glad when he stumbleth.* Job comforts himself, that he had never rejoiced at the Destruction of him that hated him, nor lift up himself when Evil found him,



him, ἐκ ἄπεν ἡ καρδία μου, Εὐγ. ch. xxxi. 29. Many of the Greek Copies omit τῷ ἐχθροῦ τῷ σου, and read in general, *Rejoice not over a dead Person*; and so the Oriental Versions, *Ne lateris de morte ullius*. According to that of Homer,

Οὐχ ὅτιον φθιμένοις ἐπ' ἀνδράσι εὐχολάαδ'.

Od. x.

Ibid. *Remember that we die all.*] i. e. Must all die; and so the Oriental Versions, *Memento nos omnes morituros*. As Death is the common Lot of all Men, any of us may die as well as our Enemy whom we triumph over; and we should be very unwilling, could we possibly foresee or know it, that others should rejoice at our Death. And this I take to be the Meaning of the additional Clause in the *Vulgate*, *Et in gaudium nolumus venire*. The Expression here is very particular and observable, 'tis not said that we shall all die in the Future, but that we die all in the Present Tense, πάντες τελευτῶμεν, intimating probably the Shortness of Life, that Death is always present with us, that in the Midst of Life we are in Death, and may be said without a Metaphor, to die daily. St. *Austin* has not expressed this amiss, when he says, *Vita hæc non est vita dicenda, sed mors, in qua momentis singulis morimur, per varios mutabilitatis defectus diversis generibus mortium*. Meditat. ch. xxi.

Ver. 8. *Despise not the Discourse of the Wise, but acquaint thyself with their Proverbs, for of them thou shalt learn Instruction, and how to serve great Men with Ease.*] In all Doubts and Difficulties consult wise and experienced Persons, and submit patiently to hear, and be informed by them. Nor let a vain Conceit of your own Abilities, produce a Contempt of their well-grounded Maxims and Aphorisms; for you may be assured, they were not taken up, and uttered at Random, but were the Result of a long and judicious Observation, and will be found of the greatest Use in Life. *Plato* well remarks, that he that would be a learned or wise Man must be φιλομαθής, φιλήκοος, ζητητικός, willing to learn, attentive to others, and of an inquisitive Disposition. *De Rep.* And for these Qualities he highly commends *Socrates*, in *Theætet.* This Advice is repeated in many Parts of this Book. As to the Skill here recommended of knowing how to please great Men, and acting in their Service with Credit and Approbation, which *Horace* says is no mean Accomplishment, *Epist. L. i.* no body is so proper to advise how to behave in this respect, and to deliver Maxims of just Conduct, as a Person long used to Courts; a nice Discernment of what passes there, joined to the great Experience which he has had in the World, must give him in this respect, a Knowledge, which is not to be fetched from Books, nor acquired in the Schools. The Court is, as it were, a new

World, to those especially who know little of it, and have seen it only at a Distance; and therefore the Direction and Countenance of those who have conversed long in it, and who have the Art of pleasing, and recommending themselves to the Great, must be of more Service than the most refined Speculations, or any Rules of general Conduct laid down by others.

Ver. 10. *Kindle not the Coals of a Sinner, lest thou be burnt with the Flame of his Fire.*]

There is the like Metaphor upon the same Occasion, ch. xxviii. 11. The *Vulgate* renders, *Non incendas carbones peccatorum*, and then adds, by way of Explanation, *Arguens eos*, confining the Sense to the seasonable Reproof of a Sinner. For though brotherly Reproof is a most necessary Duty, yet much Prudence and Caution must be used in giving it. The most favourable Opportunities must be watched, when our Reproof is likely to have the most Weight, we must do it with Temper, and take Care not to inflame the Party reproofed by any Indiscretion, which will serve only to draw on ourselves his Abuse or Resentment, without answering the End proposed. Sometimes Reproof is altogether useless, as when a Person is incorrigible, and upon good Grounds we foresee that it will be to no Purpose, or that it may provoke him to fresh Offences. In such a Case we may spare ourselves both the Pains and Hazard, 'tis only casting Pearls before Swine, who in requital will turn again, and rend us. God approves of Zeal in his Service, but it must be regulated by Prudence, and the best Things cease to be so, when they are done out of Season. St. *Jerom* very wisely remarks, that neither King *Hezekiah*, nor his People, gave any Answer or Reproof to the repeated Blasphemies of *Rabsaces*, for fear of provoking him, and giving him a fresh Occasion to utter more, and greater, *Ideo jufferat blasphemanti Assyrio non responderi, ne eum ad majores blasphemias provocarent*. Com. in Loc. For the same Reason 'tis neither advisable, nor always safe, to reprove a Person almost in the very instant of Sinning, in the Hurry of his Passion and Folly, when he cannot attend to cool Reflexion, or friendly Admonition, nor to do it in too plain and direct Terms. When *Nathan* was sent to reprove *David* for his Crime with *Bathsheba*, he took a most prudent Method to prevent that Prince's Resentment, which a sudden and direct Charge might have occasioned; he first artfully proposes a Parable to him, and brings him, by that Stratagem, to condemn his own Guilt in the Person of another, before he says to him explicitly, *Thou art the Man*. And when by this Artifice he had properly prepared him, he then enlarges upon the Heinousness of his Offence, and imparts to him his Message from the Lord. The Oriental Versions understand the Words of keeping Company with Sinners, and suffering by their evil Communication, as if the Sense was nearly the



the same with *Prov. vi. 27, 29. Can a Man take Fire in his Bosom, and not be burnt, so be that goeth in unto wicked Persons, shall not be innocent.*

Ver. 11. *Rise not up in Anger at the Presence of an injurious Person, lest he lie in wait to entrap thee in thy Words.*] This is not accurately translated; the Words in *Anger* are added by the Translators, and seem to perplex the Sense. The Meaning is, Oppose not to his Face, nor rise up to speak to, or before a perverse, captious, quarrelsome Man, lest, through some Artifice or evil Design, he entrap thee in thy Words. Instead of regarding and profiting by your Advice or Discourse, he will watch with an insidious Intent all you say, will strive to entangle you by your Talk, and draw some Consequences from it to your Hurt and Disadvantage. Of this Stamp were the Scribes and Pharisees, whose End in urging the blessed Jesus to speak of many Things, was to catch something out of his Mouth, that they might accuse him, *Luke xi. 53, 54.* Grotius and Calmet from the Term ἐξανάσσει, understand it of rising up to speak in form in a popular Assembly or Senate; that one should be cautious not to engage with, or reply to a warm Speaker, one of great Interest and Power, but impatient of Contradiction, for fear of drawing on us his Resentment, either by personal Reflexions, or exhibiting some Charge against us: Or the Sense may be, Contend not with a scurrilous abusive Man, ὕβρις; and so the *Tigurin* Version, *Ne inveharis in contumeliosum*; for he will take occasion from your Words to be mischievous and troublesome. Some few Copies have, ἵνα μὴ ἐγκαθίσῃ ὡς ἐνεδρον τῷ σώματι σου instead of τῷ σώματι σου, which is the common Reading, and followed in our Version. And then the Sense will be, beware of such a scurrilous Person, lest he sit upon thy Skirts.

Ver. 12. *Lend not unto him that is mightier than thyself, for if thou lendest him, count it but lost.*] ὡς ἀπολωλενός γινῆς, which is well rendred by *Junius*, *Perinde esto quasi perdidderis*, nor will you only be in Danger of losing your Debt, but of drawing on you a new and powerful Enemy. *Les Grands*, says *Calmet*, *se tiennent choquez, lorsque l'on repete ce qu'ils doivent.* Great Men often take it in their Head to be affronted, when they are asked for what they owe; and if you are necessitated to attempt to recover your own by a Course of Law, 'tis often in their Power to disappoint their Creditors in their Attempt, through their Interest, or by insisting on their Privilege. Lend not therefore more than what thou canst afford, or art willing to lose, for thou hast but little Prospect of receiving thine own again with Usury.

Ver. 13. *Be not Surety above thy Power, for if thou be Surety, take Care to pay it.*] Arab. *Persuasum tibi sit quod sis soluturus*, expect and be persuaded that it will fall to your Share to pay it. Look upon yourself as the

Debtor, and consider how most effectually to disengage yourself. Use all Diligence and Application to make the Party principally concerned discharge his own Debt; quicken his Indolence, lest at the Time appointed he should not be ready or able to make the Payment, for you may be assured the Creditors will come upon his Security, if he himself neglects to satisfy them. *Solomon* gives the like Advice in many Parts of the Book of *Prov. vi. 1. xi. 15, 17, 18. xx. 16. xxii. 26, 27.* The last comes nearest this Place, and expresses in the strongest Manner the Danger of such an Engagement, *Be not thou one of them that strike Hands, nor of them that are Sureties for Debts; if thou hast nothing to pay, they will take thy very Bed from under thee.* The ancient Sages have always looked upon this as a necessary Piece of Advice to be pursued in Life, and are unanimous in their Cautions on this Head. *Εὔνοια, παρὰ δ' Ἀτῆ*, was a Maxim of such Consequence, as to be thought worthy to be wrote on the Temple of *Delphi*. To be bound at all is an Instance of Weakness; but to be bound above one's Power, or for one that is mightier than thyself, *potentiori*, as the *Oriental* Versions here have it, is the very Height of Folly.

Ver. 14. *Go not to Law with a Judge, for they will judge for him according to his Honour.*] The *Vulgate* renders, *Non judices contra Judicem, quoniam secundum quod rectum est judicat*, i. e. do not rejudge a Cause which the Judge has determined, or presume to condemn his Sentence and Decree; his great Experience in judicial Matters, should make private Persons, who are not so proper judges of the Merits of a Cause, and are too apt to be partial in their own or Friend's Favour, acquiesce in the Verdict given, and modestly to presume that the Judge had weighty Reasons for the Decision which he made. But the Sense of our Version comes nearer the *Greek*, μὴ δικάζῃς κατὰ κελῖν, κατὰ γὰρ ἡ δόξαν αὐτοῦ κελύουσιν αὐτῷ, i. e. Do not contend at Law, or have any Suit with a Judge; for, according to *Calmet*, *Les autres Juges soutiendront leurs Collegues, ou leurs confreres, & lui donneront gain de Cause, ou confirmeront son jugement*; the other Judges will support and countenance their Colleague and Brother, and give the Cause for him, or confirm his Decree; they will judge and determine, κατὰ τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ, either according to his Dignity, or, as the Margin has it, according to the Opinion which he has given.

Ver. 19. *Open not thy Heart to every Man, lest he requite thee with a shrewd Turn.*] i. e. We should be cautious and sparing in our Intimacies, and of disclosing our Affairs to every accidental Acquaintance, out of Prudence, and Tenderness to our own Interest. Our Charity indeed should be universal, and extend to all Mankind; but it is by no Means convenient our Friendship and Familiarity should do so likewise. We often find that a Person



Person very little known to us, recommended to us, perhaps, by some Accident, and whom upon too slender an Acquaintance, we have unwarily unbosom'd ourselves to, when better known has lost the good Opinion we had of him before, and betrayed the Confidence we reposed in him to our great Prejudice. The *Vulgate* renders, *Ne forte inferat tibi gratiam falsam, & convitiatur tibi.* Not unlike that of *Solomon*, *Prov.* xxv. 9, 10. according to the *Vulg.* *Secretum extraneo non reveles, ne forte insultet tibi cum audierit, & exprobrare non cesset, i. e.* Do not suffer yourself to be repaid with Ingratitude and ill Usage, by the treacherous Person you have opened your Heart to, and entrusted with your Secrets. Sacred Story informs us how dear it cost *Sampson* for discovering to the faithless *Dalilah* the Secret of his Strength: and Profane gives us this remarkable Instance of *Pompey's* great Fidelity and Secrecy, "That being sent Ambassador by the Senate, he unfortunately fell into the Hands of King *Gentius*. That Prince, tried to get from him the Secret of his Embassy; but *Pompey* instead of answering, put his Finger into the Flame of a Candle, and let it burn there without crying out. The Action struck the King, and made him instantly conclude, that nothing could force from such a Man a Secret, which regarded his Country." *Valer. Max.* L. iii. c. 3.

## C H A P. IX.

Ver. 1. **B**E not jealous over the Wife of thy Bosom, and teach her not an evil Lesson against thyself.] Wife of ones Bosom, is a familiar Expression among the *Hebrews*, *Deut.* xiii. 6. xxviii. 54. *Micah* vii. 5. There are some certain Affairs wherein too much Circumspection is dangerous; one often suggests and teaches an Evil, by an ill-judged Endeavour to prevent it: *Quidam fallere docuerunt, dum timent falli, & illius peccati suspicando occasionem præbuerunt.* Distrust often puts Persons upon wicked Actions, which they would never otherwise have thought of. Of this Sort is the unjust Suspicion of a Husband, which has often raised an unclean Spirit in the Wife out of mere Spite and Revenge, to resolve to give him Reason for his Suspicions, and to enjoy the Pleasure of the Crime, since she must undergo the Ignominy. A Woman of Honour is affronted when she is but suspected of being capable of Falshood, and if she is one of Spirit, will not fail to resent it, and often in the very Manner which the jealous Person so much dreaded. A good Woman, says a polite Writer, wants no Bars, and a bad one will not be confined by them; watching only serves to make her the more abandoned. *Theophrastus*, as I find him quoted by *St. Jerom*, L. i. cont. *Jovin.* has the like Remark, *Quid prodest etiam diligens custodia, cum uxor servari impudica non potest, pudica non debeat, infida*

*enim custos castitatis est necessitas.* Such outward Restraints rather provoke than do good. A generous Confidence in the Honour and Conduct of the Wife, and Faithfulness and Constancy on the part of the Husband, are the best and most lasting Security.

Ver. 2. Give not thy Soul unto a Woman to set her Foot upon thy Substance.] ἐπιθεῖν αὐτὴν ἐπὶ τὴν ἰσχύον σου, i. e. Give not thyself up into the Power of a Woman, lest she get the Ascendant over thee, and become imperious. The *Vulgate* has, *Non des mulieri potestatem animæ tuæ, ne ingreditur in virtutem tuam, & confundaris, i. e.* Do not so doat on a Woman, as to part with thy just Authority, lest she enter upon thy Privilege, and assume that Power that belongs to thee, and thou be ashamed. *Cato* observes of the Sex, *Extemplo simul ut pares esse cæperint, superiores erunt.* *Liv.* L. xxxiv. and laments, that when, in all other Places, Husbands had the Rule and Authority over their Wives; at *Rome*, the Mistress of the World, Wives ruled their Husbands, *Omnes homines uxoribus dominantur, nos omnibus hominibus, nobis uxores.* But more seems meant here than merely submitting to a Woman, or parting with that original Prerogative which God gave Mankind over the Sex, *Gen.* iii. 16: There is this farther and better Meaning, Give not thyself up to strange Women to follow thy Lust, which will destroy thy Strength, impair thy Understanding, blast thy Reputation, and exhaust thy Substance, or Treasure, for so *ισχύς* is frequently taken in this Book. The Sense is the same in this last Acceptation with *Prov.* xxxi. 3. *Luke* xv. 30. The Artifices of Women of this Stamp and Character, and the mischievous Consequences of keeping such loose Company, are well described *Prov.* vii. 10. xxiii. 27.

Ver. 4. Use not much the Company of a Woman that is a Singer, lest thou be taken with her Attempts.] μετὰ ψαλλέσσης μὴ ἐιδέλῃς. Thus *Ovid*,

*Pro facie multis vox sua læna fuit.* The Margin has, *With one that playeth upon Instruments*; the *Vulgate*, with *St. Cyprian*, renders, *Cum saltatrice ne assiduus sis*, following a Copy which read, μετὰ ἀλλέσσης, which probably may be the better reading; for *Calmet* observes, that the Eastern Dances were less modest than the modern, less Decency observed, and more Freedoms taken. *Herodias's* Dancing shews the Power of that Entertainment over an enamoured Mind, and her bloody Request the Abuse of that Power. The Advice here given is to avoid all Occasions, Opportunities, and Temptations to Impurity, not to indulge a wanton Eye, or an itching Ear, or run into Danger by conversing with pleasing, but yet insinuating Objects.

Ver. 5. Gaze not on a Maid.] παθεῖν μὴ καλαμάδαν. The Verb means to look with Attention and Earnestness, with a Sort of Wonder and Amaze, See *Gen.* xxiv. 21. *Ecclus*



*Ecclus* xxv. 21. xxxviii. 28. xli. 21. *Susan*. xxxii. *Matt.* vi. 28. It expresses in one Word what the Apocryphal *Esdra*s describes by a long Periphrasis, 1 *Esd.* iv. 19. *Mess.* of *Port Royal* observe, that this Writer lays great Strefs upon a prudent Reservedness towards Women, as he enjoins it in so many Particulars, and so remarkably diversifies his Discourse about it, "Not to sit, eat, or look upon them, but according to the strictest Rules of Decency, even though they may be as fair in Character, as in Person; as such Intervues are always attended with Danger, open or secret. The World indeed esteems gazing, as both innocent and inoffensive, and that 'tis a faulty Preciseness to confine Modesty so strictly; but Experience confirms the Necessity of the Advice, and that the Remedy is no other, or greater, than what the Evil requires. We are not more holy than *David* was, and have not received more Grace from Heaven, that we should have that Command over us which he wanted. And what was it that ruined him, but the View of a beautiful Woman, who yet was at a great Distance from him? Let us be afraid of a Stumbling-block, which the Saints would not have fallen by, if they had been as watchful as they ought, and let their Fall be a Warning to others that are more weak. There is not a greater Delusion, than for Men to imagine that they can live in the Midst of Flames, and not be burnt; such a Persuasion is a Sign, that they think the Danger trifling, but 'tis impossible to avoid the greater Irregularities, but by guarding against the less, which are the Avenues and Inlets to them. Discretion is as it were the Barrier of Chastity, these two Virtues support each other, and he that neglects one, cannot long keep the other." *Com. in Loc.*

*Ibid.* *Lest thou fall by those things which are precious in her.* ἐν τοῖς ἐπιθυμίαις αὐτῆς, i. e. *Lest* you are involved in her Punishment, according to some Expositors; or, as *St. Austin* strongly expresses it, *Ne, cum pereunte deceptrice, & ipse perire cogaris*, *Meditat.* c. xxi. The *Oriental* Versions understand it of falling into Fornication, and paying the legal Penalty, *Deut.* xxii. 29. *Grotius* thinks ψιμνθίαις to be the true reading, i. e. Gaze not curiously upon her, lest thou be ensnared by the Fineness of her Complexion. But I would rather read, μή ποτε σκανδαλιθῆς ἐν ταῖς ἐπιθυμίαις αὐτῆς, according to *Drusus's* Copy, i. e. *Lest* thou fall by lusting after her, and then the Sense will exactly correspond with the Advice of *Solomon*, *Prov.* vi. 25. What Necessity there is of guarding the Eye, the unhappy Examples of Persons, who have fallen through the Lust of it, sufficiently evince. Had the *Jews* forebore to look on the Daughters of *Midian*, they had prevented the Plague which consumed the chosen

Men in *Israel*; and not to mention *David*, had the Elders, instead of admiring the Beauty of *Susanna*, looked another Way, they had prevented their ignominious Execution.

Ver. 6. *Give not thy Soul unto Harlots, that thou lose not thine Inheritance.*] The Mischief arising from these is prettily couched under the Fable of the *Sirens*, who are therefore by the Poets feigned to occasion Shipwreck to the Mariners, because being infamous and loose Prostitutes, by their Artifices they drew in People, and brought them to Poverty, *Serv.* on *Æn.* v. The *Vulgate* renders, *Ne perdas te, & hereditatem tuam*, which includes that of *Solomon*, *Prov.* vii. 22, 23. where he describes, in the most moving Manner, the sad State of one led astray by them. The Advice is very seasonable in the following Verse, not to frequent suspected Places, or wander about in quest of Women of such infamous Character, and is agreeable also to that of the wise Man, *Let thine Eyes look right on, and thine Eye-lids strait before thee. Ponder the Path of thy Feet, so shall all thy Ways be ordered aright*, *Prov.* iv. 25, 26. It was a wise Appointment of some of the Ancients, to order the Temple of *Venus* to be built out of the City, where Temptations of this Sort are more frequent and inviting, that no Breach of Decency, or Offence to Modesty, might be observed by the younger Sort. *Strad. Prolaf.* p. 153.

Ver. 8. *Turn away thine Eye from a beautiful Woman,—for many have been deceived by the Beauty of a Woman, for herewith Love is kindled as a Fire.*] One cannot conceive any thing stronger to express the Power of Beauty, than what is mentioned concerning *Holofernes's* Passion for *Judith*, *That her Beauty took his Mind Prisoner*, ch. xvi. 9. and his Fate shews the Danger of being a Slave to it. In the Contest at *Darius's* Feast, the Advocate for Beauty finely urges, πολλοὶ ἀπειροβήσαν ταῖς ἰδίαις διανοίαις διὰ τὰς γυναικάς, ἢ δῶλοι ἐγένοντο δι' αὐτάς· πολλοὶ ἀπώλοντο ἢ ἐσφάλησαν, ἢ ἡμάρτοσαν δι' αὐτάς, 1 *Esd.* iv. 26, 27. *Alexander the Great* was sensible of its Power, when he denied himself the Pleasure of gazing upon *Darius's* Daughters, his pretty Prisoners, alledging, with a Resolution agreeable to his Character, That he who had conquered so many Men, should not suffer himself to be overcome and captivated by Women, *Non committam ut cum viros vicerim, a mulieribus vincar.* *Museus* gives much the same Account of the Original of Love, with our Author,

Κάλλος γὰρ περίπυσον ἀμωμήτοιο γυναικὸς  
Ὁξύτερον μερόπεισι πέλει πλερόεντος οἴου.  
Ὁφθαλμὸς δ' ὁδὸς ἐστὶν ἀπ' ὀφθαλμοῦ βλαίων  
Ἐλκος ὀλισθαίνει, ἢ ἐπὶ φρένας ἀνδρὸς ὀδεύει.

*Her. & Lean.* x 93.

The *Vulgate* understands this Passage of our Author of a Woman finely drest, and set off with all the Ornaments that Art and Fancy can



can bestow, *averte faciem tuam a muliere compta.* The primitive Fathers, and ancient Sages are on no Subject more copious, than in condemning a gaudy Excess of Apparel, or superfluous Ornaments lavished upon the Person. They looked upon all Affectation of this Sort, not only as an Instance of Vanity, and a low Taste, but as a Sign of a loose Turn of Mind. St. Cyprian accordingly remarks, *Ornamentorum ac vestium insignia, & lenocinia fucorum, non nisi prostitutis & impudicis fæminis congruunt, & nullarum fere pretiosior cultus est, quam quarum pudor vilis est.* De Hab. Virg.

Ver. 9. *Nor sit down with her in thine Arms.*] This Sentence is wholly omitted in many Greek Copies, particularly the *Vatican*, and is not countenanced by any of the ancient Versions. Such Editions as retain it, read very differently. Our Translators follow the *Complut.* which has *μη κατακλιθῆς ἐπ' ἀγκάλων μετ' αὐτῆς*, and is but imperfectly rendred by them; it means rather to lie in her Embraces, *in amplexibus alienæ Uxoris dormire*, according to *Grotius*. And thus the *Tigurin* Version, *Nec inter ulnas ejus recumbas*; and *Junius* is to the same Effect. *Theocritus* has, *ἐπ' ἀγκάλῃσιν ἐκλίνῃ*, in an impure Sense. But the true reading seems to be *μη κατακλιθῆς ἐπ' ἀγκῶνα μετ' αὐτῆς*. Lie not upon the same Couch or Bed with her at Meals, alluding probably to the ancient Posture at Entertainments. *Clem. Alex.* whose Authority Dr. *Græbe* follows, reads in this Manner, and explains it manifestly to this Sense, *Pædag.* L. ii. c. 7. and thus the *Vulgate* also renders, *Nec accumbas cum ea super cubitum.* It may be proper here to enquire, in what the Indecency consisted in sitting thus at Table with a married Woman. *Calmet* observes, that at the ancient Entertainments the Husband sat at the Head of the Table, and the Wife beneath him in such a Manner, that her Head touched or rested upon his Bosom; so that with respect to any other Man placed there, her Situation would be too close and familiar. Secondly, It was reckoned a Sort of Indecency for a Man of great Gravity to sit at Table near a Woman, that was not his Spouse. Thirdly, It was esteemed an Instance of Forwardness in a married Woman, to be present at an Entertainment with Strangers of the other Sex, her Husband not being present.

*Ibid.* *Spend not thy Money with her at the Wine.*] The *Vulgate* seems to understand this of something more than mere treating, *Non alterceris cum illa in vino*, is a Prohibition not to challenge or urge a Woman to drink; a Contest which it is beneath a Man to offer to engage in, and unseemly in a Woman to accept. 'Tis improper also, as Drinking is an incentive to Lust, Revelling and Wantonness going so often together, that the Names are almost synonymous, See *Prov.* xxiii. 21. where *μέθυς*, & *προνόκος* are joined together by the α.

*Ibid.* *Let thine Heart incline unto her, and so, through thy Desire, thou fall into Destruction.*] τῷ πνεύματι ἐκ, i. e. Through thy inordinate Desire or Lust, thou be brought into Misery and Ruin. This is a *Hebraism*, that Language expressing any Affection of the Mind by *Ruach.* *Clem. Alex.* reads, τῷ αἵματι ἐκ, *Pæd.* L. ii. ch. 7. to which agrees the *Vulgate*, *Ne sanguine tuo labaris in perditionem*; and the *Syriac* is more express, *Ne sanguine noxio ruas in infernum*; which may either mean the Loss of Life in some amorous, or drunken Quarrel, or the Punishment of Death by the Law for the Sin of Adultery, *Lev.* xx. 10. Or, that they shall utterly perish in their own Corruption, and receive hereafter the Reward of their Unrighteousness, *2 Pet.* ii. 12, 13. Or, lastly, may not the Words be understood in some such impure Sense as that of *Juvenal*? — *Accipiat sane mercedem sanguinis*, *Sat.* i.

Ver. 10. *Forsake not an old Friend, for the new is not comparable to him; a new Friend is as new Wine, when it is old, thou shalt drink it with Pleasure.*] Friendship, the more ancient it is, the more valuable it is, as Wine is meliorated and improved by a proper Age. *Aristotle* makes Use of the same Comparison upon the Subject of Friendship, comparing new and old Friends to Wine of different Ages, “A new Friend, says he, is at first like new Wine, sweet, but withal unpleasant; but when it has Age, it mellows, and is in its Perfection.” Which is the common Opinion of Mankind, and represented as such, *Luke* v. 39. *No Man having drank old Wine, straightway desires new, for, he says, the old is better.* *Cicero* determines the Point in his Book Of Friendship, pursuing the same Metaphor, *Existit hoc loco quedam questio subdificilis, num aliquando amici novi, digni amicitia, veteribus sint antepone-di, ut equis vetulis teneros antepone-re solemus. indigna homine dubitatio; non enim amicitiarum debent esse, sicut aliarum rerum satietates. Veterimarum quæque, ut ea vina, quæ vetustatem ferunt, debent esse suavissima.* See *Plut. Sympos.* L. iii.

Ver. 11. *Envy not the Glory of a Sinner, for thou knowest not what shall be his End.*] The *Vulgate* renders, *Non zeles gloriam, & opes peccatoris*, i. e. Envy not his outward Pomp, and seeming good Fortune, for the State of a wicked Man is rather to be pitied than envied; though the particular Way and Manner in which he shall be destroyed, may be a Secret to thee, and thou knowest not what, or how soon his Overthrow shall be, yet be assured, that Misfortunes and Ruin attend him. 'Tis a certain Truth, confirmed by the repeated Voice of Scripture, that Sinners shall come to a fearful End. The Sentiments of the *Psalmist* upon the like Subject, agree exactly with this Writer, *Fret not thyself because of the Ungodly, neither be thou envious against the evil Doers; for they shall soon be cut down as the Grass, and withered*



as the green Herb, Psal. xxxvii. 1, 2. The Port Royal Comment has a fine Reflexion on this Place, "Man is too weak to guard against that which flatters his Vanity, he is always fond of Glory and Greatness himself, and admires and envies it in others; but it is Faith alone which discovers the Nothingness of all that appears Great below, and Grace which enables him to despise and resist the Temptation. It is for this Reason, that the wise Man so often reminds us not to suffer ourselves to be dazzled with the Power or Glory of Sinners, nor to envy their outward flourishing Condition, but to assure ourselves, that their Elevation portends their Ruin, as it occasions a Forgetfulness of God and his Judgments, and serves only to draw down his Wrath more heavily.

Ver. 12. *Delight not in the Thing that the Ungodly have Pleasure in,* *μη ενδοκησας ενδοκiais ασεβων.* The Vulgate renders, *Non placeat tibi injuria injustorum*, following a Copy probably, which read, *μη ενδοκησας αδικιας ασεβων.* After the Advice in the former Verse not to envy the Glory of Sinners, it follows very properly, not to delight in their Customs or Pleasures, as we are too easily induced to approve of the Ways, and imitate the Conduct of such, whose Condition we admire, and whose Greatness we envy. Besides the common Exposition of the Words, which at first offers itself, of not approving or joining in the Amusements, Follies, and Vices of the Abandoned and Profligate, the Sense may be, Do not value or pride yourself in having the Approbation, or good Word of Sinners, whose Praise is an Injury, and their Approbation a Disgrace. And thus the Port Royal Comment, *Ne vous rejouissez point d'avoir l'Approbation des Mechans.*

Ibid. *But remember that they will not go unpunished to their Graves.* *μη εμενησθησιν οτι εως αιδου εμη δικαιωσονται.* Drusius understands the Words as our Translators do, but the Sense of them literally translated may either be, That they shall not be just, or esteemed such to their Death; and however they may have flattered themselves, or received the false Praises of others, Men shall at length change their Opinion of them, and be convinced of their Mistake in so esteeming them, and even themselves shall find that of the wise Man to be true, *That there is a Way which seemeth right unto a Man, but the End thereof are the Ways of Death*, Prov. xiv. 12. And this seems to be the Meaning of the Geneva Version, *Remember they shall not be found just unto their Grave*; or they shall never be justified, shall always continue wicked, and shall never repent so truly and effectually, as to be converted and accepted, which is Coverdale's Sense: Or lastly, that they shall be so far from being justified or acquitted, that Misfortunes shall overtake them in this Life, and after Death, God will punish them with larger Vials of his Wrath. See Note on ch.

xviii. 22, where the Senses of *δικαιωσονται* are enumerated more particularly.

Ver. 13. *Keep thee far from the Man that hath Power to kill, so shalt thou not doubt the Fear of Death.* The Advice here is to avoid the Court of Princes, especially of Tyrants, who often abuse their Power, and sport with the Lives of their Subjects. Their Tempers are variable and uncertain, and to be in Disgrace with them, is both frequent and dangerous: To keep at a Distance therefore is most prudent, so shalt thou be safe, and out of any Apprehension of Death from them. Our Version is a literal Translation of the Greek, *ε μη υποκλευσης φοβου θανάτου*, and thereby obscure; nor is the Vulgate much clearer, *Et non suspicaberis timorem mortis*. The Meaning is, that by keeping altogether away from the Presence of such imperious and tyrannical Persons, as have it in their Power, and may have it in their Inclination to ruin us, or by being so wise and circumspect in our Conduct, if we do approach them, as to give no Offence, that may expose us to their Censure and Displeasure; we shall not only be out of the Reach, but out of the Fear of Danger, and need have no Doubt or Suspicion of any. Coverdale's Version is preferable here, *So needest thou not to be afraid of Death*; which is agreeable to the Oriental ones, *Procul abesse ab eo qui potestatem habet necis, and terrores mortis ne reformides*. The Philosopher seems happy in his Comparison, who resembled the Court to a Fire, which at a Distance, gives a comfortable and refreshing Heat, but scorches when you come too near. The Images of walking in the Midst of Snares, and upon the Battlements of a Tower, are not less lively and expressive. The Vulgate changes the last Simile, and renders, from what Authority I know not, *Super dolentium arma ambulabis*, following a Copy which probably had *επι αλγεστων πολεμικων περιπασεις*. The Sense of which I presume is, Thou shalt walk amidst the Arms of enraged Enemies, disposed to give no Quarter to those that fall into their Hands.

Ver. 14. *As near as thou canst, guess at thy Neighbours.* Our Translation seems here not full enough; for mere Guessing is not a sufficient Foundation of Security in the Choice of Friends. The original Word *σοχασαι* expresses a great deal more. 'Tis a Metaphor taken from shooting, and the whole Sentence *καλω την ιαχυν ου σοχασαι*, means to take good Aim, to look stedfastly upon the Mark, and to apply all ones Strength and Dexterity to hit it; and the Direction couched under it is, that, to form a right Judgment of our Neighbour, we must make all necessary Enquiry concerning him, and try him in all possible Instances; we must consider his general Character, and particular Qualifications, whether in all respects, such as Temper, Faithfulness, Honour, Discretion, Virtue, &c. he is a proper Person to make a Friend or Confident of, and one whom we are satisfied we can



can safely trust and communicate our most secret Affairs to, and be assisted in them by his Wisdom and Experience.

Ver. 16. *And let just Men eat and drink with thee.*] This Advice somewhat resembles that of our Saviour, *Luke xiv. 12.* not to call our rich Neighbours to our Feast, such as are recommended to us merely by their State and Fortune, but in the Choice of our Acquaintance, and the Disposal of our good Things, to have Regard chiefly to Merit, and especially Men's moral Qualifications. To prefer a Man of strict Sobriety, to an intemperate and noisy Companion; and one of Piety and Virtue, to an abandoned and profligate Rake. And we have the Reason in the former Verse for the Preference here given, because when thy Table is furnished with deserving and edifying Guests, *thy Talk will be with the Wise, and all thy Communication in the Law of the Most High;* and indeed the *Vulgate* so transposes the Verses. We may also apply this Direction to Charity in particular, which is very much recommended, and rises in its Value by the prudent Choice of the most worthy Objects. Among such as we intend to do acts of Kindness and Benevolence to, we should prefer those whom we know to be of the Number of the Faithful; and among these, such as have more eminently distinguished themselves, and merely because they have so. Thus *Tobit*, when he saw abundance of Meat prepared, said to his Son, *Go and bring what poor Man soever thou shalt find out of our Brethren, who is mindful of the Lord,* ch. ii. 1, 2. And our Saviour promises a Reward to them that receive a Prophet, or a just Man, or shall give only a Cup of cold Water to a Disciple of his, as such. When *Elijah* was sustained by the hospitable Widow, the Merit of her Piety chiefly consisted in this, that she knew she was feeding a Man of God, and it was the very Motive of her doing it, *Fructu pascitur Elias a vi-  
dua, sciente, quod hominem Dei pasceret, &  
propter hoc pasceret.* Aug. Confess. L. xiii. ch. 26.

Ver. 17. *For the Hand of the Artificer the Work shall be commended, and the wise Ruler of the People for his Speech.*] Every Business and Occupation has its Marks and Characters by which it is distinguished, and in which each Artist seeks to excel; as Sculpture, by representing Nature in Relievo; in Painting, by imitating it in Colours; Statuary, by a bold Expression of Life, and a familiar and agreeable Attitude; that which should distinguish a Prince, is Wisdom in his Discourse, Prudence in his Resolves, and Justice in his Laws and Administrations. Nothing should come from his Mouth, but should have some Resemblance of an Oracle; according to that of *Solomon*, *A Divine Sentence is in the Lips of the King, μωλὴν ἐπὶ χείλεσι βασιλέως, and his Mouth transgresseth not in Judgment,* Prov. xvi. 10. *Jansenius* is of Opinion, that

a new Chapter begins here; and indeed it appears, that this is not mere Conjecture, for some Copies do begin the x<sup>th</sup> Chapter at this Verse.

Ver. 18. *A Man of an ill Tongue is dangerous in his City, and he that is rash in his Talk shall be hated.*] i. e. The Slanderer or Spreader of false and evil Reports, is a Terror to the Neighbourhood where he lives, and very justly too, for by sowing Discord and Jealousy, and fomenting Differences, he sets all around him at Variance. *Calmet* applies ἀνὴρ γλωσσώδης to the Satyrist, who spares no body, provided he can shew his witty Talent, or make himself merry, at the Expence of others. No body cares to lie under the Lash of his Satires, and even those who commend him most, are afraid of him. *Clemens Alex.* instead of ἐν πόλει αὐτῆς, which is the common Reading, has ἀνὴρ γλωσσώδης φοβερός ἐν ἀπωλείᾳ αὐτῆς. *Pædag.* L. ii. ch. 7. which is a good Comment upon the latter Part of the Verse, i. e. the talkative, abusive Person often brings upon himself not only Hatred and Disgrace, but Punishment likewise, and sometimes such a Punishment as is terrible to himself and the Beholders; which he illustrates by the Correction which *Thersites* underwent for his insolent way of talking.

#### CHAP. X.

Ver. 1. *A Wise Judge will instruct his People, and the Government of a prudent Man is well ordered.*] Will be well ordered, ἡγεμονία συνέλτ' ἐτάσσμένη ἔσται. This is the reading in all the Editions. The *Vulgate* renders, *Principatus sensati stabilis erit*, from a Copy probably which had σεεργμένη, to which agrees the Syriac, *Princeps sapiens stabiliet Civitatem suam.* *Calmet* follows one which read, ἐτάσσμένη ἔσται, *Le Gouvernement de l'Homme sensé sera étendue, son regne sera long & heureux*, i. e. God shall bless the Reign of a prudent Prince, and make it of long Continuance, and vast Extent. According to that of *Solomon*, *Prov. xxix. 14.* *The King that faithfully judgeth, his Throne shall be established for ever.*

Ver. 2. *As the Judge of the People is himself, so are his Officers, and what Manner of Man the Ruler of the City is, such are all they that dwell therein.* Ver. 3. *An unwise King destroyeth his People, but through the Prudence of them which are in Authority, the City shall be inhabited.*] Good Kings, such as *Josiah*, *Hezekiah*, *David*, &c. who have themselves a true Sense of Religion, and a Regard for the Honour of God, will be zealous in promoting the right Worship of him, and encouraging it in others; but such an evil one, as *Jeroboam*, who introduces wrong Modes of Worship, will occasion the Lord's People to transgress in the like Instances of Idolatry. We may make the like Observation with respect to the Roman Emperors, whether



whether we instance in *Augustus, Trajan, or Vespasian*, the Delight and Guardians of their People; or in those Monsters *Caligula, Nero, and Heliogabalus*, the Pests and Scourges of them. *Cicero* has the like Reflection with our Author, *Ut cupiditatibus principum & vitiiis infici solet tota Civitas, sic emendari & corrigi continentia, &c.* Through the Vices of Princes the whole City commonly is infected, as on the contrary, by their Goodness and Regularity, it is amended and improved: So that the Vices of Princes are not so much to be lamented, though this is no small Evil, as that their Subjects are drawn thereby to an Imitation of them. One may observe in the History of all Times, that such as the Rulers were, such by Degrees was the City itself; and every Change of Manners in the Prince, produces the same in the Conduct of the People. And then he beautifully observes, *Quo perniciosius de Republica merentur vitiosi Principes, quod non solum vitia concipiunt ipsi, sed ea infundunt in civitatem, plusque exemplo, quam peccato, nocent.* De Leg. L. 3. *St. Chrysostom* applies what is here said of Rulers in general, to such as are vested with spiritual Authority. To shew how their Failings influence others, he illustrates the Case by comparing their Miscarriages with Injuries happening to the natural Body. If a Hand, or Foot, or any common Member is hurt by some Accident, the whole Welfare of the Body is not thereby affected, nor its general Use obstructed; but if thro' some Casualty the Eyes are blinded, or the Head dangerously wounded, the whole Body suffers in the Calamity of so principal a Part, and wants its necessary Guide and Direction. *Eclog. de Peccat. & Confess.*

Ver. 4. *The Power of the Earth is in the Hand of the Lord, and in due Time he will set over it one that is profitable.* God, as he is the sovereign Lord of the World, disposes of the Kingdoms of the Earth according to his Pleasure; he pulleth down one, and setteth up another, *Psal. lxxv. 7. Dan. ii. 21.* as shall best suit with the Designs of his Providence. He rejected *Saul* from being King over *Israel*, for not executing his Commandments, and promoted *David* to the Kingdom, though chosen out of the People, as the fittest, and most profitable. And thus God in due Time raised up *Cyrus*, who was prophesied of above a hundred Years before his Birth, to be a special Instrument of his Providence in restoring the *Jews* from their Captivities, and to fulfil all his Will; or, according to some learned Men, the *Messiah* in particular may be here meant, the Expectation of whom was matter of Consolation to the *Israelites* in all their Dispersions and Calamities: For that there was an Expectation of some great Blessing or Deliverance still to come, in the Days of this Writer, appears from many Passages in this Book; and the Faith and Hope of such righteous ones among the *Israelites*, as waited for the

Salvation of God seems well expressed in these Words. See *Bishop Sherlock on Prophecy, Disc. 6.*

Ver. 5. *And upon the Person of the Scribe shall be lay his Honour.* The Title of Scribe belongs not merely to a Copier of the Law, but to those likewise who were learned in explaining it, and answering the Difficulties arising concerning the Sense of it. *Γραμματῆς* here used, signifies in general, a wise and learned Man, and so it is rendred, ch. xxxviii. 24. The *Jews* had their *Σοφοί, Γραμματῆς*, and *Συζητηταί*. *Σοφοί* were wise Moralists in general, *Γραμματῆς* were those that were skilled in the Knowledge of the Law, and interpreted it to the People, according to the literal Sense; *Συζητηταί* were mystical and allegorical Interpreters of Scripture. We meet with them all together, *1 Cor. i. 20:* The Sense, according to *Calmet* is, That God puts upon the Person or Face of the wise Man, part of the Glory with which he is encompassed, a Portion of that Light which shone upon the Face of *Moses*, *Exod. xxxiv. 33.* or, that God gives to the Wise all the Light which they have Occasion for to fulfil their Duty; that it is he which crowns their Skill, and gives Success and Honour to them; that the Dignity which a learned Man through his Merit arrives at, is from the Lord, who bestowed the Wisdom, and blessed the Endeavours, by which he became so eminent and useful; or, if by Scribes, we understand Magistrates or publick Officers of State, whom we read of often under the Kings of *Judah*, both in Times of War and Peace; the Meaning then is, that God has made Persons of such a public Character, in some Sort the Representatives of his Power upon Earth; that they are in this Respect the Images of God, and in proportion to their Dignity, claim Reverence and Honour. The *Oriental* Versions understand the Place in a moral Sense, *Dabit contentibus se gloriam suam*, i. e. Those who honour God, he will honour. The *Port Royal* Comment applies it to the Clergy, to whom, when God calls them to the important Charge of the Pastoral Office, he gives the Spirit of Wisdom and Understanding at their Desire, and the other Requisites to discharge so weighty a Trust. Or lastly, if we understand it of the High-Priest in particular, it may refer to the Majesty of God upon the Diadem of his Head, *Wisd. xviii. 24.*

Ver. 6. *Bear not Hatred to thy Neighbour for every Wrong, and do nothing at all by injurious Practices.* The Advice is like that of *Pythagoras*, in his golden Verses,

*Μὴδ' ἐχθαίρε φίλον σὸν ἀμαρτάνῃ εἶνεκα μικρῆς.*

The *Vulgate* renders, *Omnis injurie proximi ne memineris*; following a Copy probably which had *μνησῆς* instead of *μνησθήσῃς*. It seems to be a Repetition and Enforcement of *Levit. xix. 18.* and forbids the treasuring up in our Minds Revenge, for every private Injury



jury received, and meditating an Opportunity of returning the like. *Calmet* observes, that the Duty of Forgiveness is expressed here almost in as clear and full a Manner, as in the Gospel itself. The best Remedy against Injuries received is to forget them. *Injuriarum remedium est oblivio.* Aug. Epist. 54. And *Cicero* records it to the Honour of *Cesar*, *Quod nihil oblivisci solet, nisi injurias.* Orat. pro Ligar. Or perhaps the true Rendering and Meaning may be, Express not Ill-will to thy Neighbour by any act of Injustice, or by doing him any Wrong, and act nothing in a proud and haughty Way; which Sense of the whole Verse is greatly confirmed by the Context, and the *Oriental* Versions.

Ver. 7. *Pride is hateful before God and Man, and by both doth one commit Iniquity.* *ἡ ἐξ ἀμφοτέρων πλημμελήσει ἀδικία.* So *Vat. Drusus, Haschelinus* and *Grabe*, contrary to the reading of the *Alex. MS.* Why he preferred this, or how he understood it, we should probably have known, had he lived to publish his Notes. If with *Badiwell* and *Dru-sius*, we refer both to what goes before, the Sense will be, That by Pride and Injustice, (for no other Vices are mentioned) one commits Iniquity. *Grotius* by Conjecture reads, *ἡ ἐξ ἀμφοτέρων πλημμελεῖ ἀδικία*, Injustice offends against both, viz. God and Man; or, which comes to the same, by Injustice, a Man offends against both. This Exposition is more agreeable to the Context, and is confirmed by the *Oriental* Versions. *Syr.* *Odio est apud Deum & homines superbia, & apud utrumque* (*Noldius* renders the Particle *ו* which the *Syriac* here uses often by *Coram*) *rapina & oppressio*; and the *Arab.* *execrandus est fastus apud Deum & homines, & apud utrumque Violentia & Tyrannis.* The *Tigurin* is to the same Effect, *Utrique facinus injustum aversantur.* *Calmet* says, the Sense may be, that Injustice is beyond them both, i. e. more odious to God and Man, than either Hatred or Pride, and supposes the *Hebrew* originally so to have read.

Ver. 8. *Because of unrighteous Dealings, Injuries and Riches, got by Deceit, the Kingdom is translated from one People to another.* i. e. Because of Injustice, and contumelious (or proud) Behaviour, *διὰ ἀδικίας ἡ ὕβρις*, and Wealth, the Foundation of both, a Kingdom undergoes different Changes, and is translated into the Hands of different Rulers. Our Translators follow a Copy, which read *χρήματα δόλια*, but most Editions, as the *Oriental* Versions likewise, have only *χρήματα* singly. The Pride and Luxury of a Nation which enervate, publick Injuries which irritate, and Riches which create Envy, are Temptations to their Neighbours to invade such a dissolute People, and are no improbable Causes of their Weakness, and final Overthrow. Besides the infinite Power of God, who is the sovereign Arbiter and Disposer of Kingdoms, and overturns them of-

ten for the Punishment of either Prince or People, one may plainly discover a natural Cause of the Fall of States and Empires, which is no other, than national Iniquity, or the Ambition, Violence, and Injustice of the Great. When a publick Spirit is lost and destroyed, and Liberty itself is no longer valued as a Blessing; when ambitious and aspiring Tempers, seek only their own Benefit, and are regardless of the publick Welfare, one may pronounce that *that* Kingdom cannot long stand, but must at length sink under the Weight of its Burthens and Oppressions. This Observation is justified in the Translations and Fate of the four famous Monarchies; Luxury within themselves, and Violence offered to others, Self-interestedness, and a Disregard to the principal Things, both Civil and Sacred, were the Occasion of their Overthrow. As to the *Roman* Empire in particular, *Cato's* Account of that People's gradual Degeneracy and Fall, is worth transcribing, and is a close Comment upon the Passage before us, *Nolite existimare majores nostros armis Remp. ex parva magnam fecisse. Alia fuere quæ illos magnos fecerunt, quæ nobis nulla sunt. Domi industria, foris justum imperium, animus in consulendo liber, neque libidini neque delicto obnoxius. Pro his nos habemus Luxuriam atque Avaritiam, publice Egestatem, privatim Opulentiam, inter bonos & malos nullum discrimen, omnia virtutis præmia ambitio possidet; neque mirum, ubi vos separatim sibi quisque consilia capitis, ubi domi voluptatibus, hic pecuniæ aut gratiæ servitis. Hinc impetus fit in vacuam Remp.* Aug. de Civit. Dei, L. v. ch. 13. *Solomon* assigns the like Reason of the Decay of States, and quick Succession of Princes, *For the Transgression of a Land, many are the Princes thereof,* Prov. xxviii. 2. *Βασιλεία ἀπὸ ἔθνους εἰς ἔθνος μεταγέται διὰ ἀδικίας ἡ ὕβρις ἡ χεῖμαλα*, is the reading in all the Editions of this Place: But I cannot conceal my Suspicion, that it is both corrupt and faultily pointed; I propose it therefore as a Conjecture, whether the true reading might not have been *ῥ 8. Βασιλεία ἀπὸ ἔθνους εἰς ἔθνος μεταγέται διὰ ἀδικίας ἡ ὕβρις.* *ῥ 9. Διὰ χεῖμαλα τί ὑπερηφανεύεται γῆ ἡ σποδός; φιλαργύρεν μὲν γὰρ ὁδὲν ἀνομιώτερον.* My Reasons to support this Conjecture are these. 1. In *ῥ 7.* two Vices are only mentioned, Pride and Injustice, as the Cause of the Fall of Empires, and therefore it seems wrong to insert a new Particular in the Verse following, which is a Continuation of the same Subject. 2. That, according to the common Reading, there seems to be no Sense or Connexion in *ῥ 9.* whether *τί ὑπερηφανεύεται γῆ ἡ σποδός* precedes *φιλαργύρεν*, &c. as it does in some Editions, or follows after it, as it does in others. 3. If *διὰ χεῖμαλα* be carried forward, and joined to *τί ὑπερηφανεύεται*, the Context is quite consistent and uniform, and a good Reason is subjoined against Pride upon account of Riches, viz. that the *φιλαργύρος*, or Person fond of Wealth, who is resolved to get it at any rate, often sets his



own Soul to Sale. I have the Pleasure to find that *Mess. of Port Royal* confirm this Conjecture in their Comment on that Place.

Ver. 9. *Why is Earth and Ashes proud? There is not a more wicked Thing than a Covetous Man, for such a one setteth his own Soul to Sale, because while he liveth, he casteth away his Bowels.*] That this Verse is mangled and imperfect, appears from the different Reading of it in most of the printed Editions, and from all the ancient Versions, none of which agree in placing the Sentences, or representing the Sense of the whole alike. The *Syr.* and *Arab.* say nothing of the covetous Man, or his Behaviour, nor are the intermediate Sentences in the *Vat.* or *Alex.* MS. Dr. *Grabe* indeed by a Transposition, *Eccles.* ch. x. makes them his 9<sup>th</sup> Verse, but from what Authority he either transposes, or inserts them, does not appear; the *Vulgate* has the whole, but in a different Order. Our Translation follows the *Complut.* an Edition of great Authority as to this Book. See *Grabe's Proleg.* ch. iii. § 1. yet here differs somewhat from the *Vulgate*. This great Uncertainty, and the Incoherence of the Text itself, have induced many to think of a Transposition, particularly *Jansenius*, and *Mess. of Port Royal*; and among the sacred Criticks, *Badwell* and *Castalio*, which is also followed in the *Geneva* Version. They have generally supposed it designed to fix this fine Reflexion, *Why is Earth and Ashes proud*, at the Beginning of the 11<sup>th</sup> Verse, where it is followed by one no less beautiful, and well adapted to it, and which gives a convincing Reason, why Man, Subject to so many Infirmities and Diseases, of short Continuance here, and whose final Condition is in the Dust, ought not to be proud. The Consideration, that he is a Composition only of animated Clay, and by Death resolvable into it again, when he shall be a filthy loathsome Object, and inherit creeping Things, *Θνητα, i. e.* poisonous Insects, and Worms, is alone sufficient to mortify all Pride even in the best, or greatest of the Species. But I do not warrant this Transposition, though the Sense is improved and well connected by it, without some Authority from MSS. or printed Copies to justify it. I shall only observe with *St. Chrysostom*, that the Prophets, to abate human Pride, represent the present State of Man, his highest Enjoyments of Life, and the final Period of it, under the most diminutive Terms, and the meanest Resemblances and Comparisons. *Hom. 27. De incomp. Dei Nat.*

*Ibid.* *Because while he liveth, he casteth away his Bowels.*] The reading of this Passage is very different. Our Translators follow a Copy which had, *ὅτι ἐν ζωῇ αὐτοῦ ἐπέριψε τὰ ἐνδοόδια αὐτοῦ*, which the *Vulgate* seems likewise to have followed. The Sense of it is perplexed, the best that offers seems to be this, That the covetous Man for the Sake of Money pawns his Soul, or forfeits his Salvation, because, from an immoderate Love

of it, he scruples not to commit any Acts of Injustice, Fraud, or Violence. And from the same Principle, when he seeth his Brother have Need *ἐπέριψε τὰ ἐνδοόδια αὐτοῦ*, he casts away, or shuts up his Bowels of Compassion from him, *Omnem humanitatis affectum*, as *Castalio* renders *ἐνδοόδια*, answerable to *σπλάγχνα οὐλίσμων*, *Col. iii. 12.* or, it may mean that he is not good even to himself, but starves and pinches his own Bowels. *Calmet* favours this Sense, That for the Sake of getting Wealth, he exposes his Life, his Liberty, and his Repose; he, as it were, tears out his own Bowels by the Cruelty, which he exercises towards himself, refusing himself even common Necessaries; and after this Revenge upon himself, 'tis no Wonder that he casts off all Tenderneſs and natural Affection towards his nearest Relations, and all Care of those that belong to him. The Wickedness of Covetousness, and the Perdition it leads Men into, is strongly represented in the Instance of *Judas*, who when, for the Gain of thirty Pieces of Silver, he sold his Master, at length *ἐπέριψε τὰ ἐνδοόδια αὐτοῦ*, burst asunder in the Midst, and all his Bowels gushed out, *Acts i. 18.* Some Greek Copies, with which agree *Drusius* and *Vatablus*, have *ὅτι ἐν ζωῇ αὐτοῦ ἐπέριψεν τὰ ἐνδοόδια αὐτοῦ*. I presume the true reading in those Copies was, *ὅτι ἐν ζωῇ αὐτοῦ ἐπέριψεν ἐνδοόδια αὐτοῦ*, *i. e.* because in his Life, or while he is living, his Bowels are, or may be shed. To shed a Man's Bowels, is a *Hebrew* Phrase for an Assassination, or sudden Slaughter of a Man. Thus in the Passage of *Joab* and *Amasa*, 'tis said, *He smote him under the fifth Rib*, an *Hebraism* for stabbing at the Heart, and *shed his Bowels to the Earth*, another Expression likewise forstabbing him: And none so liable to be thus slain by Treachery, as unjust and proud Kings, potent and great Oppressors, of whom the Context warrants us to understand this Passage principally. The Sense according to this small Alteration is, *Dum vivit, intestina projiciuntur*, *i. e.* that such a Tyrant is never safe, in the midst of Life he is in Death. And the Reflexion we should draw from it is, that the most secure State, (seemingly from Wealth and Power) is not exempt from sudden Accidents, nor more safe from Violence, than natural Death; which seems to be a more natural Sense, than that of *Grotius*, who understands the Place of chirurgical Operations, upon the Persons of the Mighty.

Ver. 10. *The Physician cutteth off a long Disease, and he that is To-day a King, To-morrow shall die.*] There are various Readings of this Passage likewise; the two principal are, *μακρὸν ἀρρώστημα νόστος ἱατρὸς*, which is followed by our Translators, and approved of by *Drusius* and *Grotius*; and *μακρὸν ἀρρώστημα σκώπεται ἱατρὸν*. The Sense of the former is, that as a Physician cureth a long and inveterate Disease by the Application of suitable Remedies, so God often takes away suddenly



ly by the Stroke of Death, a Tyrant who has been a long and sore Evil and Plague to the State; which seems to be the Sense of the *Vulgate* rendering, *Omnis potentatus brevis vita*, though this probably was a marginal Note, and crept into the Text. The Sense of the latter is, A long Disease baffles or laughs at the Physician; and considered jointly with the following Sentence, *He that is a King To-day, To-morrow shall die*, contains two substantial Reasons why mortal Men should avoid Pride, viz. the Difficulty and Uncertainty of Cure in long and chronic Distempers, and the sudden and unexpected Dispatches made by short and acute ones. Misfortunes in Life, and remarkable Visitations have taught even Tyrants not only a Sense of their Mortality, but of Submission and Humility. When the Hand of God lay heavy upon *Antiochus Epiphanes*, he, who a little before was so exalted beyond the Condition of a Man, that he thought he might have commanded the Waves of the Sea, and could weigh the Mountains in a Balance, and reach even to the Stars of Heaven, as it is finely expressed, 2 Maccab. ch. ix. 11, 12. began to come to a due Sense and Knowledge of himself, when Worms rose out of his Body: He then confessed his Weakness, and the Folly of opposing the most High in these remarkable Words, *It is meet to be subject unto God, and that a Man who is mortal, should not proudly think of himself as if he was God*. *Mattathias* enforces his Speech to his Children, concerning that Tyrant from the like Consideration, *Fear not the Words of a sinful Man, for his Glory shall be Dung and Worms; To-day he shall be lifted up, and To-morrow he shall not be found, because he is returned to his Dust, and his Thought is come to nought*, 1 Maccab. ii. 62, 63.

Ver. 12. *The Beginning of Pride is when one departeth from God, and his Heart is turned away from his Maker.* ἀρχὴ ὑπερηφανίας, ἀρθεῖν ἀπὸ Κυρίου, or, as other Copies have it, ἀποστῆναι ἀπὸ Κυρίου, which the *Vulgate* manifestly follows, i. e. to depart from God, is the Beginning of Pride, or rather Pride is the Cause of Man's revolting from the Lord. Thus the Syriac, *Initium delictorum hominum est ipsorum superbia*, as if the Reading was, ἀρχὴ ὑπερηφανίας, κ. τ. λ. And so *Calmet*, *Le premier pas que l'homme fait pour s'éloigner de Dieu, est l'orgueil*, i. e. the first Step which a Man makes to depart from God is through Pride. According to *Grotius*, the Sense is, that it is ἀρχὴ ὑπερηφανίας, the Height of Pride, *fastigium superbiae*, to depart from, and rebel against one's Maker; and so *Resh* is often taken in *Hebrew*, and ἀρχὴ in many Places of this Book, ch. xi. 3. xxix. 21. xxxix. 26. The following Sentence ὃ ἀπὸ τοῦ ποιῆσαι αὐτὸν ἀπέστη καρδία αὐτοῦ, should be rendered, *and whose Heart is turned away from his Maker*. It is an *Hebraism*, as in *Psal. xxxii. Blessed is the Man to whom the Lord imputeth no Sin, and*

*there is no Guile in the Spirit of him*. So the *Heb. שֶׁנֶּחְמָה עִי בְּרֹאשׁוֹ אֵין עֵצָה בְּרוּחוֹ*; so the LXX. and yet our rendering is preferable, *and in whose Spirit there is no Guile*; and so our Translators have done in other Places. The Truth of the Observation itself will appear from considering the first Angel and Man. *Lucifer* was dazzled with his great Beauty and Perfections, he forgot that he was nothing before God made him what he was, and imagining that he could subsist by himself, independently of his Creator, he fell into a shameful Apostasy and Rebellion. *Fulgent. de Prædestin. L. i.* The first Man in like manner became an Apostate through Pride, and all his Children, who imitate his Presumption, and make an Idol of their own Will, and aspire to a Perfection which is incommunicable to any Creature, do so far withdraw their Hearts like him from their Maker, and renounce Allegiance to him. Pride in both was the Beginning of Sin, as it follows in the next Verse. In the Devil it produced Envy, which is inseparable from it, and by it he ruined the first Man; in *Cain*, the eldest of *Adam's* Children, it produced Jealousy, which made *Abel's* Virtue and good Qualities insupportable to him, and that Jealousy filled him with Rage to kill his Brother, the Proto-Martyr of the *Old Testament*.

Ver. 13. *For Pride is the Beginning of Sin.* i. e. It is the Source of all, or the greatest Sins, or it is itself the Chief of all Sins; and so *Grotius* expounds it, *Summum omnium peccatorum est superbia*. *Fulgentius* says, Pride is properly styled here ἀρχὴ ἀμαρτίας, because Sin springs from it, as from its Root. *De Virgin. & Humil.* And this we may either understand with that Writer, of the Sin and Fall of *Lucifer*, for so high does he trace the Original of Pride. *De Prædest. L. i.* as does *St. Austin* likewise, *De Civit. Dei, L. xii. c. 6.* Or, we may apply it to *Adam's* Transgression in particular, as others do; or we may take Pride in a larger Sense here, to signify in general a Contempt of God, which accompanies all Manner of Sin, according to that of *Prosper*, *Nullum peccatum fieri potest, potuit, aut poterit, sine superbia; si quidem nihil aliud est omne peccatum, nisi contemptus Dei*. *De Vita Contemplat. L. iii. ch. iii. 4.* That Pride is the Root or Source of Sin, Experience and Observation confirm, for Men grow more or less wicked in Proportion as this Vice of Pride gets Ground. Some Degree of it is to be found in every Act of Disobedience; for Sin being a Transgression of the Law, implies a Contempt of the Authority which enacts it; but when Pride is grown up to the Height, it exalts Men into so vain an Opinion of themselves, that they lose the Sense of Duty, and of those Obligations which they owe to their Maker, and the Overflowings of their Ungodliness are like a mighty Torrent. The Psalmist therefore, with great Propriety, gives this



this, as the Character of an ungodly Man, *That he is so proud he careth not for God, neither is God in all his Thoughts*, Psal. x. 4. And as Pride was the Original of Sin, so is it still the Promoter and Continuer of it, Pride being the Fountain of most of the Heresies and Schisms which have disturbed the Church. Dr. Grabe contends, that the true reading of this Place is, ἀρχὴ ὑπερηφανίας ἀμαρτία, Proleg. c. ii. Tom. ult. to make it correspond with the preceding Verse. But it matters not greatly which reading is preferred, the Sense being nearly the same in both.

Ibid. *And therefore the Lord brought upon them strange Calamities.*] As Pride is the Root of Sin, so God's Judgments and Threatnings are particularly levelled against it. On this Account the Prophets frequently denounce Destruction to Nineve, Babylon, Tyre, and Jerusalem itself. And one End of the Ruin brought upon a wicked People, is to stain the Pride of their Glory, and to revenge their contemptuous Defiance of him. There are two Readings of the Greek, παρεδόξασι κύριος τὰς ἐπαγωγὰς, which is followed in our Version; and though this Expression is somewhat particular, yet is it warranted by a Parallel on Deut. xxviii. 59. παραδόξασαι κύριος τὰς πληγὰς σου, and in this Sense ἐπαγωγὴ is often used in this Book. See Note on ch. ii. 2. The other Reading is παρεδόξασι κύριος τὰς συναγωγὰς, i. e. God hath disgraced the Assemblies or Congregations of the Proud; and thus συναγωγὴ is used, ch. xvi. 6, 7, 8. upon a similar Occasion. The Vulgate favours this Sense, *Exbonoravit conventus malorum*; and the Tigurin, *Agmina malorum affectit ignominia*; and Coverdale's, and the Geneva Version are to the same Effect. In either Reading there are memorable Instances of the Truth of the Observation. Thus God brought strange Calamities, upon the proud Builders of Babel, the old Giants, the Inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrob, ch. xvi. 7, 8. Pharaoh and the Canaanites, who are particularly referred to in the Context, Salmanasser, Sannacherib, Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, and other insolent and haughty Princes, whose Actions are recorded in sacred and profane History, all of whom fell away in the Strength of their Foolishness, and were abhorred by God for their Pride.

Ver. 18. *Pride was not made for Man, nor furious Anger for them that are born of a Woman.*] οὐκ ἐκτίσται ἀνθρώποις ὑπερηφανία, ἔδὲ οὐ γὰρ θυμὸς γεννῆμασι γυναικῶν, i. e. Pride was not created in Men, as the Geneva Version rightly has it, with which agree Grotius and Junius. There is not, therefore, any just Reason to accuse Nature, or complain of our Creator, if we are subject to Pride, Anger, or Revenge, for these are not radical Vices, or natural to our Frame, but such as we brought upon ourselves through Negligence, or the Malice of the Devil introduced them.

As God is not the Author of Sin, so neither hath he infused such bad Habits. Pride indeed is natural to some kind of Animals, and Anger to others; but Man came perfect out of his Maker's Hands, and if Pride, Wrath, or Cruelty, prevail over him, they are Passions originally foreign to his Nature. In himself he is so excellent, and his Nature so far superior to that of Animals, that what are Perfections in them, are in Man Vices, and their Nature and Qualities, are his Shame and Reproach. Thus St. Austin, *Tantæ excellentiæ est in comparatione pecoris homo, ut vitium hominis natura sit pecoris*, L. ii. De peccat. origin. c. iv. The latter Sentence, ἔδὲ οὐ γὰρ θυμὸς γεννῆμασι γυναικῶν, which is well rendred in our Version, and with it agree Drusus, Junius, Badwell and Bossuet, as also the Oriental and Coverdale's Versions, is strangely misunderstood by Grotius, and very badly rendred by him, *nor furious Anger for the female Sex*. Had he attended to the Use of the Phrase, Job. xv. 14. xxv. 4. 1 Macc. iii. 45. Matt. xi. 11. he might have spared his unhandsom Snear, and unjust Reflection, *Sunt quidem multe mulieres iracundæ, sed non necessario*. In this Mistake he manifestly copies the Vulgate, *Neque iracundia nationi mulierum*: as do Mess. of Port Royal, and the Geneva Version, and some other Interpreters, all of whom derive their Mistake from the same Cause, and seem not to have consulted the Greek, which gives no Handle, as there is no Foundation in Nature, for such an Abuse. I shall only set down this Caution about Pride, that it is the more dangerous as it is a Bosom Evil. Other Vices are more open, and strike a Sort of Horror in the Commission; but Pride springs from our very Virtues, it grows up with them, and lies concealed under them, like a Worm in some fair Fruit, which spoils and corrupts all within, however beautiful the outward Appearance may be.

Ver. 19. *They that fear the Lord are a sure Seed, and they that love him, an honourable Plant; they that regard not the Law, are a dishonourable Seed; they that transgress the Commandments, are a deceivable Seed.*] σπέρμα πλανήσεως, a mistaken, or, as the Margin has it, an unstable Seed. Our Translators follow the Complut. with which agrees Camerarius's Copy. But neither the Vat. nor Alex. MS. nor the Vulg. nor Syr. nor Drusus follow it. The other Greek Copies have, σπέρμα ἐνὶ μὲν ποτὶν; σπέρμα ἀνθρώπων σπέρμα ἐνὶ μὲν ποτὶν; οἱ φοβούμενοι τὸ κύριον σπέρμα ἀτιμον ποτὶν; σπέρμα ἀνθρώπων σπέρμα ἀτιμον ποτὶν; οἱ παραβαίνοντες ἐντολάς, which if closely attended to, though seemingly intricate, affords a Sense easy and natural enough, viz. What is the precious Seed? (or what Race of Creatures is peculiarly worthy of Honour?) the Seed of Man, viz. the human Race alone of all the Generations of Creatures upon Earth claim this Honour. What is this precious or honourable Seed; (viz. of Man)



they that fear the Lord. What is said of *ἐπίμα ἀτιμὸν*, which immediately follows, if pursued in the same Light, will be equally clear. The first Answer to the Question is true so far as it goes, but being not complete or explicit enough, the Question is put a second Time to draw out a full Answer. The Repetition of Questions in this Manner is not unusual in Scripture, and in these sapiential Books especially, Instances of which we have, *Ecclus.* ch. ii. and iii. *Psal.* xxiv. 7, 8, 9, 10. and many might be fetched from the *Proverbs*. Of the two Greek Readings, if one only is to be admitted, there seems much the greater Authority for the latter, which our Translation hath omitted. Whether both be genuine, cannot be determined. *Hæschelius* indeed has joined them, but from what Copy, or whether from a very ancient one, does not appear. The Geneva Version makes one Verse of both, and sets the Sense in no indifferent Light, *There is a Seede of Man which is an honorable Seede; the honorable Seede are they that feare the Lord. There is a Seede of Man, which is without Honour; the Seede without Honour, are they that transgresse the Commandements of the Lord; it is a Seede that remaineth, which feareth the Lord, and a fair Plant that love him; but they are a Seede without Honour, that despise the Lawe, and a deceivable Seede, that breake the Commandements.*

Ver. 20. *Among Brethren he that is chief is honourable, so are they that fear the Lord in his Eyes.* i. e. honourable in his Eyes. The Syr. Rendering is preferable, *Inter fratres natu grandior est honorabilis, at qui timet Dominum honorabilis est præ illo*; and the Tigurin Version agrees with it.

Ver. 21. *The Fear of the Lord goeth before the obtaining of Authority, but Roughness and Pride is the losing thereof.* This Verse is omitted in many Greek Copies, the *Vulg.* and *Oriental* Versions. Our Translators follow the *Complut.* There are two Readings of the first Sentence, viz. *πρὸ λήξεως ἀρχῆς, φέλος πνεύς*, and *πρὸ λήξεως ἀρχῆς, κ. τ. λ. Σκληροσμός* is rather Hardness of Heart, than Roughness, such as was that of *Pharaoh's*. The History of the different Fortunes of *Saul* and *David* is a full Comment on this Verse.

Ver. 22. *Whether he be rich, noble, or poor, their Glory is the Fear of the Lord.* i. e. In every State of Life, the Fear of the Lord is most to be valued and regarded. Whether a Man be rich and honourable, or poor and disregarded, under each of these Conditions let him act agreeably to what God requires from him. In the former State, let him not pride himself in, nor presume too much upon a great Fortune, nor be tempted to forget God, the Giver of it. In the latter, let him not offend against his Neighbour by Wrong, or Robbery, nor against his God by Murmurs and Discontent. The Author seems to allude to *Jerem.* ix. 23, 24.

Ver. 23. *It is not meet to despise the poor Man that hath Understanding, neither is it convenient to magnify a sinful Man.* In the *Proverbial Books*, Wisdom and Religion mean the same Thing, and accordingly by a Man of Understanding here, is meant a just and good Man. And thus the *Vulgate*, *Noli despicere hominem justum pauperem, & noli magnificare virum peccatorem divitem*, which last Word is very properly added there to preserve the Antithesis, which is likewise inserted in the *Oriental*, the *Tigurin*, and the old *English* Versions.

Ver. 25. *Unto the Servant that is wise shall they that are free do Service.* See ch. xi. 1. It is not properly speaking either Birth or Fortune, that makes the free Man or the Slave. A Man of a good and great Soul, of an elevated Genius, and of surprizing Parts and Accomplishments, in whatever Condition he be with respect to his outward Circumstances, is always free, and fit to preside over his Superiors in Birth or Fortune. His great Abilities will always command respect; he will shine either in private or publick Life, and is born not to instruct Children only, but to teach Senators Wisdom; not to command a single Family, or Neighbourhood, but Provinces and Kingdoms. *Joseph's* great Accomplishments, though sold for a Bond Servant, could not be confined to *Potiphar's* little Concerns, which his Skill and Faithfulness greatly improved, but gave him Authority over the whole Land of *Egypt*; nor was *Daniel*, one of the Children of the Captivity, less in Favour and Power at the Court of *Nebuchodonosor*. *Diogenes*, when exposed at a publick Sale, and asked what he knew, conscious of his own Worth, and of the Importance of his Abilities, with a peculiar Greatness of Soul replied, I know how to command free Men, *Apud Laert.* L. 6. *Solomon* has an Observation resembling this, *A wise Servant shall have Rule over a Son that causeth Shame*, *καλῆσει δεσποτῶν ἀφρόνων*, according to the 6, *Prov.* xvii. 2.

Ibid. *And he that hath Knowledge will not grudge when he is reformed.* Many Copies omit *παιδεύόμενος*, and the Sense is good without it. But if it be admitted, it should not be rendred reformed, but either instructed, or reproved, as the *Vulgate* has it, i. e. No Man of Knowledge or Sense, will murmur to be either instructed or reproved by one, who is his superior both in Skill and Power.

Ver. 26. *Be not overwise in doing thy Business, and boast not thyself in the Time of thy Distress.* i. e. Be not conceited of thy Work, nor boast of thy superior Skill in the way of thy Profession or Trade, and be not slothful in Time of Poverty, or ashamed to get your Livelihood by Labour, nor say with the unjust Steward, *I cannot dig, to beg I am ashamed*; which is a ridiculous Pride. Or the Sense may be, Invent not Pretences to excuse



excuse yourself from Labour, nor scruple through a false Shame to get your own living by it in a low Estate; and thus the Geneva Version, *Seek not Excuses when thou shouldest doe thy Worke, neither be ashamed thereof through Pride in the Time of Adversitie.* The Arab. Version too seems to favour this latter Sense, *Ne sis ignavus in opere tuo, nec impediatur te pudor, cum fueris egenus ab his quæ tibi profunt,* following probably a Copy which read *νοσφιζα.* The Port Royal Comment is, Be not exalted or proud upon having done your Work or Duty, for when we have taken the greatest Pains to do our best, we are but unprofitable Servants; but such is our Nature, that even our Virtue and Goodness itself is apt to betray us into Pride.

Ver. 27. *Better is he that laboureth and aboundeth in all Things, than he that boasteth himself, and wanteth Bread.* Calmet thinks our Author here aims at exposing the ridiculous Pride of the Stoics, who made their wise Man, though starving and naked, a Demi-God.

*Ad summam sapiens uno minor est Jove; dives,*

*Liber, honoratus, pulcher, rex denique regum.*

Hor. Epist. L. i.

Some Copies read *ἡ περπαλῶν, ἡ δοξαζόμενος,* others omit *περπαλῶν,* and have only *ἡ δοξαζόμενος.* I think the true reading is *ἡ περπαλῶν δοξαζόμενος,* which the Alex. MS. has, i. e. one that strutteth and walketh proudly, that goeth about boasting, as vain and idle Persons are wont to do, one of a quite different Character from *ἐργαζόμενος* immediately before. As St. Paul's Words *περπατῆντας ἀτάκτως μὴ δὲν ἐργαζομένους,* express the full Opposition to his Command *ἵνα μετὰ ἡσυχίας ἐργαζόμενοι, κ. τ. λ.* 2 Thess. iii. 11, 12.

Ver. 28. *My Son, glorify thy Soul in Meekness, and give it honour according to the Dignity thereof.* The Sense seems the same with Luke xxi. 19. *In your Patience possess your Souls,* but the Expression here is much stronger. It is rendred more clearly in the Geneva Version, *My Son, get thyself Praise by Meekness, and esteem thyself as thou deservest,* i. e. if thou art in Want and Poverty, be not dispirited or dejected, but preserve a constant Evenness of Temper, and endeavour to act up to the Dignity of your Nature; or there may be, according to Calmet this farther Meaning, as *τιμῇ* often signifies Maintenance in this Writer, Provide for all the necessary Wants of Life, by allowing yourself Food, and all Things convenient, according to your Condition and Circumstances. In the foregoing Verse the wise Man condemns those who out of a foolish Vanity were ashamed to work, though ready to perish with Hunger, see Prov. xii. 9. to which probably he alludes. Here he attacks those who out of a shameful Principle of Avarice, refuse themselves the common Necessaries of Life, and are afraid to use those good Things which they have in

their Power and Possession. This Sense seems countenanced by the following Verse. This Advice may also be extended to Persons succeeding to great Fortunes, or advanced to high Posts of Honour, to behave with Moderation in their new State, not to be puffed up with Pride, nor yet to demean themselves, or act below the Dignity of their Rank, and thereby forfeit the Regard and Deference due to it: But this is not so agreeable to the Context.

Ver. 29. *Who will justify him that sinneth against his own Soul.* i. e. He that is so niggardly and covetous as to defraud and deny himself even common Necessaries, and fails in the Duty which he owes to himself, cannot expect that others should justify him, or speak in his Behalf, or that they should administer any Relief to him. The latter Part of the Verse, *Who will honour him that dishonoureth his own Life,* is parallel to that of Horace,

*Miraris, cum tu argento post omnia ponas,*

*Si nemo præstet quem non merearis honorem?*

Lib. i. Sat. i.

Ver. 31. *He that is honoured in Poverty, how much more in Riches? and he that is dishonourable in Riches, how much more in Poverty?* He that behaves well upon a little, would shine in the Management of a superior Fortune; but he that cannot live upon an overgrown Fortune with Credit, will be laughed at and despised, when reduced almost to Poverty; or the Sense may be, If a poor Man, by his Skill and Merit acquires Honour and Esteem, how much more would he have been respected, and his Accomplishments extolled, if he had been Master of a great Fortune. A poor Man of real and intrinsic Worth, is more to be esteemed and valued, than one who is simply rich, and has nothing else to recommend him; for the Reputation of the former must arise from himself, and his own personal Merit, which has broke through many Difficulties and Oppositions in its Way. Whereas the Honour which attends the Rich, and the Regard paid to him, is founded upon something foreign to him, upon the lucky Chance of Birth or Fortune, which may be, and sometimes is, the Lot of the Worthless and Undeserving. Diogenes and Epictetus adorned a very mean Condition, as Joseph was an Instance of a just Conduct in both States.

## CHAP. XI.

Ver. 2. *Commend not a Man for his Beauty, neither abhor a Man for his outward Appearance.* By which is not meant, that it is no Advantage or Recommendation to a Man to have a good Person, or an agreeable Air; but the Meaning is, that a Man's Merit or Excellency is not chiefly to be placed in the Size, or Lineaments of the Body, since the Mind is the true and lasting Beauty, in the Accomplishments of which



which consists the Perfection of Man, and the Likeness and Image of God. As outward Beauty therefore does not confer Merit, so neither should the Want of it in any Instances occasion Ridicule or Contempt. Lowness of Stature, which with some passes for a Sort of Deformity, is no Reason for Sneer or Reproach, for sometimes great Souls inhabit little Bodies, and much Merit may lie concealed under a disagreeable Outside. St. Paul's Person and Appearance was, according to Tradition, but ordinary and contemptible; and yet, if we consider his great Qualities and Attainments, he was rather an Angel than a Man. Honey is here called ἀρχὴ γλυκασμάτων, and rightly rendred *the Chief of sweet Things*, and so ἀρχὴ is used in many Places by this Writer, See ch. xxix. 21. xxxix. 26. Psal. cx. 3. Amos vi. 6. which the Author pertinently illustrates by the Example of the Bee, which, though little in Size and Appearance, by its Industry produces Fruit of most admirable Use and Sweetness.

Ver. 4. *Boast not of thy Cloathing and Raiment.*] These are good indeed for the Uses which God designed them, to defend us from the Weather, or to cover our Nakedness, but 'tis Folly to boast of that as a Perfection, which owes its Original to our Shame, our Weakness, or natural Necessities, See Chrys. in ch. iii. Gen. Hom. 18. and to this Sense what follows may also be explained, *Exalt not thyself in the Day of Honour*; for that δόξα signifies glorious Apparel, See Addit. Esther xv. 1. Luke xii. 27. where ἐν πάσῃ τῇ δόξῃ αὐτοῦ ὁ μετὰ αὐτοῦ, must be taken in this Sense, the same with ἰματισμὸς ἐνδοξός, Luke vii. 25. and δόξα τῷ ἰματισμῷ, Isai. iii. 11. Or δόξα may be taken here in its usual Acceptation, to signify Advancement, State, or Dignity, and then the Advice is, not to be proud of these, because of God's terrible Judgments, often sent to mortify, and subdue Pride. Thus Herod priding himself in his Royal Robes, and in the flattering Acclamations of the People, was immediately struck with an incurable Disease from the Hand of God. Thus also Nebuchadnezzar, flushed with the Success of his Victories, and with the superb Magnificence of Babylon, which he had built for the Honour of his Majesty, is admonished by a Voice from Heaven, *Thy Kingdom is departed from thee*, and was so literally brought to the Ground, as to graze upon it, like one of the Beasts, Dan. iv. 30. Histories are full of such Revolutions, and Changes of Princes and mighty Men deposed, vanquished, made Prisoners, and led in Triumph by the Conquerors. Scripture shews us Sampson in the Hands of the Philistines, and Zedekiah in those of the Babylonians, which Instances are sufficient to shew the Truth of the Observation in the two following Verses.

Ver. 7. *Blame not before thou hast examined the Truth; understand first, and then rebuke.*] To proceed with Caution and Deliberation,

and to examine into the Merits of a Cause, before Sentence is pronounced, is agreeable to what God himself hath done upon many Occasions; for with respect to the Sin of our first Parents, he vouchsafes first to enquire about the Offence, and to examine the Fact, before he gives Sentence against them. The like Behaviour is observable in God with regard to the Murder of Abel; he first asks Cain, *Where is thy Brother*, giving him an Opportunity to excuse himself, if he could, before he pronounces, *Thou art cursed from the Earth*. The like Example we have, Gen. xi. 5. where it is said, *the Lord came down to see the Tower*, before he would confound their Language. And again, Gen. xviii. 20, 21. speaking of Sodom and Gomorrah, he says, *He will go down and see, whether they have done altogether according unto the Cry which is come unto him*. He, from whom no Secrets are hid, even he first examines the Fact, and will hear first what miserable Man can say for himself, before his Sentence shall pass upon him; not out of any Ignorance of what was done, for how should the omniscient God, θεὸς γνῶσκων, be ignorant? But out of his wonderful Clemency and unspeakable Moderation towards Man, and to instruct his Creatures to proceed with the same Caution, and not to be precipitate, or rash in their Censures or Rebukes. This is the very Inference which St. Chrysostom draws from it, τὴ βέλῃ καὶ αἰσῶς ὀφθαλμοῖς, κ. τ. λ. Docere nos vult, quod non auditu solo peccatores condemnandi sint, neque sententiae ferendae, nisi probatio precedat. Audiamus haec omnes; non enim solum ii, qui tribunali sedent, observare hanc legem debent, sed & nullus unquam ob nudam accusationem proximum condemnet. Com. in loc. Mede. Disc. 40. This Rashness David was guilty of, when listening to the false Suggestions of Ziba, he condemned Mephibosheth, and gave away his Inheritance, 2 Sam. xvi. 4. It was Matter of continual Grief to Constantine, that he had put his Son Crispus to Death by a hasty Credulity; and for the same Reason Eusebius condemns the Proceedings of Theodosius the Great, against the People of Thessalonica. *Doth our Law judge any Man before it hear him, and know what he doth?* was Nicodemus's wise Answer to the Pharisees, John vii. 51. And from hence we may explain our Saviour's Answer to the Woman taken in Adultery, *Neither do I condemn thee*, ch. viii. 11. which we are not to understand, as if he thought her innocent, or any way approved or authorized hereby the Sin of Adultery, as some have falsely inferred; but that he discharged her at this Time, as her Accusers through Self-Consciousness had fled, and she had not been formally convicted of the Crime.

Ver. 8. *Answer not before thou hast heard the Cause.*] By a hasty Proceeding thou wilt probably mistake the Matter; and if thou judgest right, it is but by Chance; and therefore



fore thou wilt not escape Censure, according to that of *Seneca*,

*Qui statuit aliquid, parte inaudita altera, Equum licet statuerit, haud æquus erit.*

In *Medæa*.

A Man may perhaps think to shew the Readiness and Quickness of his Parts by a hasty Determination, but he will rather make himself ridiculous, and be in danger to pervert Judgment. According to that of *Solomon*, which this Writer had certainly in View, *He that answereth a Matter before he beareth it, it is Shame and Folly to him.* Hence Judges were, for their prudent Deliberation in Matters that came before them, called *Cognitores*, as it is incumbent upon them to know, and be acquainted with the Truth and Circumstances of a Case before they give their Sentence. For if it be a Fault in ordinary Discourse for a private Person to determine with Positiveness, before he rightly understands the Case, much greater certainly is the Imprudence and Rashness of a Magistrate, to be inconsiderate, or hasty in Matters of Justice, and Judgment. It was by searching out the Cause that he knew not, that *Job* put on Righteousness, and it clothed him, and his Judgment was as a Robe, and a Diadem, ch. xxix. 14, 16. From hence also we may be instructed in private Life, not to judge rashly, nor to suffer ourselves to be led away by vague and uncertain Reports, nor hastily credit Accusations to the Prejudice of our Neighbour, without knowing the Truth and Foundation of them.

Ver. 9. *Strive not in a Matter that concerneth thee not, and sit not in Judgment with Sinners.* According to the Marginal Rendering, *Sit not in the Judgment of Sinners.* The Sense may be, Sit not on the Bench with corrupt Judges; or, applied to private Life, Associate not, nor consult with Sinners; according to the Advice of the Psalmist, *Psal. i. 1. Blessed is the Man that hath not walked in the Counsel of the Ungodly, nor stood in the Way of Sinners, and hath not sat in the Seat of the Scornful.* Or, Sin not by private Judgment, or in Matters that do not belong to thy Cognizance; for nothing is more common, says *Nazianzen*, quoting this Passage, than for Men to interfere in Things that have no Relation to them, and to set up themselves as Censors of those who are not under them, and Judges of Things which they are ignorant of. God commands us to judge ourselves, and not others, and we always do the contrary. We are at no trouble to know, or understand ourselves, and are always determining about others, whom we know nothing of with Certainty. This the wise Man calls sitting in Judgment with Sinners, who make themselves such, by an unwarrantable Way of acting, full both of Presumption and Injustice.

Ver. 10. *My Son, meddle not with many Matters.* In any Business or Profession, a Man should not undertake more than his

Time, Condition, or the Nature of such Affairs to be well managed, will admit of. For either they must be performed imperfectly, and in Haste, or some of them be neglected. Life is too short, our Minds too limited, our bodily Powers too small and feeble, to execute successfully many Things at once; for the surest Way of doing nothing well, is to attempt a Multiplicity of Things together. It is a very just Observation, *Impar quisque invenitur ad singula, dum confusa mente dividitur ad singula.* This Advice also is proper in spiritual Matters; when we are about any part of our Duty, we must avoid, as much as possible, the Distraction of Cares, and outward Avocations; for as the Understanding when perplexed with several Objects, is intent upon none of them as it ought, so the Soul, divided between Heaven and Earth, and the Cares of each, makes slow Progress, and soars not to Perfection. This is particularly true of Prayer; if the Spirit of a Man is busied with a Variety of worldly intervening Cares, they will intrude themselves unseasonably, and abate the Fervour of Devotion. We may also hence see the Danger of a hurrying Life in general; the Soul thro' a Multitude of secular Business, or a continual Round of Pleasures, succeeding thick, one upon another, is apt to forget herself, and her true Concerns, and grow careless about what passes within. At first, she makes a faint Resistance, but by Degrees, being accustomed to a Life made up of Trifles and Pleasures, she at length becomes reconciled to it, and takes Delight in it, and so is carried with the many, down the Stream, and makes Shipwreck.

Ibid. *If thou meddle much, thou shalt not be innocent; and if thou follow after, thou shalt not obtain, neither shalt thou escape by fleeing.* *ἐὰν πολλὰ ποιοῖς.* The Advice here is not to avoid Business proportionable to our Strength or Leisure, but Employs of such a Nature as require our whole Time, to the Injury and Neglect of our own selves, or which cannot be sufficiently managed by dividing our Time; for by such Sort of Business one can get no good, it must be done by Halves, or every thing else must be neglected for it. We cannot by undertaking such Variety of Business, answer at the same Time the Trust reposed in us by others, and the Duty which we owe to our own selves. If thou meddle much, says the wise Man, thou shalt not be innocent, rather thou shalt not come off harmless, or unhurt; the Reason immediately follows, 2, (which I would here with the Oriental Versions, render *etenim*) for if you follow after, i. e. attempt them, thou shalt not obtain, i. e. thou canst not manage them (being many) neither shalt thou escape by fleeing, i. e. neither can you clear your Hands of them; the Consequence is, you can get no good, but must get Trouble, and may get Mischief by them; or, as the Margin is, *Thou shalt not escape Hurt.* *Bossuet's Exposition*



Exposition is to the same Effect, *Multis implicitus negotiis multa peccat, multa seclatus nihil capit, multa conatus, expedire se non potest.* The *Vulgate* here renders, *Et si Dives fueris, non eris immunis a delicto*; following a Copy which read *πλησις*, and with it agree the *Figurin*, *Geneva*, and *Coverdale's* Versions. The Sense of the whole Verse according to this Reading is, Be not too intent upon getting Riches, for as it is always dangerous to pursue them with too much Eagerness, so when gotten, do they not always satisfy, and oftentimes Endeavours for obtaining them prove ineffectual. For the Providence of God governs all Things, and if it is not his Will that a Man shall be rich, in vain does he run after them, they shall flee from him. If he allots a State of Poverty to a Man, it shall constantly pursue him, he shall not escape from it by any Art or Endeavours; but with the Blessing of God, Riches shall court a Man, and shall come to him without his Labour, or seeking.

Ver. 11. *There is one that laboreth, and taketh Pains, and maketh Haste, and is so much the more behind.* *τόσῳ μᾶλλον ὑστερεῖται.* The *Vulgate* renders, *Est homo laborans, & festinans & dolens impius, & tanto magis non abundabit.* The latter Part is but indifferently rendered, for Poverty is a negative Term, and is better expressed, as it is in the *Greek*, by Want, than by not abounding, and is even more proper and expressive than *πτωχία* *πενεσιάν* in the following Verse. *Seneca* well defines it, *Paupertas non ab eo dicitur, quod habet, sed ab eo quod ei deest.* And therefore, *Luke xxi. 4.* *αὐτῇ τῇ ὕστερον αὐτῆς*, is excellently well translated by the *Vulgate*, *Ex eo quod deest illi.* The *Vulgate* properly inserts *impius* in the Passage before us, for a wicked Man above all others, even though he *hastes to rise up early, and eats the Bread of Carefulness*, and employs the most usual and probable Means, shall not have the Success he proposes in the World, for want of the Blessing of God going along with him, which alone maketh rich, *Prov. x. 22.* *Mess. of Port Royal* expound this in a spiritual Sense, The proud *Pharisee* in the Gospel, whose Life was irreproachable, who fasted at all the stated Seasons, and paid Tythes with the greatest Exactness, but yet through his spiritual Pride was rejected, is an Instance of what is mentioned in this Verse, as the *Publican* is likewise, according to them, of the Verse following. That a Sinner like him, under a true Poverty of Spirit, who has a Sense of his Guilt, and acknowledges his own Vileness, has the best Prospect of Advancement; that though Men despise him, as the *Pharisee* did the *Publican*, yet God looks favourably upon him, and will regard him the more for not daring to lift up his Eyes to Heaven; he will exalt him from his low Estate, because by smiting his Breast he testifies his true Peni-

tence, and sues for Mercy in the Posture, and Language of the greatest of Sinners.

Ver. 15. *Love, and the way of good Works are from him.* The wise Man after having shewn that temporal Goods come from the Lord, such as Prosperity, Riches, Health, long Life, proceeds to shew, that spiritual Goods, the Endowments of the Mind, and the Affections of the Heart are from the same Originals, and the Gifts of his Bounty and Liberality. Not only the Knowledge of human Arts, and Proficiency in Science, but all Virtues and good Qualities, such as Love, both of God and our Neighbour, good Dispositions, and good Works, their natural Fruit, come from the Lord. This Verse, and the following, are omitted in the *Vat.* and many other *Greek* Copies, nor do they occur in all the *Latin* ones. The *Syriac* has them, and the *Complut.* and this last probably our Translators follow.

Ver. 16. *Error and Darknes had their Beginning together with Sinners, and Evil shall wax old with them that glory therein.* God made Man originally upright with the Sense and Knowledge of his Duty clearly stamped upon his Mind; he created him not unto Error or Sin, his Will was as perfect as his Understanding; but since the Fall, he has been less able both to discern and practise his Duty, and Darknes and Error are as it were natural to the whole Species; but in Sinners the sad Consequences of the Fall are most visible, and melancholy. Vicious Inclinations so early appear in them, that they may seem to be born with them, according to that of the *Psalmist*, *The Ungodly are froward even from their Mother's Womb, as soon as they are born they go astray and speak Lies*, *Psal. lvi. 3.* Though all Men are born in Sin, it is certain the Wicked seem to have brought into the World with them worse Dispositions than others; whether owing to their natural Temperament, and Constitution, or to the encreasing the evil Leaven through their own Fault, they have the Habit of Sin so deeply rooted, as if it was even natural; instead of growing in Grace, they pride themselves in Sin, and glory in their Shame, and through a long Continuance in it, strengthen themselves, as the *Psalmist* expresses it, in their Wickedness; and so they grow old in it, *Consenscunt in malo*, *Vulg.* and die without Repentance, or Amendment.

Ver. 17. *The Gift of the Lord remaineth with the Godly, and his Favour bringeth Prosperity for ever.* The Gifts, Favours, or Graces which God gives to pious and good Men, are durable, and permanent, nor is he easily induced to withdraw his Loving-kindness, according to that of *St. Paul*, *The Gifts of God are without Repentance*, *Rom. xi. 29.* i. e. He does not hastily revoke what he has granted, nor recall the Favours which he has once vouchsafed, arbitrarily, and without Reason. The Author having before established



blished these two great Truths, that all the good Things of this Life come from God, and that all the Evils of it are so many Punishments sent by him, he adds here, That the Gifts of God to the Righteous are attended with happy Success, they thrive with them, and are productive of more Good; but to the Wicked, whom sometimes the same Favours are vouchsafed to, they often prove to them the Means of their Ruin, and Snares to take them withal. This Observation is equally true, if applied to spiritual Favours. The Gifts of the holy Spirit, received into a Heart well disposed, like the Seed which fell upon good Ground, take deep Root there, and bring forth Fruit, which is always renewing and encreasing; for the good Man is daily improving the Talents received, is continually adding to his Virtues, and proceeding from Grace to Grace, till he arrives at Perfection; but the Wicked, by the Neglect, or Abuse of the same proffered Help, encrease unto more Ungodliness.

Ver. 18, 19. *There is that waxeth rich by his Wariness and Pinching, and this is the Portion of his Reward: Whereas he saith, I have found Rest, and now will eat continually of my Goods, and yet he knoweth not what Time shall come upon him, and that he must leave those Things to others, and die.* This is not rightly translated; it should be rendered, This is the Portion of his Reward, or this is all he gets by his pinching, viz. ἐν τῷ εἰπαὶ αὐτὸν, to say, or flatter himself, that he can now take his Ease, and live upon what he has hoarded up. *Middas* is thus used, *Matt.* vi. 2. *Luke* vi. 24. *Phil.* iv. 8. And by this Writer, *ch.* xiv. 6. upon the same Subject. *Horace* too, *Ep.* xvi. l. i. and other pure Writers, use *Pretium* in the like Sense. The Parable of the rich Man, *Luke* xii. 19, 20. very much resembles the Description of this Writer, who said to himself, *Soul, thou hast much Goods laid up for many Years, take thine Ease, eat, drink, and be merry.* And the Inference from both is nearly the same, *Thou Fool, this Night shall thy Soul be required of thee, and then whose shall those Things be, which thou hast provided?* And tis observed of the rich Miser here, that notwithstanding his laying up great Stock for Futurity, he knoweth not what may happen, or how long Time he shall have to live, or what Opportunity of using them; nor considereth how uncertain Life is, and that he may soon die, and leave his Riches for others. In the Greek there is ὅτερον πρότερον, for Death precedes the leaving our Goods to others. We have the like inverted Order, *Luke* xx. 15, 31. *Solomon* well exposes the fruitless Labour of such a Worldling, *There is one alone, and there is not a second, i. e. no Heir, he hath neither Child nor Brother, yet is there no End of his Labour, neither is he satisfied with Riches, neither sayeth he, For whom do I labour, and bereave my Soul of Good?* *Eccles.* iv. 8. The Observation of

the Son of *Sirach*, is a Consequence of the former Verse, where he says, That the Gifts of God to good Men are lasting, and blessed with Success; here he shews, by way of Contrast, that the good Things which he sometimes bestows upon the Wicked, who please themselves with the Hopes of long enjoying them, are soon taken from them, and when they imagine themselves most at Ease, and in the greatest Security of the Fruits of their Labour, God suddenly takes from them what they so much set their Hearts upon, and summons them to give an Account of their Stewardship.

Ver. 20. *Be stedfast in thy Covenant.* In the Covenant made with God, in which all the Jewish Posterity were included, as well as their Forefathers, and each one personally, by undergoing the Rite of Circumcision, the Seal of the Covenant. This the Israelites first entered into in the Person of *Abraham*, the Founder of their Race, *Gen.* xv. 8. next by that made with their Fathers in the Wilderness at Mount *Sinai*, *Exod.* xix. 6, 7, 8. after by the Covenant with *Joshua* upon their Entrance into the promised Land, *Josh.* viii. 32, 33. And lastly, at their Return from the Captivity under *Nehemiah*, when the original Covenant was solemnly renewed, *Neb.* ix. 38: and *ch.* x. 1, 2. The latter Part of this Verse, *Wax old in thy Work*, is well rendered by the Vulgate, *In opere manditorum tuorum veterasce.* This Advice may also be applied to the Christian Sacraments, to holy Orders, religious Vows, promissory Oaths, matrimonial Faith, &c. in all which as an Obligation is brought upon Persons by their Stipulations, so are they in Conscience bound carefully to fulfil their respective Engagements, to be conversant, and stedfast in their Covenant.

Ver. 21. *Marvel not at the Works of Sinners,—for it is an easy Thing in the Sight of the Lord, on the sudden to make a poor Man rich.* μὴ θαυμάζε ἐν ἔργοις ἀμαρτωλῶν. Θαυμάζειν is taken in a different Sense here, from what it is *ψ* 13. For besides the common Sense of Wondering, it may either be expounded, Praise or extol not the Works of Sinners; and in this Sense it is used, *Job* xxxii. 22. *Eccles.* vii. 31. xxxviii. 3. or, Do not envy, or desire the Riches, and Prosperity of the Wicked; or, Be not offended at the Works of Sinners; and thus it is used, *Eccles.* v. 8. *When thou seest the Oppression of the Poor, μὴ θαυμάσῃς*, be not troubled or offended at the Matter. See also *John* vii. 21. where πάντες θαυμάζετε, is explained, *ψ* 23. by χαλάτε. And the Reason follows immediately, why we should neither extol, envy, or be offended at the Prosperity of the Ungodly, because the Power of God can immediately alter the State and Condition of his Creatures, and deal with them as he wills, or sees proper, in an Instant, διὰ τάχους, ἐξάπνῃ; a Pleonasm, to express the Swiftneſs of his dealing. He can suddenly overturn the



the high Estate of a rich Sinner, and as suddenly make his Blessing to flourish upon the Godly. And thus God enriched the Patriarchs, *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*, for their Piety, with the Blessings of Plenty and Abundance, which the Law promised to the faithful, and obedient.

Ver. 23. *Say not, What Profit is there of my Service? and what good Things shall I have hereafter?*] These seem to be the Words of a poor Man in Despair, pouring forth his Complaint in some such melancholy Strain, What Reason is there for me to desire to live? Of what use am I in Life, what Advantage can I propose by a longer Stay, or what hopes have I of bettering my Condition? After all the Care I have taken to give Proofs of my Duty and Faithfulness to God, and an inviolable Attachment to his Service, what Good have I received from him in return? Am I the happier, or more at Ease in my Condition, have I received any, or more Comforts from his Liberality than others on that account? In the like Strain *Job's* Wife tries to subdue his Integrity, After all the Misfortunes which are come upon thee, the Loss of thy Goods and Children, which with such Pain and Danger I brought forth, and which is a visible Token of his Displeasure, the Fire of God falling from Heaven, dost thou still retain thy Integrity, and continue to serve him? What more or worse can he do to you, except taking away your Life, as a return for all your fruitless Services? *Curse God and die.* The Speech of *Job's* Wife is indeed but short in the *English* Version; but the Curious, by consulting the *LXX.* where it is continued to a great Length, may see enough of her outrageous Temper. *Tobit's* Wife too insults the Goodness of her Husband in the like sneering Manner. Where are thine Alms, and thy righteous Deeds. All thy fine Hopes and Expectations are plainly vanished, the Charities which you have exercised all your Life, profit you nothing; they have not kept you from Blindness, which deprives you of all Comfort,—behold, thou and all thy pious Works are laughed at, and every one is sensible of, and makes Sport with thy Disgrace.—Imitate not, says this pious Writer, such idle Persons in their profane Talk, entertain no such disrespectful Sentiments of God, nor dare to utter any evil Blasphemy against him, or to murmur at the Methods of his Providence. He will reward your Service and Faithfulness, when, and in what Manner, he sees proper; and if in this Life you fail of a Reward, you may be assured of a future, and better Recompence. In the next Verse we have a rich insolent Person described, triumphing in his imagined Self-sufficiency, as above the Reach and Power of Fortune, sporting himself in the Luxury of present Enjoyments, and quite indifferent and unconcerned about what may happen to him hereafter; like the Worldling de-

scribed in the Gospel, an equal Monument of Weakness, and Folly.

Ver. 25. *In the Day of Prosperity there is a Forgetfulness of Affliction, and in the Day of Affliction there is no more Remembrance of Prosperity.*] The Author here replies to, and reproves the Faults usually attending each Extream. He begins with the last first, that the Conduct of the conceited rich Man is entirely owing to his Forgetfulness, and want of Reflexion upon the Uncertainty of all human Happiness and Greatness, which God delights to overthrow and confound, when Men affect to be independent, and are regardless of his Power and Providence. On the other hand, the poor Man who is so dispirited and dejected with his present calamitous Circumstances, as to think of nothing else, forgets how Things were with him formerly, how he has been hitherto sustained by the Bounty of indulgent Heaven, and if not by the Bounty, yet with Necessaries, such as were most convenient for him. As if the present Cloud which hangs over him could never be removed, nor his Sun rise again in Glory, he forgets his Duty of Patience and Trust in God, and that it is an easy Thing in the Sight of the Lord on a sudden to make a poor Man rich; or if he does not do it instantly, or even at all, that he can bless his latter End, *ψ 26.* and make his Death comfortable; and, because he has in this Life received his evil Things, place him with *Lazarus*, in *Abraham's* Bosom. The *Vulgate* gives this by Way of Advice, and it is worthy of Remembrance, *In die bonorum ne immemor sis malorum, & in die malorum ne immemor sis bonorum*; by thus prudently managing the two different States, by reflecting often that a Change may come, we shall avoid Pride, and not sink into Despair.

Ver. 27. *The Affliction of an Hour maketh a Man forget Pleasure.*] Nothing shews more the Vanity of worldly Pleasures, than the shortness of their Continuance, and the Weakness of the Impression made by them; the Sense of them is interrupted, and even effaced by any Vexation of the Mind, or present Indisposition of the Body. Any acute Pain or Disease shall make us disrelish every thing about us, nor will the Anxiety be relieved, or suspended by any Reflexion on past Delights, or present Amusements; even the Voice of Melody is then harsh and ungrateful. This Observation is equally true, applied to Times of publick Calamity, when Diversions, Entertainments, and the usual Expressions of Joy lose all their former Relish, and are as disagreeable to the Inclination of all serious and considerate Persons as are then unseasonable and misbecoming. It was a just Reply of the *Jewish* Exiles, to those who required of them Melody in their Heaviness, *How can we sing the Lord's Song in a strange Land?* *Psalm. cxxxvii. 3, 4.* To propose Scenes of Mirth of any kind, to Persons



sons in a State of Trouble, whether in Captivity, or mourning some domestic Evil and Misfortune, is Impertinence, Insult, Cruelty; or the Meaning may be in a moral Sense, That Men are apt, when Evils and Calamities are upon them, and they lie under the Smart of present Sufferings, ungratefully to overlook past Instances of the divine Goodness to them, and not to reflect on former Mercies and Blessings, with that Gratitude and Thankfulness which they ought. Agreeably *Seneca* says, *Hoc habet inter reliqua mala dolor, quod non supervacuum tantum, sed & ingratus est.* Epist. 99. Some, and particularly *Calmet*, understand by the Hour of Affliction, the Hour of Death, which so absolutely effaces all that the World has in it which is charming and inviting, that one in those melancholy Circumstances cannot in the least attend to any of its Pleasures, or Allurements. The dying Person is insensible of all that passes; every thing before him is Mist and Darkness, and the Thought of former Delights and Regalements, either pleases him not at all, or, if he has been intemperate in the Use of them, fills his Soul with cutting Remorse at the Remembrance of them, and a lively Apprehension of Misery on that Account. This Sense seems favoured by the following Sentence, In his End his Deeds shall be discovered, *i. e.* while a Man is alive he may act under a Disguise, or Envy may detract from him, or Malice blacken him; in Death only we truly view and judge of the Man; their respective Works discover then both the good and bad Man, and follow them accordingly. *Mess. of Port Royal* understand the Place also in this latter Sense, and have this beautiful Reflexion upon it, "The Prospect of Death is a most necessary and useful Admonition to the living; 'tis that which forces Men at length in some Sort to despise the World, and to prepare for a better. The last Hour expels all those Clouds which darkened and intercepted the Soul; it represents to a Man in a Moment all the Folly and Vanity of his Life past, and convinces him of the Extravagance of his Desires, the Deceit of his Pleasures, and the Nothingness of worldly Hopes. 'Tis the View of this only, that gives a Man a right Sense of Things, and enables him to form a true Judgment of himself, and his State, persuades him in Time to provide for his future Safety, and properly to bid Adieu to the World, before he is forced to leave it."

Ver. 28. Judge none blessed before his Death, for a Man shall be known in his Children.] St. *Cyril* very highly commends the Son of *Sirach* for this fine Reflexion, in Terms of great Honour and Respect, *Hom. li. In S. Eustath. Antioch.* which he expatiates upon after his oratorical Manner. The ancient Sages, upon the View of the Uncertainty of human Happiness, have

been almost unanimous in subscribing to this Aphorism, That none can be pronounced happy before his Death; for the most glorious and happy Life may be blemished by the concluding Stroke, and the last Period may fully the Beauty and Glory of all that went before. This Truth *Craesus*, when his boasted Happiness was near expiring, by the Prospect of a miserable Death, was at length sensible of, and acknowledged before *Cyrus* the Justness of *Solon's* Judgment, who, from a Sense of the Frailty of human Greatness, had pronounced; that a Man's Happiness could only be determined truly by the Circumstances of his Death. This Writer rests the Verdict of a Man's Happiness upon the Condition of his Children, their State, and Circumstances in the World, and especially their good or evil Disposition, and moral Conduct in Life: For the Judgment of a Man's Felicity is not always to be taken singly from himself: If his Children are unsuccessful, and come to Misfortunes, or, which is worse, if they prove extravagant and vicious, we account such a Father truly unhappy, and his Grave, to which their evil Conduct will the sooner hasten him, to be strewn with Disgrace and Sorrow. When degenerate and unworthy Sons succeed to a Father of distinguished Merit and Character, and by their Misconduct or Weakness sully the great Name of their Ancestors, the World sympathizes, and weeps over the Monuments of their great Progenitors, and is convinced, that Misery and Unhappiness can overtake a Man even in his Grave. When Parents have taken all the Care they can about the Education of their Children, and to give them, as it were, a second Birth by the Nurture of their Souls, it must doubtless be an uncommon Affliction to them, if, instead of answering their Hopes and Expectations, their Name and Family is dishonoured by their evil Conduct; especially as the World is generally so ill-natured, as to ascribe the Miscarriage of Children to the Negligence of their Parents, and to suspect even their Vertue on that Account. According to the Observation of St. *Ambrose* upon the Place, *Unusquisque in novissimis suis agnoscitur, & in filiis suis aestimatur, si bene filios suos instituit, & disciplinis competentibus erudit; si quidem ad negligentiam Patris refertur dissolutio filiorum.* De bono Mortis, c. viii. Many are the Instances, both in sacred and profane History, of Children degenerating from the Vertue and Probity of Ancestors peculiarly eminent in their Generations, and thereby disturbing their domestick Peace, and making their Exit less glorious and comfortable. That *Moses* died upon Mount *Nebo*, in the Sight of *Canaan*, was not so great a Trial, as that his Sons were unworthy to succeed him in the Priesthood: And that *El's* Children proved so corrupt, such Sons of *Belial*, as to know not the Lord, and to be set aside from officiating before him for their



their Unworthiness, was a great Alloy to his Honour and Comfort. The like may be said of *Solomon*, whose Glory and Happiness was much sullied by the evil Conduct of *Rehoboam*, as *Hezekiah's* Fame was by that of his Son *Manasses*. Amongst the *Romans*, the Reputation of the brave *Germanicus* was eclipsed by the Succession of an infamous *Caligula*; and *Commodus*, the unworthy Son of the wise *Antoninus*, gave a Check to the great Name of his Father. These Instances are sufficient to shew, that the Measure of our Happiness is not always to be taken from ourselves, but from our Descendants and Relations; and he that is cursed in his Children, however other Things may favour him, cannot be reckoned among the Fortunate. But neither the ancient Philosophers, nor even this Writer have carried this Matter far enough; in the Delivery of this Maxim, they considered only the present Life, and pronounced that one could not congratulate a Person upon a compleat Happiness before his Death, because so many Accidents might happen to him, or to his Children which would give him Uneasiness: but take this Maxim in a more extended View, and apply it to another Life, and then both the Sense and Prospect will be greatly enlarged; for Scripture acquaints us, that the Happiness of a good Man begins, properly speaking, at his Death; 'till that Time he is subject, and perhaps more exposed to Injuries than others; and from the frail Condition of his Nature liable to fall into Sin, especially as the Artifice of the Devil is principally levelled against every good Man, to seduce him, if possible, from his Duty, and to leave that good Way which he so long hopefully went on in; but when once he has finished his Course, fought the good Fight, and come off Conqueror, we can then pronounce him compleatly safe and happy, he enters upon his Rest, a State of present Comfort and Security, and when the sensual Man's Happiness ends, his begins.

Ver. 30. *Like as a Partridge taken, and kept in a Cage, so is the Heart of the Proud.* *παραλαβὴν θηροῦ ἐν καλαίῳ, i. e. as a tame Partridge kept in a Cage, by its Arts decoys others of the like Kind into the Nets spread for them, and then prides itself over them, so the proud Man watches for another's Fall, and insults over him in his Misfortune.* *Bochart* understands the Passage in this Sense, *Hominem superbum, altero in ruinam impulsu, sic in illum insultare, quomodo Perdix venator, seu cicor in cavea, sui generis aves, quas suis artibus in laqueum induxit.* *Hieroz.* l. i. c. xiii. P. 2<sup>da</sup>. *Pliny* and *Aristotle* both take Notice of the Game-Partridge, and of its Cunning to entice others; the latter calls it, *παραλαβὴν θηροῦ*, as this Writer does, *Hist. Anim.* l. ix. c. 8. *Plin.* l. x. c. 33. *St. Austin* observes, that the other Partridges are taken by their Eagerness to fight with that in the Cage. *Cont. Faust.* The proud Man here is the same with the deceitful one, men-

tioned in the former Verse, and means a false Friend who intrudes upon Families with an Air of Confidence and Respect, but his Design only is, out of an ill-natured Curiosity, to pry into their Secrets, and to expose them, *Scire volunt secreta domus, atque inde timeri.* *Grotius* thinks *ὑπερηφάνου*, a corrupt reading, and puts instead of it *ὑπερφιάου*, i. e. *perfidii*, which indeed seems more agreeable to the Context.

Ver. 31. *And in Things worthy Praise, will lay Blame upon thee.* Most Editions have *ἐν τοῖς αἰετιμοῖς*, but the true reading is either *αἰνετοῖς*, which our Translators follow, or *αἰελοῖς*, which the *Vulgate* favours, *Et in electis imponit maculam*, i. e. he will spy out some Fault, or lay something to the Charge of the Elect; the best, and most innocent Persons cannot escape him; for this is applicable to Persons, as well as Things (see being generally omitted) though our Version renders otherwise.

Ver. 34. *Receive a Stranger into thy House, and he will disturb thee, and turn thee out of thine own.* *ἀπαλλοτριώσει σε ἐν τῶν ἰδίων οὐκ*, either out of thine own House, or, thy Goods, and Possessions. In this latter Sense the *Vulgate* takes it, *Abalienabit te a tuis propriis*; and the *Tigurin* Version, *Cum perturbatione subvertet, exuetque te tuis possessionibus*; *διατρέψει σε ἐν ταραχαῖς* is badly rendered by the *Vulgate*, *Subverte te in turbine*. The Meaning rather is, he will overturn your House, and distract the Peace of it, *ἐν ταραχαῖς*, by the Disturbances, which he will occasion. The Sense is the same with *ψ 29*. One cannot but observe a remarkable *Paronomasia* in the Words *ἐν τῶν ἰδίων οὐκ*, — *ἀπαλλοτριώσει σε*. Instances of this, besides those which occur in private Life daily, are *Massinissa*, King of *Numidia*, who receiving *Jugurtha* into his Familiarity, and House, occasioned such Disturbances, as to prove his Ruin. The like may be observed of *Menelaus* entertaining *Paris*, who in return stole his fair Wife *Helen*, and kindled thereby the long War between the *Greeks* and the *Trojans*. *Herod* too, coming into the Family of *Hyrcanus*, by the Marriage of *Mariamne*, seized their Kingdom, and was the ruin of the *Asmonean* Race. See his Life in *Josephus*.

## CHAP. XII.

Ver. 1. **W**HEN thou wilt do good, know to whom thou dost it, so shalt thou be thanked for thy Benefits.] This is a Consequence of the last Verse in the former Chapter, wherein we are advised not to receive a Stranger into our House, for often, without knowing it, one admits a worthless treacherous designing Person, who will either pry into, and discover the Secrets of the Family, or may attempt improper, or indecent Liberties in it, and thereby give much Trouble, and occasion great Disturbances.

The



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The Advice here in general is, to make a prudent Choice of the Persons to whom we do the Favour of an Entertainment, or other good Turn, that we may have the Pleasure of obliging worthy Objects, and such as will have the Gratitude to thank us for our Kindness, and the Ingenuity to acknowledge the Obligation: Or the Direction here may be, that when there is a Contest about disposing of a Post of some Trust and Consequence, or of a Gift and Benefaction of Value and Worth; and there are many Candidates for the same Place or Favour, in such a Competition to deliberate on the Merit of each, and prefer one that is most worthy, or has most Need, to one that is less so, or has less Occasion. Or if this is extended to Charity, as it is most commonly understood, and which the Context seems to favour, it then points out the great Discernment and Caution, which is necessary to be used, to know who are real and proper Objects. The Direction does not seem to include common and daily Charities, which offer themselves continually almost from every Quarter, wherein one need not be so scrupulous as to examine strictly into the Merit, or the particular Wants and Circumstances of all that apply to us, lest if we are too nice and exact in our Enquiry, we lose frequent Opportunities of exercising our Liberality, and being too wary in the Distribution of our Alms, draw upon ourselves the Murmurs and Curses of the Poor; but rather to be inquisitive after, and assist distressed Merit, or persecuted Piety, such as are come to Poverty, not through their own Fault or Idleness, as is the Case of such as make a Trade of begging; but unfortunate Persons, unhappily reduced through some sudden Calamity, or Accident, modestly concealing their Misfortunes, or silently declaring their Wants by a sad expressive Countenance, or such as suffer for Righteousness Sake, and are in Bonds and Afflictions for the Testimony of the Truth. 'Tis of Charity done to such worthy Objects as these, we are to understand our Saviour when he says, *I was a hungry, and ye gave me Meat*; and "Not, to imitate, says St. Jerome, the Custom of many in the World, who are unwilling to distribute to the Necessities of the Saints, and are regardless of the real Wants of their poor Neighbours, and yet lavish away the Superfluity of their Money, which would make many distressed Families happy, upon Entertainments and Diversions.

Ver. 3. *There can no good come to him that is always occupied in Evil, nor to him that giveth no Alms.*] This does not seem rightly translated. By the Disjunction it looks as if two different Persons were here spoken of, whereas the Fate only of the uncharitable Sinner is hinted at. The Sense is, that the Sinner who giveth no Alms, cannot expect to be forgiven, Charity being an appointed Means of procuring God's Favour and Re-

conciliation, and an Atonement that will be accepted for the Multitude of Sins. And so the *Vulgate* seems to take it, *Non est ei bene, qui assiduus est in malis, & Eleemosynas non danti.* Alms-giving was accounted by the *Jewish* Doctors, one of the essential Parts of their Religion; and the *Rabbins* call it, as well as the sacred Writers, by the Name of Righteousness. As by this merciful Appointment God has shewed his tender Regard for even the meanest of his Creatures, so the *Jewish* Synagogue was very careful to execute the Orders of God in this respect. We learn from their Writers, that in every Synagogue there were two Treasury Chests, one for poor Strangers, and the other for their own Poor. Those that were charitably inclined, put their Alms into these Chests, at their coming into the Synagogue to pray, thereby to recommend their Devotions, and forward the holy Work they met about. Upon extraordinary Occasions, when Times, and Cases of Calamity called for it, they made Collections, upon which Occasions the Ruler of the Synagogue gave Orders to ask every body for their Charity. And the primitive Christians were so exemplary for their Charity, that no Beggars were seen among them, nor did they extend their Benevolence to their own Poor only, but even to those of their Enemies; which Behaviour was so affecting, that even *Julian* the Apostate proposed it as a Pattern to his own Subjects. *Sozom. Eccl. Hist. L. v. c. 16. Just. Mart. Apol. 2.*

Ver. 4, 5. *Give to the godly Man, and help not a Sinner; do well unto him that is lowly, but give not to the Ungodly, &c.*] The former Part is repeated, v. 7. not by any Mistake, but to inculcate probably, that in the Distribution of our Charity we must make a Distinction of the Persons, or Objects on whom we bestow it. The godly, and lowly Man (for they are equivalent Terms in Scripture) as most deserving of our Help, is most entitled to it; and we have this farther Comfort and Encouragement, that he will not abuse our Kindness, but be thankful to us for all the good Offices which he receives, and to God for every Benefactor he raises him up. But the Sinner will be so far from making any Acknowledgment of our Kindness, or indeed any good Use of it, that he probably he may strengthen himself in his Wickedness thereby, or abuse our Kindness, and apply the Means afforded him, to our Prejudice and Disadvantage. And therefore in the following Part of the Verse the Advice is, *Hold back thy Bread, lest he overmatch thee thereby.* *Prohibe panes illi dari.* *Vulg.* Which not only seems to mean, that we should not support the Sinner, or any worthless Object in his Indigence, as we do others in the same Condition, but that we should discourage others from being kind to him, acquaint such as are Strangers to him with his Character, and how unworthy



thy he is of their Favour and Charity, and not suffer one of so little Worth to receive what others want as much, and deserve much better. From hence, it appears, that the Duty of Almsgiving, as it was enjoined and practised in the Times of this Writer, was more restrained, than under the Gospel. For under the latter, every Person, though he be as odious to us, as a Jew to a Samaritan, is to be esteemed our Neighbour, and as such, to be relieved by us; nor are our good Offices and Kindness to be refused even unto Sinners, as the Merit of Persons is to be no Rule of our Charity, and the doing Acts of Benevolence to those that least deserve it, is the very Method of the divine Goodness, and as such, is recommended in Scripture to our Imitation. I shall only observe that the Construction of the Greek in the latter Part of the 5<sup>th</sup> Verse, ἐν πάσιν ἀγαθοῖς οἷς ἀν ποιήσης αὐτοῖς, is very singular, but agreeable to the Attic Dialect. There are several Instances of this Syntax in the New Testament, See Mark xiii. 19. John ii. 22. iv. 50. 1 Cor. vi. 19. But Ephes. ii. 10. καὶ ἡμεῖς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ ἐν ἔργοις ἀγαθοῖς, οἷς προηλοίμασεν ὁ Θεός, κ. τ. λ. comes nearest this Passage. See more Instances, Glass. Philol. Sac. L. iii. de pronomine.

Ver. 6. For the most High hateth Sinners, —and keepeth them against the mighty Day of their Punishment.] This last Sentence is omitted in the Vat. Edition. The Vulgate transposes it, and joins it to the End of the 4<sup>th</sup> Verse, rendring, Custodiens eos in diem vindictæ, without the Epithet. The mighty Day of Punishment is equivalent to ἡμέρας κείρας, 2 Pet. ii. 9. iii. 7. 1 John iv. 17. and to κείρας μεγάλης ἡμέρας, Jude. vi. Τηρεῖτε, and φυλάττετε among the Greeks answer to reservari, and custodiri among the Latins, and are all of them elegantly used of Delinquents reserved and secured for future Punishment. Thus Prov. xvi. 4. φυλάσσει αὐτὸν ὁ ἀσεβὴς εἰς ἡμέραν κακὴν, an Expression similar to that of this Writer, See also Acts xxv. 21. Ovid too has, Pœnæ crucianda reservor.

Ver. 10. Never trust thy Enemy.] Neither thy present, nor quondam Enemy, because he will not soon forget former Injuries received, but will revenge himself when Opportunity offers. Nothing is more rare than a solid and lasting Reconciliation, according to that of Horace,

Male facta

Gratia nequaquam coit, & rescinditur.

Epist. L. i. Ep. 3.

He that is hurt and injured, with Difficulty forgets it, and he that has done the Wrong cannot easily persuade himself, that the other has forgot it, so always suspects him; he hates him, because the injured Person is a constant Reproach to him, whenever he meets or thinks of him, and imagining him to resent the first Injury, is always ready to re-

turn a second. Mr. Pope has excellently described this,

Forgiveness to the Injur'd does belong,  
But they ne'er pardon who have done the Wrong.

Ibid. For like as Iron rusteth, so is his Wickedness.] The Ancients speaking of Envy, Malice, and Hatred, often make Use of the Comparison of Rust to display their ill Effects. Thus Horace,

—Hic nigra succus loliginis, hæc est  
Ærugo mera. L. 1. Serm.

And Martial,

—Nimisque ærugine captus  
Allatras omnem, quod tibi cunque datum est.

The Sense is, that as Brass (Χαλκός in the Greek, Æramentum in the Vulg.) though you take never so much Pains to rub it clean and polish it, will quickly again contract a green Rust; so an Enemy, though seemingly reconciled, will hide his evil Dispositions, and lurking Intention for a Time, but will sooner or later return to his old Rancour and Wickedness; for though he knows how to dissemble to Advantage, yet the Root of Malice and Bitterness being still in him, it will be sure to put forth.

Ver. 11. Though he humble himself, and go crouching, yet take good Heed, and beware of him.] i. e. Such a designing Person will put on a friendly Appearance, will look humbly, and act submissively, that the Person on whom he intends to seize and vent his Malice, may lie the more open to his premeditated Assault. He is therefore the more to be suspected for this Piece of Artifice, and to be looked upon as concealing some Design of Mischief, under such a cringing Behaviour; he only waits an Opportunity, when he may be revenged more securely, and injure you most effectually, for the disagreeable Submissions he has been obliged to, so much against his Inclination. The Psalmist describes such a designing and dangerous Person, in the self same Terms, He falleth down and humbleth himself, that the Poor may fall into the Hands of his Captains, Psal. x. 11. Nor is such a prudent Caution inconsistent with the Behaviour required towards Enemies, even under the Gospel. For though we are commanded to love them, yet are we not commanded to make them our Confidants; though it condemns Hatred, and returning Evil for Evil, yet it allows a proper Care, and reasonable Distrust of such, as we know bear us no good Will. For there is a great Difference between not injuring, or even being ready to assist them, and the putting ourselves in their Power, and making them our Bosom Friends, and lying at their Mercy by too great a Freedom and Openheartedness. Even among our confessed Friends, all are not Intimates, nor have we the same Confidence in, or equal Reliance upon all; we know, and can judge how far each



each may be trusted, and depended on, and deserves to have a greater or less Share in our Esteem and Confidence: And with respect to our Enemies, Prudence does not certainly require less Care and Circumspection to be observed, whose pretended Friendship is only for their own Advantage. Ecclesiastical History furnishes us with many Instances of Saints and holy Fathers, who, being upright, and well meaning themselves, and suspecting no Harm from others affected Civility, have been deceived, imposed upon, and almost ruined by the Artifice of false and designing Friends. Such was *Greg. Nazianzen*, whom *Maximus*, the Cynic Philosopher, having gained upon by his Complaisance, Address, and Insinuation, the use this subtle Impostor made of the Friendship indulged him, was, to decry his Patron and Master secretly, to set himself up as his Rival, and to endeavour to dispossess him of his Bishoprick; concealing his ambitious Design under the deceitful Veil of being his Disciple, and Admirer. *Cave's Lives of the Fath.* 296—7. This Instance shews us the Justness of our Author's Observation in this, and the following Verse, to take good heed and beware of such intriguing Persons, whose Friendship is Self-Interest, and their Familiarity a view only to their own Gain or Promotion; who, however humble they appear, mean to stand up in thy Place, to seize upon thy Office or Dignity, τὴν κατέδραν σε, and hope to rise by thy fall.

*Ibid.* Thou shalt be unto him, as if thou hadst wiped a Looking-glass, and thou shalt know that his Rust hath not been altogether wiped away.] The *Vulg.* and *Jerom's Bible* wholly omit this. The present reading of the *Greek*, γνώσῃ ὅτι ἐν εἰς τέλος καλῶσε, seems to be corrupt, and yet it is in all the Editions: I would either read ἀκαλῶσε, or with *Grotius*, ἐκαλῶσε, *Cognosces non esse planè immaculatum.* And thus *Tacitus*, *Cavendos esse flagitiis commaculatos.* *Annal. L. vi.* This Writer here alludes to Mirrors of Metal, generally of Brass, which were used in ancient Times, of some of which was the Laver of Brass made *Exod. xxxviii. 8.* The Nature of these is such, that when once the Rust has eat into them, though they are wiped carefully, and all Endeavours used to remove it, it will be perpetually returning, and sometimes is confirmed to that Degree, that it can never be gotten out, and quite spoils the Polish of the Mirror, and by that Means renders it useless. Such is the concealed Hatred of a false Friend, reconciled only in Appearance; his Resentment, which is firmly rivetted, will soon break out again, and you will perceive and experience his old Rancour.

Ver. 13. *Who will pity a Charmer that is bitten with a Serpent, or any such as come nigh wild Beasts?*] ὁ γὰρ may either mean wild Beasts in general, or Serpents and Vipers, and such like venomous Creatures. There were a sort of Physicians among the *Hebrews*, *Calmet*

calls them Enchanters, who took upon them to charm Serpents, and hinder them from stinging, or to cure those that were stung by Enchantments and Spells. It does not appear there was anciently any Medicine invented or found out, for the Cure of the Bite of a venomous Animal, such as modern Times have discovered; and therefore these Enchanters often failed of Success, and their pretended Charms proved ineffectual. They were, notwithstanding their boasted Spells, sometimes bit by them themselves, and lost their Life by their Poison. *Jeremiah* alludes to these noxious Creatures, and the supposed Cure by Spells, when he says, *I will send Serpents, and Cockatrices among you, which will not be charmed.* *viii. 17.* as does the *Psalmist*, who describes the Adder, as sometimes stopping her Ears, and refusing to hear the Voice of the Charmer, though he charmed never so wisely. *Psa. lviii. 4, 5.* The Sense of the Author in this Passage either is, that the keeping Company with Sinners, is contracting a certain Infection, and sucking in a deadly Poison; that they are like so many wild Beasts, slaying the Souls of Men; that Persons warned of the Danger of such evil Communication, who will notwithstanding associate with them, and run into Mischief, fall unpitied, and may thank themselves for their Ruin: Or, from the Context we may suppose the Meaning rather to be, That as one does not pity those who boast of their Skill to charm Serpents, and have the Rashness often to handle them, if they are at last bitten by them, because they voluntarily run into such Danger, and vainly thought to escape that Harm by Art, which *St. Paul* once did by Miracle: So neither is any Pity due to one who trusts to a seeming and false Friend, one suddenly taken into Favour, from an inveterate Enemy, a Person that one knows not thoroughly, or has reason to know by past Experience too well, ever to expect any good from him for the future; to adopt such a one, upon whom so little Dependance can be fixed, either as a Companion or Friend, is courting Danger, and betraying ones own Safety.

Ver. 16. *An Enemy speaketh sweetly with his Lips, but in his Heart he imagineth how to throw thee into a Pit; he will weep with his Eyes, but if he find Opportunity, will not be satisfied with Blood.*] This is a fine Description of the fawning Parasite, who flattereth with his Lips, but imagineth Mischief in his Heart. The *Psalmist* describes such, when he says, *They give good Words with their Lips, but dissemble in their double Heart.* They have Honey upon their Tongue, and the Poison of Asps under it, which *Plautus* well expresses,

*In melle linguæ sunt sitæ atque orationes*

*Lactique: corda felle sunt sita, atque acerbæ aceto.*

*In Tricul.*

Believe therefore neither their Words, Looks,  
S  
nor



nor even their Tears, they are false and designing, the Tears of a Crocodile, who aims to devour its Prey the next Moment, *Nullæ sunt majores, periculosioresque insidiæ, quam quæ sub nomine amicitia, & officii simulatione occultantur*, says Cicero. It was by her false Tears that Sampson's Wife deceived him, and, got from him the Secret of the Riddle, and, through her Deceit, unto the Strong came forth Bitterness: and by the same Artifice Dalilah stole the Intelligence from him wherein his mighty Strength lay. Against such Sort of Deceivers, who have the Art of moving by their Tears, Ovid gives this Caution,

*Neve Puellarum lacrymis moveare, caveto;  
Ut flerent, oculos erudiere suos.*

De Remed. Amor.

It was thus that Ishmael, the Son of Netbaniah, slew all those Jews that were marching to join Gedaliah, by going out in a friendly Manner to meet them, by discoursing freely with them, and treacherously weeping all along as he went, Jer. xli. 6, 7. By which artful Deceit he prevailed to slay Numbers of them, and cast their dead Bodies into the Midst of a Pit. Solomon gives the like Description of such dangerous Dissemblers, *He that bateth, dissembleth with his Lips, and layeth up Deceit within him; when he speaketh fair, believe him not, for there are seven Abominations in his Heart*, i. e. many Artifices and Tricks lie concealed there to surprize and ruin thee. The rendring of the *ο*, is much stronger and closer to our Purpose, *χαίρει πάντα ἐπινεύει ἀποκλαύμεν ὁ ἰχθὺς, ἐν δὲ τῇ καρδίᾳ τεκταίνεσθαι δόλους· ἵαν σὺ δέησαι ὁ ἰχθὺς μεγάλη τῇ φωνῇ, μὴ πεισθῇς. κ. τ. λ.* Prov. xxvi. 24, 25. See Psal. xii. 2. lxii. 4. Jer. ix. 8, 12. Ezek. xxxiii. 31.

Ver. 17. *If Adversity come upon thee, thou shalt find him there first.* *πρότερον*, i. e. first before others, either to satisfy his ill-natured Curiosity, and to be a Witness of your Disgrace, or that he may have the Pleasure to insult you under your Humiliation and Affliction. Some Editions have *πρότερόν σου*, i. e. first or nearest to your Person. And thus Calmet, and Mess. of Port Royal render, *Vous le trouverez le premier auprès de vous*. If *πρότερόν σου* seems harsh in this Sense, might not *πρὸ ἑταίρων σου* be the true reading? i. e. he will be the first officiously to intrude himself, even before your Friends and Acquaintance.

Ver. 18. *He will shake his Head, and clap his Hands, and whisper much, and change his Countenance.* i. e. he will shake his Head at thee, by way of Contempt and Insult, see Eccles. xiii. 7. clap his Hands, in token of his rejoicing at thy Misfortunes, and spread many false Reports about thee secretly, by Insinuations and Whispers, and be quite another Person from what he appeared to be; or rather, the Man will then shew himself in his true Colours.

### CHAP. XIII.

Ver. 2. **B**URDEN not thyself above thy Power, and have no Fellowship with one that is mightier, and richer than thyself; for how agree the Kettle, and the Earthen Pot together? for if the one be smitten against the other, it shall be broken.] When thou chusest a Friend, chuse an equal, one of the like State and Condition with thyself. In Friendship, as in Marriage, too great a Difference of Circumstances, Age, and Condition is dangerous, and often the Occasion of Unhappiness. *Pares amici*, is the Poet's Advice in Friendship, as *nube pari* is in Marriage. The Friendship and Confidence of great Folks flatters indeed the Ambition of Persons of a lower Rank, they think it an Honour to be distinguished by them, and propose great Advantage to themselves by such an Acquaintance, but at length they are convinced of their Folly, and have cause to repent of their Intimacy. According to that of Horace,

*Dulcis inexpertis cultura potentis amici,  
Expertus metuit.*

They propose indeed to raise themselves, and make their Fortunes by paying their Court to great Men; but they are often disappointed in their Pursuit, sacrificing in the mean Time their Liberty to a Prospect of Grandeur, and are at best but splendid Slaves. *Nunquam est fidelis cum potente societas*, is the Motto of one of Phædrus's Fables, which he illustrates also by the Instance of the Kettle and Earthen Pot. There is the like Comparison too in *Æsop*, and upon the same Occasion, near 300 Years before this Writer, to which probably he alludes. The Man of Wealth and Power encourages the weaker Vessel in the Language of the Brazen Pot, *Ne metuas, curabo enim ego ne tu allidaris*; but the Answer of the other contains a fine Moral, *Colliso certe cum meo fiet periculo, decretum mihi est a te disjungi*; for when either the Rich and the Poor, the Strong and the Weak are sure to be Sufferers, and to lose the little they have, and sometimes their Liberty and Lives. *Plautus* illustrates the Inconvenience of an unequal Match by the Simile of an Ass sinking under too great a Burden,

*Venit mihi in mentem, te esse hominem divitem  
Factiosum: me item esse hominem hominum pauperrimum,  
Nunc si filiam locassem meam tibi, in mentem venit,  
Te bovem esse & me esse asellum: ubi tecum conjunctus siem,  
Ubi onus nequeam ferre pariter, jaceam ego asinus in luto.*

Where the Poet, like our Author, compares an unequal Engagement to an over heavy Burden,



Burden, and makes such a Match, to be no less a Folly, than for a contemptible Animal to vie with one of an overgrown Size. We have a celebrated Instance of the Danger of having Fellowship with one too mighty, and depending upon such a one for Safety and Protection, in what happened to *Abaz*, King of *Judab*; he called into his Assistance *Tiglath-Pileser*, King of *Assyria*, and made an Alliance with him; the Consequence was, he secured himself against *Pekab*, King of *Israel*, and *Rezin* King of *Syria*, but he delivered himself into the Hands of a more formidable, and powerful Enemy, who, as the Text expresses it, distressed him, but strengthened him not, *2 Kings* xvi. 7. *2 Chron.* xxviii. 20.

Ver. 3. *The rich Man hath done Wrong, and yet he threateneth withal; the Poor is wronged, and he must intreat also.*] The rich Man adds one Injury to another, evil and abusive Language to some Act of Violence and Oppression. He invades others Rights, and then, to justify himself, is angry as if he was the Sufferer. The poor Man is forced to submit to, and even ask Pardon of the rich Oppressor, and to ask Pardon, as if he was the Aggressor. This Passage seems to be an Imitation of *Prov.* xviii. 23. *The Poor useth Intreaties, but the Rich answereth roughly.* The reading of the Greek here is very different; that followed by our Translators gives the best Sense, and the Truth of it is confirmed by History and Experience. Men are often obliged in the Neighbourhood of the Great, and find it to be their best Way, to buy their Peace by Submission, and to compound for, and dispense with lesser Injuries, to prevent more, and greater. One reads of Fathers, not only dissembling their Grief and Concern before a merciless Tyrant, for the Death of some of his Children, but even flattering and commending him to appease his Brutality, and to prevail on him to spare the rest. Thus *Seneca*, *Potentiorum injuriæ bilari vultu, non patienter tantum ferende sunt*, Lib. ii. De Ira. c. 33. *Juvenal* well describes the sad State of a poor Man under the merciless Power of an over-grown imperious Person, in the following Lines,

——— *Libertas pauperis hæc est,  
Pulsatus rogat, & pugnis concisus adorat,  
Ut liceat paucis cum dentibus inde reverti.*

Ver. 7. *And he will shame thee by his Meats, until he have drawn thee dry twice or thrice, and at the last he will laugh thee to scorn.*] Though you may think it a favour to be invited often to his Table, yet by the Frequency or Magnificence of his Entertainments, he will at length ruin you: for if you attempt to return his Civilities, and treat him in the like Manner, with the same Elegance that he is used to, as perhaps he will expect two or three such Treats, will occasion much Expence, and hurt your Circumstances in the End, when he will laugh at your Presumption,

for pretending to vie with Men of Fortune. The Author seems to allude to *Prov.* xxiii. 1. which in the rendring of the LXX comes near this Place, *ἐὰν καθίσῃς δεῖπνεν ἐπὶ τραπέζης δυνάστη, νοήσῃς νόμι τα παροχθιμένα σοι. . . .* *εἰδὼς ὅτι τοιαῦτά σε δεῖ παρασκευάσαι.* Or the Sense may be, He will invite you to his Entertainments, and make much of you for a few Visits, and when he has got what he wants from you, and drawn out of you what he has occasion for, he will afterwards laugh at you, and pretend not to know thee.

Ver. 8. *Beware that thou be not deceived, and brought down in thy Jollity.*] *ἐν ἀφροσύνῃ σκ*, i. e. Take heed that thou be not reduced, or suffer in thy Fortune by Feasting, and Entertainments, for so *ἀφροσύνη* sometimes signifies, See *Esther* ix. 19. Though a grateful Temper, and an Endeavour to shew Civilities to a Benefactor is to be commended, yet the Ambition of entertaining the Great, merely as such, for the empty Pleasure of being thought considerable, or the vain Eclat of having such grand Acquaintance, is to be condemned in one of a private Fortune, and is an Instance of Extravagance and Folly. The Marginal Reading therefore, *Lest thou be brought down by thy Simplicity*, or Imprudence, *ἐν ἀφροσύνῃ σκ*, is very proper, which the *Vulgate* also follows. We have in these, and some of the following Verses, a lively Image and Representation of the Behaviour of the Rich and Powerful towards such as are beneath them, and depend upon them. One sees the Absoluteness of their Will, Haughtiness of their Temper, the Oppression and Injustice, false Caresses, artificial Disguises, and deceitful Promises with which they impose upon their Credulity and Simplicity, expecting an assiduous, and often expensive Attendance from them, till at length they have reduced them to a State of Indigence; and then they abandon them in their Distress, and make them the subject of their Contempt and Raillery. Those, therefore, says a pious Writer, who truly love God, pay not their Homage to such Golden Idols; as Faith assures them, that in their State of Humility they are greater than the Lords of the World, and that they degenerate from the Nobleness of their Spirit, if their Ambition carries them to aspire after any Thing but Heaven.

Ver. 9. *If thou be invited of a mighty Man, withdraw thyself, and so much the more will he invite thee.*] The Advice is not to refuse such an Invitation, which would be looked upon as Rudeness and ill Breeding, but to accept it modestly, to behave decently, to go but rarely, and to withdraw discreetly. Probably this Writer alludes to *Prov.* xxv. 17. *Withdraw thy Foot from thy Neighbour's House, lest he be weary of thee, and so hate thee.* Where the *Interlinear* Version has, *Rarum fac pedem*; and so the *Heb.* and *Gr.* If such a Conduct is adviseable with respect to private Persons, our Neighbours, much more is Reservedness and Caution to be observed



served as to Frequency of Visits, and a proper Distance and Carriage towards the great, our Superiors. Experience confirms this Advice of the wise Man, to retire from, rather than run after Persons of Figure and Distinction, because they usually despise such as press upon them too much; they grow tired of them, and though their Politeness keeps them from saying so, they esteem such, as officious Impertinents: We should therefore approach them, says an ancient Writer, as we do the Fire, not too near, for fear of being scorched, nor at too great a Distance, so as to receive no Benefit from it. As we should not be too forward and bold in intruding, so neither should we be so negligent of our own Interest, as to forego an Acquaintance, which may some Time or other be beneficial to us: Neither offend by our constant Presence, and over Fondness to be remembered by them, nor yet by so long an Absence, as to occasion our being forgotten, and overlooked by them. We should be dutiful and respectful to them, but not servile or abject; neither too much admire, nor too much fear the Persons of the Great, so as to betray the Cause of Virtue by any faulty Compliance. This has been the Case of many eminent Persons in the Church, and even some of the great Lights of it, as appears from Ecclesiastical History, who, having more of the Innocence of the Lamb, than the Courage of the Lion, have not been sufficiently upon their Guard, in treating with Persons of great Authority and Power; but through Promises and Caresses, or Fear of Disgrace and Punishment, have abandoned the Defence of the Truth, and been surprized, or rather forced into Resolutions, which they have repented afterwards.

Ver. 11. *Affect not to be made equal unto him in Talk.* All the printed Copies read here, *μη ἐπεχε εἰσηγορεῖσθαι*. The true reading undoubtedly is, *μη ἐπεχε ἰσηγορεῖσθαι*. See *Grabe's Proleg.* Tom. iii. c. 2. The Reason for such a Reservedness of Speech before great Persons, follows in the next Verse, *Cruelly he will lay up thy Words.* The Copy which our Translators follow, I presume, had *ἀνελεημόνως συνιηρήσει λόγους σου*, but the rest have, *ἀνελεήμων ὁ μὴ συνιηρῶν λόγους*, which, if it has any Sense, means, that he that guards not his Tongue, and watches not over his Words in such Company, wants pity for himself, and is unmindful of his own Interest. And thus *Calmet* expounds it, *Celui qui ne garde pas sa langue, ou qui ne veille pas sur son discours, manque de pitié pour soi même.* But the Sense given in our Version seems preferable, which is confirmed by the *Vulg.* *Immitis animus illius conservabit verba tua*, i. e. If a Prince, or Person of great Power takes Occasion, from your Words, of Jealousy, Mistrust, or Offence against you, though he says nothing for a Time, he will afterwards shew you, that he treasured up what was spoken, and give you a Proof of

his Resentment. He will use you here ill, and perhaps imprison you; but whatever Treatment you meet with of this Sort, ascribe it to your own Imprudence, in being too open and unguarded. Thus *Tiberius* used to do, *Verba, vultus in crimen detorquens, recondebat*, as *Tacitus* observes of him. And *Sejanus's* Temper, as described by that Writer, was the same, *Odia in longum jaciebat, quæ reconderet, autaque promeret.*

Ver. 13. *Observe and take good Heed, for thou walkest in peril of thy overthrowing; when thou hearest these Things, awake in thy Sleep.* The first Sentence, as it is in our Version, contains a necessary Piece of Advice and Caution as to our general Conduct, but the Vulgate confines it to hearing in particular, *Attende diligenter auditui tuo.* And indeed some Greek Copies have, *συνίησον καὶ πρόχες σφόδρα τῷ ἀκούειν*, i. e. Listen to a great Man when he is talking, with much Attention and Respect, and at the same Time with such Circumspection, as not to seem inquisitive, or prying into his Affairs; be as watchful and cunning in not being any ways surprized, as one that feigneth him asleep, and is awake all the Time. And thus *Bosuet*, *Vigilem te volo, sed instar somnolenti.* As Inattention betrays Neglect and Contempt, so too much Attention in you, and too great a Curiosity may raise Jealousy and Suspensions in him against you. In the Court of Princes, and Levees of great Men, the grand Secret of Behaviour is, says *Calmet*, to have Ears and hear not, Eyes and see not, and a Tongue and speak not. To hear every Thing, and divulge nothing, to observe all that passes, and in Appearance to be quite absent, to make just Reflexions on Men and Things, and seemingly to mind nothing, and be wholly incurious as to every body, and their Concerns. Such a Conduct if it raises not to a Man Friends, will be sure to create him no Enemies. This masterly Stroke in Politics, and many others which might be mentioned, shew this Writer's nice Discernment, his Knowledge of Courts and public Life, and the Justness of his Observations made on both; and contains a higher Sense, and more agreeable to the Context, than the common Interpretation of attending to, and meditating upon, what is delivered and spoken.

Ver. 17. *What Fellowship hath the Wolf with the Lamb, so the Sinner with the Godly.* The wise Man having taken Notice of the Inconvenience, and often Danger of the Poor keeping Company with the Rich, the Weak with the Powerful, the Slavery of Courts, and the proper Carriage to be observed towards great Men, he farther confirms his first Thesis, that all Persons ought to cultivate Fellowship with those of the same Rank and Condition, by instancing in the Godly and the Sinner, who can much less than the other maintain Friendship, and keep up an Intimacy together, because their

Way



# Chap. xiii. the Book of ECCLESIASTICUS. 73

Way of Life, Sentiments, Inclinations, Morals and Conduct, are disagreeable to each other, as dissonant as those of the Wolf and the Lamb: the one innocent, gentle, and amiable; the other, mischievous, outrageous, and devouring. For as a mutual Resemblance of Manners, Likeness of Views, Interests and Designs, and as it were a Sympathy of Souls, are no less approved Means of uniting Persons, than Equality of State and Condition; so, where these are wanting, or disagree, an Intimacy cannot long subsist, and Extremes may as well be supposed to meet, or Contraries coalesce, as a Harmony subsist between the Godly and the Sinner, whose Pursuits are so widely different. Thus Cicero, *Ob nullam etiam causam boni improbis, improbi bonis amici esse non possunt, nisi quod tanta est inter eos, quanta maxima esse potest, morum studiorumque distantia.* De Amicit. The Comparison of the Wolf and the Lamb, whose Union is inconsistent in Nature, is often made use of by Horace, and other Writers, to shew the Impossibility of a Friendship improperly contracted. And when Isaiah, prophetically to shew the blessed Effects of the Gospel, and the great Change it should produce in Men's Sentiments, uses the Comparison of the Wolf and the Lamb, dwelling and feeding together; he introduces that Allusion to intimate, that the true Religion should reconcile, and make one, those whom the Vices of Heathenism had so variously distracted, and divided; that Persons, the most separated in Interest, Inclination, Religion, and Climate, should then happily unite, and compose one Church, *Isai. xi. 6.* In Scripture, the Disagreement of God and Belial, and their respective Votaries, is well represented by the Metaphor of Light and Darkness, which are quite incompatible, and mutually destroy each other.

Ver. 17. *What Agreement is there between the Hyæna, and the Dog?* As to the Fact of the natural Antipathy between these two Animals, it is confirmed by various Testimonies. There is a remarkable one in Opi-  
*Kal se xunes keinoisin embeaōta pedilous*  
*'Añion ex ulāssi.*

De Venat. L. iii.

Pliny mentions the like of the Tongue, *Eos qui Hyæna linguam in calceamento sub pede habeant, non latrari a canibus,* L. xxviii. c. 8. Nat. Hist. Ælian likewise confirms the Account of this irreconcilable Hatred between them; he says, that the Hyæna is a voracious Animal, that imitates the Voice, and vomiting of a Man, and by that Artifice entices the Dogs out, whom it instantly devours, *Hist. Animal. L. vii.* And with

this Account agree *Arist. Hist. L. viii. ch. 5. Plin. L. viii. c. 30. Chrysost. in S. Marc. Hom. 13.* This Father adds another remarkable particular, that Dogs are struck instantly dumb, and cannot open, when they approach the very Shadow of the Hyæna. Others say, that it stupifies, and makes them giddy, and that the Flesh of it eaten is good against the Bite of a mad Dog. Bochart enumerates many such Whims, and calls them, *Magorum atque Arabum nugas.* Hieroz. L. ii. c. 56. The Arab. Version of this Place changes the Hyæna into another Animal, *Quorsum versetur canis cum lacerto,* which he shews to be a Mistake. The Vulg. too wholly omits the Hyæna, nor does it substitute any other Animal, to form the Comparison, *Quæ communicatio sancto homini ad canem?* This Mistake he thinks arose from the Transcriber not understanding what the Hyæna meant, and therefore changed it for *homini*, and afterwards added *sancto*, to preserve the Opposition between holy, and impure Persons, called Dogs *Rev. xxii. 15. in Loc. sup. citat.* The Greek Copies all agree in *δαίην*, and countenance the literal, rather than a metaphorical Sense; which probably was a marginal Gloss, and crept into the Text. However this be, the Author introduces this Simile to intimate, that the Rich are often great Oppressors, that they swallow up the Needy, and make the Poor of the Land to fail. Amos viii. 4. That what a Lion is in the Forest, as it follows in the next Verse, such is an over-wealthy, powerful Person, with respect to the Helpless and Poor.

Ver. 22. *When a rich Man is fallen, he hath many Helpers: he speaketh Things not to be spoken, and yet Men justify him. The poor Man slept, and yet they rebuked him too; he spake wisely, and could have no Place.* Ver. 23. *When a rich Man speaketh, every Man holdeth his Tongue, and look what he saith, they extol it to the Clouds; but if the poor Man speak, they say, What Fellow is this? and if he stumble, they will help to overthrow him.]* If Riches are wanting, the best Qualifications are taken no Notice of; you are on that Account esteemed as a Person of no Consequence, or Worth, and instead of being befriended in a low Condition, you will meet with Affronts and Injuries sooner. According to that of Horace,

*Est animus tibi, sunt mores, & lingua, fidesque;*

*Si quadringentis sex septem millia desint, Plebs eris.* Epist. L. i.

But the rich Man is caressed and courted, he has instantly all Endowments and Qualifications, all good Qualities both of Body and Mind. Thus the same Poet,

*Omnis enim res Divitiis paret, quas qui construxerit, ille Clarus erit, fortis, justus, sapiens etiam, & Rex, Et quicquid volet.* Sat. L. ii. Thucydides,



*Thucydides* well observes, *δεναι δ'πραξίαι σὺνκρύψαι ἢ στυγιάσαι τὰ ἐκάστων ἀμαρτήματα*, that Prosperity is of great Advantage to hide Men's Failings and Defects, which *Salust* has imitated with great Conciseness and Strength, *Res secundæ mire vitiis sunt obtentui*. And *Theognis* as beautifully expresses the Disadvantage of Poverty, to disparage all that a necessitous Man can offer, or speak, when he says, that it makes a Man Tongue-tied, *γλώσσα δὲ οἱ δέδεται*. But none of the Sayings of the Ancients exceed the Beauty of our Author's Sentiments on the occasion, particularly in *ψ 21, 22, 23*. where the Antithesis is elegant, and well preserved. I shall only observe, that our Version has not fully expressed, *ἐκ ἰδού τοῦ τόπου*, which means more than that he could have no Place, viz. that he was not commended or honoured for his wise Reflections. And so *τόπον δίδοναι* is to be understood in many Places of this Writer. See *ch. xvi. 3, 14. xxxviii. 12*. whereas if the rich Man talks loosely or profanely, speaks *ἀπόρητα*, Things not fit to be named or repeated, the Sparkling of his Wit is admired, as if Wit was consistent with Indecency, or what is shocking can be pleasing.

Ver. 24. *Riches are good unto him that bath no Sin, and Poverty is Evil in the Mouth of the Ungodly.* *ἢ μὴ πρόσθεν ἀμαρτία*, in which there is no Sin by the Means of acquiring them, or when they are honestly got, which is a better Sense, than that of our Version. The Author in the Observations he has made above on the different States, does not condemn Riches as such, nor universally justify, or approve a State of Poverty. For there are rich Men, who do Honour to their great Fortunes by the good Use which they make of them, and there are poor Men who disgrace even their low Estate, by their Pitch of Wickedness. To the one, Riches are good when gotten lawfully, enjoyed moderately, and dispensed liberally; and when they are free from the Sins of Avarice, Pride, Luxury, and Forgetfulness of God, which too commonly attend them, they are Blessings to the other; Poverty is an Evil when it is accompanied with Impatience, murmuring, coveting other Men's Goods, or actually seizing upon them, which Persons of a very indigent Condition are often guilty of. It appears therefore, that Riches are not positively good in themselves, but 'tis the good or ill Use of them only that denominates their Worth and Value. By the one they become the means of Blessedness, and by the other they are made the occasion of falling. *St. Bernard* has wisely determined this Point, *Aurum & argentum, & cetera hujusmodi, quantum ad animi bonum spectant, nec bona sunt, nec mala: usus horum bonus, abusus mala, sollicitudo peior, questus turpior*. *L. iv. De considerat.* And so *St. Chrysostom*, commenting on this Passage, *ἐκ ἀπλῶς ἀπὸ κλημάτων, κ. τ. λ. Non simpliciter a divitiis nascuntur mala, sed ideo quia qui illas receperunt,*

*eis nesciunt recte uti. Quia & Abraham dives erat & Job, & non solum nihil damni eis accidit a divitiis, sed & clariores fuere: quia non in usum suum tantum has possidebant, sed ut eis juvarent etiam alios, quorum succurrerent inopie.* *Hom. lxvi. in cap. 48. Gen.*

Ver. 26. *A cheerful Countenance is a Token of a Heart that is in Prosperity, and the finding out of Parables is a wearisome Labour of the Mind.* i. e. The studious and contemplative Man employed in deep Researches, or in writing and expounding dark and obscure Parables, has not that gay brisk Countenance, as one that is at Ease, and whose Mind is perfectly without Care. Study, and intense Application are apt to abate a Man's Vivacity, to flatten the Spirits, and give a serious and grave Turn to the Countenance. For whereas Joy discovers itself by sparkling Eyes, an elevated Brow, a free Air, and an open Aspect; intense Contemplation, on the contrary, is denoted by fixed Eyes, a contracted Brow, a composed Air, a settled or stern Countenance, deliberate Speech, or profound Silence. These are Tokens of a Mind deeply engaged in intricate Speculations, in painful and recondite Disquisitions. And so laborious and fatiguing is close Application both to Body and Mind, that *Solomon* very justly pronounced, *much Study to be a Weariness of the Flesh*, *Eccles. xii. 12.* and that great Experience of Wisdom and Knowledge was, as well as other Pursuits, a Vexation of Spirit.

#### CHAP. XIV.

Ver. 1. **BLESSED** is he that bath not slept with his Mouth, and is not pricked with the Multitude of Sins.] Our Translators follow the *Complut.* Edition, which reads, *ἐν πλῆθει ἀμαρτιῶν*, but the more general reading is *ἐν λύπῃ ἀμαρτίας*, in *tristitia delicti*, as the *Vulg.* has it. And so the marginal Reading is, which does not mean, as some have interpreted, that the Man is happy who is not affected with Sorrow and Remorse for his Sins, for he that is so affected, and has a true inward Compunction on that Account, has the best Title to, and prospect of Blessedness; but the Sense of the whole Verse is, that the Man is happy, and highly to be commended, who, when Poverty or any outward Calamity lies heavy upon him, betrays no Impatience, nor charges God foolishly by any Murmur against him or the Dispensations of his Providence, nor by a criminal Dejection, and sinful Despondency utters any thing reflecting upon his Honour or Justice.

Ver. 2. *Blessed is he whose Conscience bath not condemned him.* *μακάριος ὁ ὃς κατεργασῇ τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ*. This is an Hebraism. *Glossius* produces many Instances in the *New Testament*, and other Writings of this Construction. *Grotius* contends, that the true reading is



is, μακάριος ὁ ὁ ἀπέναντι τῆς ψυχῆς αὐτοῦ, Blessed is he who does not despond, or despair under Tribulation; which is confirmed by the next Sentence, *Who is not fallen from his Hope in the Lord.* And this seems to be the Sense of the *Vulgate*, *Felix qui non habuit animi sui tristitiam.* And thus *Calmet*, *Heureux celui dont l'ame n'est point tombée dans le découragement.* Or the Sense may be, That a good Conscience is the Ground of a religious Assurance, like that of the Apostle, *Beloved, if our Heart condemn us not, then have we Confidence towards God.*

Ver. 3. *Riches are not comely for a Niggard, and what should an envious Man do with Money?* i. e. Riches do not become the sordid Person, are of little Service to ἀνδρὶ μικρολόγῳ, *viro cupido & tenaci*, in the *Vulg.* which is hardly expressive enough; for it means one who is sparing of using them, even upon necessary Occasions. *Theophrastus* well defines μικρολογία to be, φειδωλία τῆς διαφοράς ὑπὲρ τῆς καίρου. Βάσκανος, though it is often used in the Sense of envious, as our *Translators*, and the *Vulg.* render, yet here means covetous. And so it is often used in this Book, See y 6, 8. of this Chapter, &c. xviii. 18. xxxvii. 11. And so *Grotius* and *Bossuet* take it. The covetous Man is so far justly styled envious, as he grudges the Use and Enjoyment of his Wealth both to himself, and others. This Vice of Covetousness so blinds the Minds and Hearts of those that are possessed with it, that they don't see its Folly and Deformity; they are apt to give the Name of Prudence, Frugality, Economy, or of some other Virtue to a detestable sordid Passion, which makes them Enemies to God, to Mankind, and even themselves.

Ver. 4. *He that gathereth by defrauding his own Soul, gathereth for others that shall spend his Goods riotously.* The *Vulgate* rendering, *Qui acervat ex animo suo*, probably is a Mistake; it would have been better expressed, by *Anima sua*. The Greek ὁ συνάγων ἀπὸ τῆς ψυχῆς αὐτοῦ, literally rendered, is, He that gathereth from his Life, i. e. by his pinching manner of Living, by depriving himself of even Necessaries to enrich himself the more, lays up only for an extravagant Heir, who will spend profusely in Riot and Luxury, what he had been amassing with so much Care and Sollicitude. And thus the *Syriac*, *Qui sibimet detrahit, colligit aliis.* And the *Arab.* is to the same Effect. Our Author has the same Observation, c. xi. 18. *There is that waxeth rich by his Wariness and Pinching, and yet he knoweth not what Time shall come upon him, and that he must leave those Things to others, and die.* See Note on that Place. *Solomon* has many fine Thoughts upon the Occasion; see *Eccles.* ii. 18. iv. 7, 8. vi. 2. And the Poets have with great Sharpness exposed this Vice in their Satyres. *Juvenal* particularly takes Notice of the Vanity of starving a Man's Self to

raise a Family, and calls such a mean and sordid way of Living, in order to die rich, Folly and Madness.

*Sed quò divitias hæc per tormenta coactas?  
Cum furor haud dubius, cum sit manifesta  
phrenesis,*

*Ut locuples moriaris, egenti vivere fato.*

Sat. xiv.

But nothing can be more just than our Author's Reflexions upon this Vice, and the Reasons which he gives against it, which he pursues to the End of the 19<sup>th</sup> Verse.

Ver. 7. *If he doth good, he doth it unwillingly, and at the last he will declare his Wickedness.* καὶ ἐν ποίῃ, ἐν λήθῃ ποιεῖ, If he does any good, he does it ignorantly, he forgets himself, or does it by Chance and Accident. And thus the *Syr.* *Quod si casu benefecerit, imprudens, ac per errorem facit,* with which the *Arab.* agrees. The Copy which our *Translators* follow reads, καὶ ἐὰν ἀπορήσῃ, καὶ ἐκὼν ποιεῖ. The *Vulgate*, 'tis observable retains both, *Si bene fecerit, ignoranter & non volens facit.* Nor is *Drusus's* Conjecture to be despised, who would read, ἐν λήθῃ, καὶ ἐκ ἐκὼν ποιεῖ, *dolens, & invitus facit.* The Sense of the latter Clause is, That if such a Wretch stumbles upon a good Action, yet the Manner of his doing it in such a grudging Way, as if it was extorted from him, quite spoils the Grace of it, and takes off from its Merit. 'Tis in the Language of *Isocrates*, τὰς χαίτας ἀχαρίζως χαρίζεσθαι. Some Tincture of Sordidness will discover itself, and adhere to all he does. And if a good Action by Accident drops from him, the Miser soon again stands confest. *Grotius* by ἐπ' ἐχάτων understands the End of his Life; that he will maintain this niggardly Temper to the last, and manifest it in some Instances at his Death, particularly in the ordering of his Funeral, and preventing the Expences of it. *Phædrus* well exposes such a stingy Carefulness,

*Tibi dico, avaro, gaudium heredis tui,*

*Qui circumcidis omnem impensam funeris,  
Libitina ne quid de tuo faciat lucri.*

Ver. 8. *The envious Man hath a wicked Eye, he turneth away his Face, and despiseth Men.* ὑπερορῶν ψυχὰς, i. e. He overlooks the Wants and Misery of other Men. The *Vulg.* has, *Dispiciens animam suam*, i. e. the covetous Man overlooks himself, disregards his own Soul, or Life, and will not allow himself necessary Food to keep himself in Health, nor proper and convenient Help and Remedies in his Sickness. By a wicked, evil, and envious Eye, both in this and the sacred Writings is meant, the covetous Man, and by a good Eye, the liberal Person. Thus *Prov.* xxiii. 6. *Eat not the Bread of him that hath an evil Eye*, i. e. of one, that is grudging, and covetous. See also ch. xxviii. 22.

Tob.



Tob. iv. 16. Eccles xxxi. 13. xxxv. 10. Mat. vi. 22. Mark vii. 22. where ἀγαθὸς ὀφθαλμὸς, the good or liberal Eye, is opposed to πονηρὸς ὀφθαλμὸς, the evil or covetous Eye. The Reason of applying this Epithet more particularly to the Eye, seems to be, because the Eye is that part of the Body which takes most Satisfaction in Wealth, in beholding, contemplating, and turning it over, Eccles. v. 11. Hence Covetousness is called the Lust of the Eye, 1 John xii. 16. though more properly speaking, this should be referred to the inward Mind or Judgment, as Envy, Covetousness, evil Concupiscence, and the like Vices, are said in Scripture, to proceed from the Heart.

Ver. 9. *A covetous Man's Eye is not satisfied with his Portion, and the Iniquity of the Wicked drieth up his Soul.*] Like an insatiable Guest, he thinks he never has enough, and is not pleased with part, ἐκ ἐμπιπλάσαι μερίδος, the ordinary Portion which the Master of the Feast gives to each of his Guests, does not content him; he grasps at, and devours in his Imagination and Wishes, what is helped to others; and his Iniquity, i. e. his Envy at what others have, gnaws and consumes his Soul. He is just in no other Instance, but in punishing himself as he deserves; he is ingenious in contriving Ways to torment himself, and by denying himself the Comforts, and even Necessaries of Life, condemns himself as unworthy to live. The Author alludes, says Calmet, to the ancient Custom of dividing the Victuals among the Guests by equal Portions, in which Sense the Miser is not pleased to be put upon the Level with others. Or it may mean, that be his Portion of good Things in this Life what it will, he still wishes for and covets more; and this is the Recompence of his Wickedness, that his unsatisfied Desires make him continually uneasy.

Ver. 10. *A wicked Eye envieth his Bread, and he is a niggard at his Table.*] φθονερός ἐπ' ἄλλω, Grudges himself, or others, their Bread, and pines himself and them, by his coarse Food and sordid Entertainment. The Vulg. renders, *Oculus malus indigenus, & in tristitia erit super mensam*, following a Copy probably which had, ἐν λύπῃ. And indeed this Circumstance is a true Test likewise of the covetous Man, who is generally observed to be dull, dejected, and out of Humour at his own Table; he is uneasy at the Expence, has not the Heart to help his Guests plentifully, or to make them welcome, but wishes them to be gone, or forces them by his cold Reception to depart the sooner. Whereas the Person of an open and generous Temper invites you by his very Looks, thinks he can never entertain his Guests enough, and is always happiest when he has his Friends about him. St. Chrysostom enumerating the several Particulars set down by this Writer, which make up the covetous Man, adds, Certainly this Picture cannot suit any Thing in the

Shape of human Nature, it can be neither Man nor Beast, but a Picture made up of both, the Stupidity of the one, with the greatest Degeneracy of the other.

Ver. 11. *According to thy Ability do Good to thy self, and give the Lord his due Offering.*] i. e. Do not through Covetousness defraud thyself of Necessaries and Conveniences, by forbearing to make Use of those good Things which God has given thee richly to enjoy, nor rob God of his Offerings; but give him not only in Proportion to thy Substance, and what is strictly due, but freely, and of the best likewise, such choice Offerings as are worthy of his Majesty, *Deo dignas oblationes*, as St. Cyprian here renders with the Vulgate. For the Offering of the Blind, or Lame, or Sick for Sacrifice, is, according to the Prophet, *Making the Table of the Lord contemptible*, Mal. i. 7, 8. This also may be extended to Tythes and Offerings, That a Man should not grudge to pay them to the Levite, God's Minister, according to his Appointment, nor diminish from the Quantity, or injure him in the Quality of them, nor alter the Time, or Manner of paying them. The Author having fully described the Vice of Avarice, and the Folly, Malignity, and Injustice of it, proceeds next to propose some Remedies against it, as, to use the good Things of Life in the Manner they were designed, to be hospitable to our Friends and Neighbours; to be charitable to the Poor and Distressed; to stop the immoderate Cravings of Avarice, by reflecting on the Certainty, and often Suddenness of Death, which will take away all at once, a Man has been so long amassing, & 12. To give liberally, therefore, before it seizes us, to be willing, and have the Merit of parting with some of our beloved Wealth, before it of course leaves us, and we can hold it no longer, to lay up thereby a good Foundation for ourselves against the Time to come, and so far prevent the Extravagance of a spendthrift Heir, who, perhaps will neither thank us for what we leave him, nor take Care to keep it, and may expose, and droll on our Memory, for having been so tenacious, and saving for him.

Ver. 16. *Give, and take, and sanctify thy Soul, for there is no seeking of Dainties in the Grave.*] Deprive not thyself of the innocent Mirth and Pleasure, which the Law permits on good Days, for so the Hebrews styled their Festivals, and rejoice with, and entertain your Family and Friends on such publick Occasions. Nor at other Times deny yourself the Enjoyment of such good Things, as God has blessed you with, and given for your present Use and Comfort. But use them in the Manner which God approves, free from Intemperance and Luxury, free from Covetousness, and a criminal Attachment to them. This seems to be the Sense of ἀγλασάν τὴν ψυχὴν σου, which is the Reading in many Greek Copies, and of δικαίωσαν τὴν ψυχὴν, which



which obtains in others. The *Vat.* Edition has ἀπάτησον τὴν ψυχὴν σου, *i. e.* Live an agreeable Life, deceive your Cares, and let innocent Pleasures and Amusements divert any Thing that may lie heavy upon your Spirits. But possibly the true reading may be ἀγάπησον τὴν ψυχὴν, *bilariter excipe animam*; which seems confirmed by the Context, particularly from the Reflexion, that all Dainties in the *Gr.* τρυφή, cease in the Grave. The Advice here given of living freely, and at large, on account of the Shortness of Life, is not, says *Calmet*, to be extended to all Persons indifferently, but should be considered as directed by this Writer, either to Misers in particular, as a Motive to engage them to enjoy their Wealth and Plenty whilst they have them, or to Heathens in general, whose Views going no farther than this Life, might properly enough be admonished from the Uncertainty of it, to make the most of it. Many of the Poets give the like Advice, and for the same Reason. Thus *Phocylides*,

Πλάττω μὴ Φείδω· μέμνησ' ὅτι θνήσκῃς ὑπάρχεις.  
Οὐκ ἐν ἐς αἶδον ὄλβον ἔχειν ἢ χρημᾶϊ ἀγαθῷ.  
Οὐ πολὺν ἀνθρώποι ζῶμεν χρόνον, ἀλλ' ἐπικάισρον.  
Σῶμα γὰρ ἐν γαίῃς ἔχομεν, ἢ πάντες ἐς αὐτὴν  
Λύομενοι κόνις ἐσμέν.

Ver. 17. *For the Covenant from the Beginning is, Thou shalt die the Death.*] Θανάτῳ ἀποθανῇ. This refers to *Gen.* ii. 17. where the rendring of the *Hebrew* is, *Dying thou shalt die*, which, though spoken to *Adam* personally, yet included his whole Posterity. The original Covenant or Law of Mortality was, that all Flesh should, by the Transgression, see Corruption. Πᾶσα σὰρξ θανάτῳ ἀποθανῇ. The *Vulg.* joins this to the End of the 12<sup>th</sup> Verse, where *Calmet* thinks it would come in better. The Comparison of Leaves, by which the Succession and Mortality of Mankind is expressed in the following Verse, is very ancient and natural. The Writer of this Book, living after many of the celebrated Sages of *Greece*, has occasionally borrowed from them some of their Sentiments, of which this among others is an Instance. There is exactly the same Thought in *Homer*,

Οἷη περ Φύλλων γενεή, τοιήδε ἢ ἀνδρῶν.  
Φύλλα τὰ μὲν τ' ἀνεμῷ χαμαὶ δὲ χέει, ἄλλα δὲ  
δ' ὕλη  
Τηλεβόωσα φύει, ἔαρος δ' ἐπιγίγνεται ὥρη,  
Ὡς ἀνδρῶν γενεή, ἣ μὲν φύει, ἣ δ' ἀπολήγει.  
Il. vi.

There is also a Parallel Passage in *Iliad* xxi. which *Mr. Pope* compares with that before us, and in his excellent Translation runs thus,

*For what is Man? calamitous by Birth,  
They owe their Life and Nourishment to Earth;  
Like yearly Leaves, that now, with Beauty crown'd,  
Smile on the Sun; now, wither on the Ground.*

The same Comparison is likewise to be found in a Fragment of *Musæus*, preserved by *Clem. Alexandr. Strom.* L. 6. The Ancients have contended who should describe the Shortness of human Life in Terms most expressive of its Vanity. As some of them, with this Writer, compare it to the falling of a Leaf, the smallest and weakest Piece of a short-lived unsteady Plant, so others resemble it no less aptly, to a Dream, a Shadow, and Smoke. *St. James*, who spake by a more excellent Spirit, calls our Life, a Vapour, and, which is yet lighter, a phantastick one, αἶμας φαινομένη, a mere Apparition, and nothing real, and yet the Expression by what follows is made still more diminutive, for this mere Appearance is but a for little while, πρὸς ὀλίγον, and then the Phantom instantly disappears, *ch.* iv. 14. *St. Austin* expresses very strongly the Frailty of the human State, when he calls Man, *Terræ filius, nihili nepos*, the Son of Earth, and Grandchild of nothing. I shall only observe farther, that as the best Heathen Writers agree in comparing Life, and its sensible Decay, to the fading of a Leaf or Flower, so the sacred ones express an immortal State under the Image of the never-failing Tree of Life.

Ver. 20. *Blessed is the Man that doth meditate good Things in Wisdom, and that reasoneth of holy Things by his Understanding.*] *Grotius* says, that καλὰ ἢ ἁγία, are an Addition to the Text, and makes the Sense barely to be, *Blessed is the Man that meditates on Wisdom, and can reason well with his Understanding*; which, though it be an Accomplishment much admired, yet the Sense which our Version furnishes, seems preferable, *i. e.* *Blessed is he, whose Wisdom carries him to the Study of holy Things, and whose chief Delight is to be employed upon good and religious Subjects, who aspires after heavenly Truths, and prefers the Consideration and Study of these, to dry Speculations, and Science falsely so called*; which though they may amuse and entertain for a Time, yet edify not, nor promote the main End of Man; for however extensive a Man's Knowledge may be in human Learning, or whatever Progress he may make in philosophical Researches, yet the good Man will at last be found the truly wise Man, which seems confirmed by the next Verse, *He that considereth his Ways in his Heart, shall also have Understanding in her Secrets*; which is the Reading of one Copy, and preferred by *Grotius* and *Calmet*; and the Sense is the same with that in the Gospel, *If any Man will do his Will, he shall know of the Doctrine*; his Obedience shall be his Teacher, and as he improves in Grace, he shall encrease in Wisdom.

Ver. 23. *He that prieth in at her Windows, shall also hearken at her Doors.*] We have here, and in the Context, an Assemblage of Images to encourage the Pursuit after Wisdom. In the preceding Verse all the Vigilance of the Hunter, and the Sagacity and  
U Attention



Attention of the Spy is recommended for that Purpose. There is the same Metaphor in *Plato*, where *Socrates*, describing the inquisitive Philosopher, calls him *θηρῶν*, or the Hunter. The Author adds farther here, you must pursue her with all the Eagerness of a passionate Lover (which Comparison is continued to the End of the Chapter) who hangs about the House of his beloved Fair, *Nec vultum dulci detinet a domo*, watching and observing every thing that passes. I think this Verse not accurately translated, I would either render, after the Manner of the former Verse, Go after her, like an assiduous Lover, that prieth in at the Windows, and hearkens at the Doors of his Mistress; or rather to go a little farther back still, Blessed is the Man that is so desirous of, and inquisitive after Wisdom, as to pry in at her Windows, and listen at her Doors. *Solomon* makes use of the same Comparison, for thus Wisdom speaks of herself, Blessed is the Man that heareth me, and watcheth daily at my Gates, waiting at the Posts of my Doors, *Prov. viii. 34.*

Ver. 24. *He that doth lodge near her House, shall also fasten a Pin in her Walls.* Ver. 25. *He shall pitch his Tent nigh unto her, and shall lodge in a Lodging where good Things are.]* The Translation should rather be as before, Blessed is the Man who lodgeth near her House, and is desirous to join his Habitation to hers, who will pitch his Tent nigh unto her, and partake of the Advantages of so commodious a Situation. By fastening a Pin in her Walls is meant, that such a one who seeks her Intimacy and Acquaintance, shall have a constant and sure Abode with her, his Dwelling shall be as secure, and his Tent as unmoveable, as if by Pins or Nails fastened to the Ground. We have the like Expression, *Ezr. ix. 8.* where speaking of God's giving them a little reviving in their Bondage, and an Opportunity of setting up, and repairing the House of God, he expresses this Advantage and Security, by God's giving them a Nail in his holy Place; which the Margin expounds to the same Sense. See also *Isai. xxii. 23.* The Sense of the whole is, Blessed, or happy is the Man, that is not content to follow after Wisdom for a little Time only, or to see and speak to her *en passant*, and as it were by Accident, but is desirous of a long Continuance with her, to be known to, and converse often with her, for he that is ambitious to fix his Abode, and Dwelling near her, will find there a Lodging stocked with all Conveniencies and Goods: for so advantageous is her Neighbourhood, that a little Hut near to the Seat of Wisdom, is preferable to the most stately Palaces, and the superb Magnificence of Kings. This was holy *David's* Opinion, who says, *I had rather be a Door-keeper, even the meanest Servant, in the House of God, than to dwell in the most stately Pavilions of Ungodliness, Psal. lxxxiv. 11.* And speaking of the wise Man,

or one that feareth the Lord, he expresses himself like this Writer, *Τὸς ἐστὶν ὁ φοβούμενος τὸν Κύριον; ἡ ψυχὴ αὐτοῦ ἐν ἀγαθοῖς ἀνδραγαθήσεται.* *Psal. xxv. 13.* See also *Ezek. xxxiv. 14.* *John x. 9.*

Ver. 26. *He shall set his Children under her Shelter, and shall lodge under her Branches.* Ver. 27. *By her he shall be covered from Heat, and in her Glory shall he dwell.] i. e.* Happy is the Man who will commit his Children to her Care, and bring them up under her Nurture and Admonition, who will, with his young, lodge or repose himself under the hospitable Security of her Branches: for Wisdom will protect him under her Shade against all Inconveniencies, like the cloudy Pillar which attended upon, and sheltered the *Israelites* in the Wilderness, she will enlighten him with her Glory, which shall be reflected upon him, and by the Brightness of its Presence, shall he be known and distinguished. By *δόξα*, the Term here used, the LXX expresses the *Schechinah*, or the radiant Presence of God in the Sanctuary. The representing Wisdom, under the Image of a spreading Tree, is common in this, and the other sapiential Books. But the Prophet's Description of the visionary Tree, whose Height reached unto the Heaven, and the Sight thereof to all the Earth, whose Leaves were fair, and on it Meat enough for all, *Dan. iv. 20, 21.* is truly applicable unto Wisdom, and her Fruits.

## C H A P. XV.

Ver. 2. **A**ND as a Mother shall she meet him, and receive him as a Wife married of a Virgin.] *ὡς γυνὴν παρθέναν.* The Version of this Place is very inaccurate and indeterminate, which means neither more nor less than a Virgin, whether *γυνή* be interpreted *mulier*, (as in the *Lat.* Version of the *Greek* in the *Polyglot*) or a betrothed Virgin. If *γυνή* be taken for a Wife, (as the *Syr.* Version has it) and as it is used, *2 Cor. xi. 2.* *γυνὴν παρθέναν* probably is the same with *γυνὴν παρθένον*. See *Deut. xxii. 23.* Instances of this Construction, which is called Apposition, may be seen in *Gloss. Philol. Sac. p. 386.* But in *regimine*, the Genitive is also used as here. See *Gen. xv. 18.* *Ezek. iii. 15.* *Amos v. 2.* *Matt. xii. 39.* *xxiv. 30.* *Acts viii. 5.* *Rom. iv. 11.* I make no doubt but the Original had *אשה בתולה* a Woman, or a Wife of Virginities, according to the *Heb.* Phraseology, like a Wife of Whoredoms, *Hos. i. 2.* which yet is the very same with *Mulier meretrix*, *Lev. xxi. 1.* a Wife that is a Whore (for so it is there rendred.) And then the Sense of the present Passage is clear enough: As a Mother shall she meet him, and receive him, as a Bride, or an espoused Virgin, in the Possession of whom he will rejoice and be made happy. There is indeed another good Sense suggested in the *Arab.* and *Syr.* Versions. One has it, *More puella*, the



the other, *Uxor adolescentie*, a young Wife, or the Wife of his Youth. And if the Original *Heb.* included a Woman of Youths, a young Woman, or Wife, or the Wife of his Youth, as חַמְלָה it is certain signifies all these, then those Versions, (supposing them taken from the Original) may be justified, as well as γυνή παρθενίας. But the first Sense is to be preferred as being the best, and most natural. *Mess. of Port Royal* observe, that this Writer makes Use of the Image of a Mother and a Spouse, to denote, that Wisdom loves her Children with the most tender Affection, and that it is she that produces the Fruits of Justice, Holiness, and Understanding in them, and is the Parent of all good Things to them. She is represented here as going out to meet them with a sort of rapturous Joy, to denote, that we do not come to God till he first comes to us, and that it is his Goodness that conducts us to himself, and puts us in Possession of Happiness.

Ver. 3. *With the Bread of Understanding shall she feed him, and give him the Water of Wisdom to drink.*] See ch. xxiv. 21. as divine Grace is often represented under the Emblem of Springs and Streams of Water, so Wisdom, or divine Knowledge, the Food and Support of the Soul, is expressed by the Metaphor of Meat and Drink, which sustain the Body. Expressions very familiar to the Eastern Nations, and frequent in the Jewish Writings. Under this Image the wise Man here advises to make Use of those Means of Instruction which Wisdom offers, from the certain Advantages she has to bestow. *Solomon* uses the like, *Prov.* ix. 5. where Wisdom calls out to every simple Soul that wants Understanding, *Come, eat of the Bread and drink of the Wine which I have mingled.* And that we may know what is meant by this Metaphor, it follows, *Forsake the Foolish, and live, and go in the Way of Understanding.* There is the same Comparison, *Is.* lv. 1. and when God in his Anger threatens to deprive his People of the Comfort and Benefit of hearing his Word, the Prophet calls the withdrawing this Blessedness a Famine, *Amos* viii. 11. pursuing the same Metaphor taken from the ordinary Refreshment of Meat and Drink; because when we want the support of God's Word, we want that Bread which nourishes the Soul unto everlasting Life, and without which it dies with spiritual Hunger. The Gospel too uses the same Comparison, and advises us to hunger and thirst after Righteousness. The *Rabbins* observe, that wherever Mention is made in the Book of *Proverbs* of eating and drinking, there is meant principally Wisdom, and the keeping of the Law.

Ver. 5. *She shall exalt him above his Neighbours, and in the Midst of the Congregation shall she open his Mouth.*] Thus the *Psalmist* describes his happy Success and Advancement through Wisdom, or the Study and Observance of God's Laws, *Thou through thy Com-*

*mandments hast made me wiser than mine Enemies, for they are ever with me: I have more Understanding than my Teachers, for thy Testimonies are my Study; I am wiser than the Aged, because I keep thy Commandments.* *Psal.* cxix. 98, 99. ἐκκλησία, may either signify the Church, or the Senate; in both which, a Man of superior Parts, and consummate Wisdom, for to human Learning it may also be applied, is attended to with great Respect, and even Admiration and Applause. Unto him Men give Ear, as *Job* speaks upon another occasion, and wait as for the Rain, when his Speech drops from him, they open their Mouth wide to receive his Instruction, and keep Silence at his Counsel. Before him the Aged arise and stand up, and Nobles hold their Peace; Princes also refrain talking, and lay their Hands on their Mouth. ch. xxix.

Ver. 8. *For she is far from Pride, and Men that are Liars cannot remember her.*] This Writer often inculcates, that Wisdom will not continue in a wicked, proud, and lying Spirit, which frequently meet together in the same Person, and as such are mentioned together in Scripture. Thus *Prov.* viii. 12, 13. Wisdom says, *I Wisdom dwell with Prudence, and find out Knowledge of witty Inventions, Pride and Arrogancy, and the evil Way, and the froward Mouth do I hate,* as if true Wisdom and Sin were incompatible. Wisdom requires Innocence of Manners, Humbleness of Mind, and Uprightness of Intention. The Writer of the *Book of Wisdom* well observes, that the holy Spirit will have no Fellowship with the Wicked and Deceitful, *Into a malicious Soul Wisdom shall not enter, nor dwell in a Body that is subject unto Sin; for the holy Spirit of Discipline will flee Deceit, and remove from Thoughts that are without Understanding, and will not abide when Unrighteousness cometh in.* ch. i. 4, 5.

Ver. 9. *Praise is not seemly in the Mouth of a Sinner; for it was not sent him of the Lord.*] ἐκ παῖτος αὐτοῦ. 'Tis strange that our Translators should prefer a remote and secondary Sense of both these Words to their first and primary Signification; αὐτοῦ is *sermo proverbialis*, *sententia*, a Parable, as the Margin has it, such as these sapiential Books wholly consist of: παῖτος is properly *tempestivus*, or seasonable. Thus ch. xx. 1. ἐν ἑλέγχῳ ὅς ἐστιν ὡραῖον, which in the Margin is properly rendred, seasonable. I take the Meaning to be, that a wise Saying is out of Season in the Mouth of a Sinner; be it never so good in itself, it comes awkwardly, and without Effect out of such a Mouth. And this our Author says expressly, ch. xx. 19, 20. *An unseasonable Tale will always be in the Mouth of the Unwise, a wise Sentence shall be rejected when it cometh out of a Fool's Mouth, for he will not speak it in due Season.* The reason immediately follows, why this is not to be expected from such a one, because it does not proceed from its true Source of Wisdom, viz.



it was not sent of the Lord, from whom comes every good and profitable Sentiment. Or, as the *Margin* has it, because the Sinner was not sent of the Lord to deliver Instructions, which will be despised and laughed at from such a Teacher. Things spoken lose their Excellence, and change their Nature when spoken by improper Persons, and at unreasonable Times. But Proverbs, and profitable Sayings must proceed from Wisdom, viz. from Men of Wisdom, as is observed in the next Verse. So the *Syr.* and *Arab.* Versions render ἐν σοφίᾳ, ore sapientum, *Syr.* Ex ore prudentum, *Arab.* Clem. Alex. reads ἐν σώματι πρῶτον, *Strom.* L. ii. which the *Vulg.* seems to confirm; and then the Lord will prosper them, viz. They shall have a good Effect, they come seasonable, ὥρατοι, ripe, mature, and will profit the Hearer. Solomon has the same Observation, and illustrates it beautifully, viz. That a Fool is as unequal to a Parable, as a lame Man is to walk, *The Legs of the Lame are not equal, so is a Parable in the Mouth of Fools*, Prov. xxvi. 7. All the Editions of the ὁ read here by Mistake, παρανομίαν ἐν σώματι ἀφρόνων, which Dr. Grabe by a happy Conjecture restores to παρανομίαν, the true reading, as the *Hebrew* manifestly shews. See also, y 9. And again ch. xvii. 7. *Excellent Speech becometh not a Fool.* When the Servant in the Play affected a Gravity of Speech misbecoming his Place and Condition, and to talk sententious; the Master's Reply is, condemning his Pretence to Wisdom, *Etenim hic carnifex sententias loquitur.* *Plaut.* There is also another Sense of αἶνος, which our Translators follow, Praise is not seemly in the Mouth of a Sinner, which means not Praise in general, but the Praise of God; *Dei laus*, as the *Vulgate* has it, which the Lord inspires into a wise and faithful Heart, as he did into *David's*, *Moses*, and other Composers of sacred Hymns, and Thanksgivings. Or it may refer to the Performance of religious Duties, which Sinners disgrace, who officiate publickly, and through their evil Conduct, render the Sacrifice of the Lord contemptible; according to that of the Psalmist, *Unto the Ungodly, says God, why dost thou preach my Laws, and take my Covenant in thy Mouth, whereas thou hatest to be reformed, and hast cast my Words behind thee?* Psal. l. 16, 17.

Ver. 11. Say not, *It is through the Lord that I fell away.*] Some Copies have, μὴ ἀπὸς, ὅτι διὰ Κύριον ἀπέστην. And so the *Vulg.* Ne dixeris, per Deum abest, i. e. Sapientia. Say not that God is the Cause that I have not Wisdom, for God is not the Cause of our Weakness, Ignorance, or want of Knowledge, nor are mere Privations, such as Darkness, chargeable upon him. He has given us a Soul capable of Learning and Improvement, and we should ask of God such good Qualities as we stand in Need of, and have not, and be careful to encrease those we have. While we are petitioning for any Blessing,

we should ourselves take Pains to obtain it, as far as human Industry and Care can contribute to that End; for the Goodness and Grace of God does not exclude our own Endeavours and Co-operations. But above all Things, we should take Care not to commit Wickedness, to deprive us of the Grace of God, or that Wisdom, which cometh from above, which will not abide, when Unrighteousness cometh in, *Wisd.* i. 5. This Sense *Grotius* favours, as most agreeable to the Context, particularly, y 7, 8. But there is another Reading, μὴ ἀπὸς, ὅτι διὰ Κυρίου ἀπέστην, which is followed by our Translators, and authorized by the greater Number of Copies. According to this Reading the Meaning is, Say not that the Lord made me to wander from the right Path, or that through him I departed from it; and thus ἀπέστην is used in several Parts of this Book, ch. ii. 3. x. 12. xvi. 8. xix. 2. Such evil Sentiments, and unworthy Notions of the Deity obtained in the Prophet's Time, and are expressly condemned by him, *Ye have wearied the Lord with your Words, when ye say, Every one that doth evil is good in the Sight of the Lord, and he delighteth in them.* *Mak.* ii. 17. The Psalmist truly describes his Nature, when he says, *That he is a God that hath no Pleasure in Wickedness, neither shall any Evil dwell with him.* *Psal.* v. 4. Our Author here confutes some Objectors that ascribe too much to God, even Men's Vices, as in the following Chapter, y 17. he condemns those that impute too little to him.

*Ibid.* For thou oughtest not to do the Thing which he hateth.] ὁ γὰρ ἐμίσησεν, ὃ ποιεῖς. I think the Connexion between this and former Sentence not close and just, nor is this an adequate Answer or Reason against what is advanced in the first Part. In the following Verse, which is drawn up much after the same Manner, the Reasoning is just, and each Part answers to the other with great Strength and Exactness. I conjecture the true Reading to be, ὁ γὰρ ἐμίσησεν, ὃ ποιεῖς, i. e. what he hates, or hath expressed his Abhorrence of, viz. the falling away of any Man from his Duty, whether Adam, or any of his Descendants, he will not do, occasion, or be the Author of. And thus the *Syriac*, Ne dicas, impulsu Dei deliqui & peccavi, quia rem turpem nunquam commisit; and if that Translator had pleased, it might, by changing the Points, have been as well translated, what he hates, as rem turpem, what is hateful. The *Arabic* too, though it understands the former Part of falling into Adversity, yet agrees in applying the latter to God, for neque enim proficiscitur ab eo, seems to be the same with neque enim facit. The present Reasoning indeed is just, applied to Adversity, in the Sense of the *Arab.* Translator, Blame not God for any Adversity that hath befallen thee, but rather blame thyself for doing those Things which he hateth, and have brought his Displeasure and Judgments upon thee.

Ver.



# Chap. xv. the Book of ECCLESIASTIGUS. 81

Ver. 12. *Say not he hath caused me to err.*] *ὅτι αὐτός με ἐπλάσεν.* Some Copies read *ὅτι αὐτός με ἐπλασεν.* That God hath created me so, or formed me such, by a Temperament of Body inclinable to such and such Vices; which Reading *Grotius* prefers, as most agreeable to the Place. The *Vulgate* has, *Ille me decepit.* See *St. James i. 13.* *ὅτι ἂν κακὸν πράττεις,* says *Lucian*, *μὲνησο τῆ σοφῆ λέγοντι,* *ὡς θεὸς ἀνάτι,* *αἰτία δ' ἐλομένη.* *De Merc. Conduct.* The wife Man here referred to, is probably *Plato*, whose Words are, *Κακῶν αἰτιον φάναι θεόν τινι γίνεσθαι, ἀγαθὸν ὄντα, πάντῃ τρόπῳ διαμαχήμενον.* *De Rep. L. 2. i. e.* Since God is good, we must by no means allow any to say, that he is the Cause of any Evil that is done, but must reject such a wild Opinion. All the ancient Sages held, that neither Prophecies, nor Prescience, nor the Decrees of God lay any Necessity upon the Will of Man; they who assert this, says *Origen in Genesi.* absolve the Sinner from all Guilt, and lay it upon God, as if by his Decree or Foreknowledge he laid such Men under an unavoidable Necessity of acting wickedly. And so *Prosper*, *Non casus ruentium, nec cupiditates, peccantium predestinatio Dei aut excitavit, aut suavit, aut impulit.* *Ad Vincent. Object.* *St. Austin* blames such as pretend in their own Excuse, *Venus hoc fecit, aut Saturnus, aut Mars; scilicet ut homo sine culpa sit, culpandus autem sit celi ac siderum creator.* *Confess. L. iv. c. 3.* And *Maximus Tyrius* has much the same Thought, *τὸ φάναι ὅτι ὁ ἔρως μοιχείαν ἀνάγει, κ. τ. λ.* To say that Love forced a Man into Adultery, and to charge that, or any such wicked Transgression upon the Deity, is very shocking and profane, *Dissert. xi.* *Tully* also pronounces the same concerning the Amours of *Paris, &c.* which, says he, are not chargeable upon God, but upon their own Lusts and Passions. *De Nat. Deor. L. iii.*

*Ibid.* *He hath no need of the sinful Man.*] *i. e.* He can have no Motive to deceive any of his Creatures, or to oblige them to commit any Sin. For what Glory, Profit, or Advantage can he possibly reap from Wickedness or Injustice, the two Things which he principally hateth, and are most contrary to his Nature? Does he do this out of Hatred to his Creatures, or can we suppose him hereby to intend to vex and torment himself? Or the Sense may be, That God hath no need of Sinners to execute the determined Ends of his Providence; for though it be necessary that God should permit Men to do that which he hath foretold, yet he does not incline, or force the sinful Man to accomplish his Designs, but rather foreseeing, that he will do so, he lets him follow his own wicked Inclination and Temper, and so accidentally makes him his Instrument; which was the Case of *Judas* in the Crucifixion of our Lord. The same may be said of the Oppression of the *Hebrews* by the *Affyrians* and *Babylonians*, which is mentioned as God's doing: God, to chastise

the Ingratitude and Wickedness of his own People, permitted the Rage and Fury of these Tyrants to have its full Swing; he did not think it proper by any secret Motions, or open Judgments to turn the Hearts of those Conquerors, or to stop the Progress of their Arms—but he neither forced, nor compelled them to the Evil, nor necessarily determined them to act in that Manner. *St. Austin's* Words are a complete Comment upon this whole Verse: "We ought never to make God the Author of any Fault we have, nor charge him for the want of any Grace which we have not. He is not the Cause of any Man's Irregularity or Falling; but he that is Wicked, is so through his own Fault, and he that is good, is so only by his Grace. Neither Sinners, nor even good Men are any other ways necessary to him, than as the wilful Wickedness of the one serves to exemplify his Power and Justice, and the Grace which he bestows upon the other to display his Mercy. So that no one can in the least impeach the Equity of his Conduct; nor under his Government, which is altogether just, suffer the least Hardship, without having really deserved it. If he punishes, 'tis exacting only what is his Due; and if he spares and forgives, 'tis remitting what he might justly have required, and inflicted."

Ver. 14. *He himself made Man from the Beginning, and left him in the Hand of his Counsel.*] This may either refer to the State of our first Parent in Paradise, whom God endowed with a full Sense of his Duty, yet laid him not under an unavoidable Necessity of being good; he may be considered as under a perfect Equilibrium with respect to Good and Evil; he was neither determined to Evil by the superior Weight of his Concupiscence; nor was the Attraction to Goodness so forcible and strong, as not to be resisted; so that it was absolutely in his Power to have made himself either happy or miserable. Or it may mean, that when God gave his Law to the *Israelites* in particular, by the Disposition of Angels, and with such Pomp and Terror, though his Will was declared therein in the strongest and most affecting Manner, yet he imposed upon them no such Necessity of keeping it, as that it was impossible for them to act otherwise, but left it to their own Choice and Counsel, whether they would live according to the Precepts of it, and be happy, or forfeit the glorious Promises of the Covenant by Transgression, and incur the Punishment denounced. This God proposes to them in the most solemn Manner, *Deut. xxx. 19.* Or it may relate to Mankind in general, That God does neither compel any to do evil, nor necessitate them to do good, though he is always ready with his preventing Grace to assist them towards doing well. In the Business of Religion, and Matters of Salvation, free Will is as evident-



ly exercised, as in any thing else, wherein one Man covenants or contracts with another; and the Evils of the Soul are not the Fault of Nature, but of the Will, which, being free, uses its Liberty to chuse either Good or Evil. The Author's Design here is to take from the Wicked all the Excuses and Pretexts, which they make Use of to cast upon God their Vices and Irregularities, pretending, that God has given them strong and even invincible Inclinations towards Sin, that they find in themselves the Seeds of natural Corruption, of which they are not the Cause or Authors. To this Plea the wise Man replies, that God cannot be justly charged with the Leaven of Wickedness, because he abhors it, forbids, and even punishes it. That it was not God that originally placed in Men such evil Inclinations; neither is such a Corruption invincible, as he has created Men free, and at their own Disposal, capable of either following what is good, and affording them his assisting Grace for that Purpose, in order to make them happy, or of choosing Evil, through the Sway of their own corrupt Will, and thereby making themselves miserable. St. Chrysostom, as if he had been directly commenting upon the Place, hath well observed, τὰ ἐν ἡμῶν κατὰ τὸ θεῶν ἐχει τὸ αἴτιον, κ. τ. λ. *Deus non est autor malorum apud Inferos, sed nos ipsi. Radix enim peccati est arbitrium nostrum, & voluntatis nostrae libertas.*

Ver. 15. *If thou wilt, to keep the Commandments, and to perform acceptable Faithfulness.* The Reading in all the Greek Copies is, ἐὰν θέλῃς, συντηγήσεις ἐντολάς, καὶ πίστιν ποιήσεις δίδουίαις. But would not the reading be better, ἐὰν θέλῃς, συντηγήσῃς ἐντολάς, καὶ πίστιν ποιήσῃς δίδουίαις, i. e. He originally made Man, and left him from the Beginning ἐν χειρὶ διαθεῖναι αὐτῶν, which is a *Hebraism*, i. e. in his own Power, and to his own Choice, to keep God's Commandments, and to perform πίστιν δίδουίαις, Faithfulness of Acceptance, or acceptable Faithfulness, as the *Hebraism* is rightly rendred in our Version, i. e. faithfully to discharge his Duty, if it be not his Fault; ἐὰν θέλῃς, if he wills, or pleases. A farther Proof of Man's free Agency may be drawn from hence, viz. from God's giving Commandments to Mankind to follow and obey, which necessarily supposes a Choice, and indeed the very Nature of a Covenant between God and Man implies it, nor without it can the Neglect of the Conditions of it be justly punishable. A right Direction of the Will is indeed to be asked of God, whose Grace is compatible with human Liberty. *Certum est*, says St. Austin, commenting upon this Place, *nos servare mandata, si volumus, sed quia preparatur voluntas a Domino, ab illo petendum est, ut tantum velimus, quantum sufficit ut volendo faciamus. Certum est nos velle cum volumus, sed ille facit ut velimus bonum. Certum est nos facere cum facimus, sed ille facit ut faciamus bonum, praebeundo*

*vires efficacissimas voluntati.* De Grat. & Lib. Arbitr. c. xvi.

Ver. 16. *He hath set Fire and Water before thee.* Some hereby understand, that God hath given Man the free Use of the Things of this Life, and hath placed him as a sort of Sovereign in the World, entirely free himself, and Lord of the Elements, and possessed of every Convenience, denoted by the two principal ones, that may make Life happy and easy, which God has put in his Power, and under his Command; as Earth and Water were wont to be given to the Kings of Persia anciently, *Judith* ii. 7. to acknowledge, that they were Lords of Land and Sea. But more seems here intended than barely Man's Prerogative and Dominion; it contains the Test of Man's Obedience, a Proposal of Happiness or Misery to him, according to a wise or indiscreet Choice. It is observable, that the *Vulgate* changes the Order here, and puts Water first, *apposuit tibi aquam & ignem*, and so indeed the Opposition is in the following Verse, *Before Man is Life and Death*, giving the Precedence to what is best and most useful, and so Water is here manifestly taken in Contradistinction to Fire, which is generally more dangerous, and destructive. But in ch. xxxix. 26. this Writer places them both among the principal Necessaries of Life. Grotius says, by these Elements is denoted a State of Lusts and Passions, and a State of Innocence, the former by Fire, the latter by Water.

Ver. 18. *For the Wisdom of the Lord is great, and he is mighty in Power, and beholdeth all Things.*—Ver. 19. *He hath commanded no Man to do wickedly, neither hath he given any Man Licence to Sin.* *ἰσχυρὸς ἐν δυνάμει.* This is a strong and vigorous Expression: The *Hellenists* often style God ἰσχυρὸς simply, see *Job* xxiii. 13. And in another Passage of that Writer we have τὰ πάντα ἐργάται οὗ ἰσχυροῦ. God is also called ὁ δυνάστης, 2 *Maccab.* xv. 3. and δυνάστης μέγας τῷ κόσμῳ, and δυνάστης τῶν ἀσπασίων. This Writer also has, ὁ δυνάστης, ὁ μέγας δυνάστης, and ὁ κύριος δυνάστης, all in c. xlii. 6, 19. But ἰσχυρὸς ἐν δυνάμει, exceeds all these, and must express the Superlativeness of God's Power. The Sense of this and the following Verses is, God, by his infinite Wisdom has given Man every Thing that will make him happy, if he does not obstruct his own Happiness, and by his Almighty Power is able also to render him as completely miserable, if he disobey him. He likewise, as our sovereign Judge, examines every Work of Man, and will make a proportionable Difference in their State, according to their respective Merit. He hates, he forbids, he threatens, he punishes all wilful Sin; the Sinner therefore cannot with Reason promise himself Impunity, or think to excuse himself by any pretended Necessity laid on him to commit Sin; he cannot plead that he wants Freedom, and Liberty to act otherwise, or that God has given him, or others



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others any Licence, or Indulgence for committing Evil.

## CHAP. XVI.

Ver. 1. **D**ESIRE not a Multitude of unprofitable Children, neither delight in ungodly Sons: though they multiply, rejoice not in them, except the Fear of the Lord be with them.] The Vulgate joins the first Verse to the former Chapter, and renders, *Non enim concupiscit multitudinem filiorum infidelium & inutilium*, applying it to God, in the Sense of the latter Part of Verse 12. of that Chapter. In the 2<sup>d</sup> Verse, the wise Man teaches Parents the great Importance of a good Education, to bring them up, and settle them in the Way wherein they should go; that neither the great Number of Children, nor their Beauty, Shape, or Strength, or any bodily Accomplishment can give any true Delight or Satisfaction to a Parent, but their good Dispositions, and moral Conduct only; that it is better to have only one that is virtuous, and well inclined, than a Number of loose and profligate ones, who will bring certain Ruin and Disgrace into the Family, and that even the having none at all, is far preferable to bad ones. *Aristotle*, therefore, with great Judgment requires *εὐτεχνίαν*, as well as *πολυτεχνίαν*, i. e. a virtuous, and not a numerous Race only, towards a Parent's Content and Happiness. For one Child of bad Morals and scandalous Behaviour is enough to take away all Satisfaction from a Parent, however happy he may be in the rest of his Children; such a one will give more real Plague and Vexation than the others can administer Comfort, and few Families are there where there is a Number of Children, but have some domestic Evil of this Sort. *Mess. of Port Royal* apply what is here said, and in the Context, to the Children of our spiritual Mother, the Church, the Governors whereof ought not to rejoice at merely seeing great Numbers, making Profession of the Faith, except they are in reality what they appear to be, and their Life answers to the Holiness of their Calling. If they truly fear God, and make a visible Progress in the Ways of Godliness, they are then a Pastor's Glory and Joy; but if, through their bad Conduct and Wickedness of Life, some of her Members dishonour God, and disgrace their Profession, they are then the occasion of much real Concern, and Affliction to him, which encreases in Proportion to the Number of such bad Disciples, and the Power which they have to seduce others also. *St. Chrysostom* therefore wishes that such as dishonour God by their Immoralities, would in earnest leave the Church, and those only who devoutly serve him, and are a Credit to their Religion, would continue in it; that a few so disposed are more to be valued, than a vast mixed Multitude of nominal Professors only, whose Affection is not right, and their

Attachment to her Service, indifferent, and insincere.

Ver. 3. *Trust not thou in their Life, neither respect their Multitude.*] i. e. Flatter not thyself that Children of such vicious Dispositions shall live long, and carry thy Name to any distant Time, for Life at best is uncertain, its Continuance depends upon God's Blessing, which the Wicked have the least Reason to expect, and by their own Immoralities they often shorten its Period, and hasten their miserable End. Nor boast thyself in a numerous Issue, as if that was a Security to thy Race, that it shall not be extinct. *Abah* had seventy Sons, and none of them succeeded him, but *Jebu* put them all to Death, 2 Kings x. 1. *Gideon* had the like Number, and *Abimelech* slew them all, but *Jotham* the youngest, who hid himself, *Judg.* ix. 5. *Abraham*, on the contrary had but one Son, and his Posterity was as numerous as the Stars of Heaven for Multitude. The *Vatican* Edition reads, *καὶ μὴ ἐπὶ τῷ τόπῳ αὐτῶν*, which may either mean, Depend not upon their Place or Continuance, for, according to that of the Psalmist, *Thou shalt look after their Place, and they shall be away.* Or depend not on the Rank and Dignity in which they may be placed, for they shall suddenly be overthrown; and thus *τόπος* is used by this Writer, *ch.* xiii. 22. xvi. 14. xxxviii. 12.

Ver. 4. *For by one that hath Understanding, shall the City be replenished, but the Kindred of the Wicked shall speedily become desolate.*] i. e. By wise Men Cities and Empires were founded, as anciently *Rome* and *Athens*, and owed their Greatness to the Policy and Counsels of good Legislators. Such by their Knowledge of Learning were meet for the People, and being wise and eloquent profited them by their Instructions; *Their Seed stood fast, and their Children for their Sakes*, *ch.* xlv. 4, 12. In such Sons, either a Family or Kingdom may glory, for they will adorn both public and private Life. But degenerate and profligate Children add Affliction to a good Parent, and, instead of being serviceable to the public Good and Welfare, often contribute to their Country's Ruin: Thus *Priam*, through the ill Conduct of his Son *Paris*, saw his Capitol and numerous Family in the utmost Circumstances of Distress, and fell himself a Victim to the merciless Enemy. By *φυλὴ ἀσεβῶν* we may not only understand the Company, or Society, the Kindred, or Tribe of the Wicked, as the *Margin* has it, but the very Place or Land where they dwell, which shall suffer for their Sakes. And so *Calmet* understands it, *Le pays de mechans deviendra desert*, according to the Observation of the Psalmist, *A fruitful Land maketh be barren, for the Wickedness of those that dwell therein.* And so in Scripture-History, the People of the Jews which sprang from one, even *Abraham*, increased so incredibly, as to be at least Six hundred



hundred thousand at their going out of Egypt; and on the other hand, the Canaanites, tho' so numerous and powerful, were destroyed, and overthrown, and their Land, the Type of Heaven, given to God's own People. Many such Instances, the Author says, he had both seen and heard of, of Multitudes springing from one good and pious Root, and large and rich Families dwindling through their Wickedness, and in Time entirely forgot.

Ver. 6. *In the Congregation of the Ungodly shall a Fire be kindled, and in a rebellious Nation Wrath is set on Fire.*] There is much the same Sentiment, ch. xxi. 9. *The Congregation of the Wicked is like Tow wrapped together, and the End of them is a Flame of Fire to destroy them.* By Fire we may understand the divine Vengeance, as when God says, *A Fire is kindled in my Anger, and shall burn unto the lowest Hell, and shall consume the Earth with her Increase;* it afterwards follows by way of Explanation, *I will heap Mischief upon them, they shall be burnt with Hunger, and devoured with bitter Destruction,* Deut. xxxii. 22, 23, 24. Or Fire may be understood literally, as it is sometimes the Effect of God's Displeasure: Thus it was when the Company raised by Corah, were smitten with Lightning, *The Fire was kindled among them, and the Flame burnt up the Ungodly,* Psal. cvi. 18. Lightning particularly is called the Fire of the Lord, as being a known Instrument of his Vengeance. By Fire also is sometimes meant War, and so the Sense may be, That War or Sedition shall break forth, burn, and destroy the Families and Territories of a wicked and disobedient People, that God will permit the Enemy from without, or civil Discord and Division to ruin and overthrow them. The Author now seems to return to the Subject at the End of the last Chapter, viz. to shew that God will certainly punish the Wicked, and is not backward to proceed against them with Severity, upon account of their Number or Power, which he proves by many memorable Instances in the following Verses.

Ver. 7. *He was not pacified towards the old Giants, who fell away in the Strength of their Foolishness.*] Our Translators follow a Copy which had *οὐκ ἀνέστησαν ἐν τῇ ἰσχύϊ τῆς ἀφροσύνης αὐτῶν*, though the Generality of Editions omit the latter Words. It is a *Hebraism*, and means rather that they fell away, or rebelled, through a foolish Conceit of their own Strength, and a vain Dependence upon it. And thus Calmet, *Qui se sont revoltés par une folle confiance en leur force.* These mighty Giants of the old World, trusting in their great Number, and extraordinary Strength, God exterminated for their Insolence, and drowned them in the Waters of the Deluge, Gen. vi. 4. *Wisd.* xiv. 6. They were, says Macrobius, a wicked Generation of Men, who defied the Gods, and renounced their Government, and for that Reason were represented as at-

tempting to invade Heaven, and to depose the Gods from their heavenly Thrones, *Saturnal.* L. i. c. 20. But how would it have adorned his Subject, if this Writer had instanced in, what he could not be unacquainted with, and his Design naturally led him to, the Apostasy and Punishment of the Rebel Angels. The Prophet's Description of it is truly sublime, *How art thou fallen from Heaven, O Lucifer, Son of the Morning! for thou hast said in thine Heart, I will ascend into Heaven, I will exalt my Throne above the Stars of God, I will ascend above the Clouds, I will be like the most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to Hell.* Isa. xiv. 12, 15. And the Inference which might have been drawn from it, would exactly have suited this Place, If God spared not the Angels of Heaven, how much less will he spare us, the low Inhabitants of Earth? What this Writer mentions about the Pride of Sodom, in the next Verse, Ezekiel confirms, *Behold, this was the Iniquity of thy Sister Sodom, Pride, Fulness of Bread, and Abundance of Idleness, these occasioned those Abominations for which the Lord took them away,* ch. xvi. 49, 50. The same Prophet's Description of the Downfall of the Assyrian and Egyptian Pride, under the Image of a Cedar in Lebanon, with fair Branches, ch. xxxi. can never be sufficiently admired, and the Beauty of it cannot but entertain every judicious Reader.

Ver. 9. *He pitied not the People of Perdition, who were taken away in their Sins.*] *ἐκ ἡλίκου ἐθνὸς ἀπωλείας, τὰς ἐξερχομένους ἐν ἀμαρτίαις αὐτῶν.* *Ἔθνος ἀπωλείας* means a Nation devoted to Destruction, or fit to be destroyed; so Judas, by the Evangelists, is called *ὁ υἱὸς τῆς ἀπωλείας*, the Son of Perdition, and Antichrist is so called 2 Thess. ii. 3. a Son of Death, 2 Sam. xii. 5. is one worthy of it, and the like may be observed of *υἱὸς γένητος*, Matt. xxiii. 15. Almost all the Interpreters understand by the People of Perdition here, the Sodomites, and think the Subject of the former Verse is continued in this, and herein they are warranted by the *Vulgate*, nor does it suit amiss with the Character of that People. There is also another reading in some Copies, viz. *τὰς ἐξερχομένους ἐν ἀμαρτίαις αὐτῶν*, *Qui egrediebantur, or as Junius has it, Qui procedebant cum peccatis suis*, which some understand of the Destruction of many of the Israelites in their Journey through the Wilderness for their Obstinacy, but more of the Egyptians pursuing after them in their Departure from Egypt, and perishing in their wicked Attempt. The Syriac Version furnishes still another Sense, *Non est misertus super populo anathematizato.* This is favoured by Corn. a Lapide, who understands, by the People of Perdition, the Inhabitants of Jericho, which was an accursed City, and all that were therein, Josh. vi. 17. Whom then are we to understand at last by the People of Perdition? Shall we fix on the Sodomites, or Israelites, or Egyptians, or the People



ple of *Jericho*? For all these have their Advocates. As to the *Sodomites*, they, I think, must be excluded from being intended here, because they are mentioned just before, and as the two former Verses relate to two different Subjects, it is natural this third should too. The *Israelites*, who were cut off in the Wilderness, were not properly ἔθνος ἀπωλείας, nor would a *Jew* call them so; but γενεὰ ἀπωλείας only, and besides they are mentioned afterwards, and are distinguished by καὶ ἕτεροι, from those spoken of here. The *Egyptians* come best in order of Time; but though *Pharaoh*, and his Host, and perhaps the Body of his People were οἱ ἀπωλείας, yet the Nation was not destroyed, and therefore not so properly to be called ἔθνος ἀπωλείας; and as to *Jericho*, though it had indeed a separate King, yet was it not counted a separate ἔθνος. If I may offer my Conjecture among the rest, I think it most probable, that the *Canaanites* in general are here meant, who were a Nation worthy of Destruction, were also devoted to it, and at length ἐξηγμένοι, actually taken away in their Sins, as our Translation rightly has it; or, if we render τὸ ἐξηγμένον, proud, or elated, as both *Grotius* and *Drusus* translate it, agreeably to the *Vulg.* and *Tigurin* Versions, (which avoids something of a Tautology, and answers better to the latter Part of the next Verse) this Sense, too, suits the *Canaanites*, for they defied the Lord, persecuted his Chosen, were an idolatrous and savage People, were at the very Height of Wickedness, and gloried in their Shame, *Wisd.* xii. 4, 5, 6. and though their Punishment, which was adequate to their brutal Vices, came after that of the *Jews* in the next Verse, and therefore may seem less proper to be mentioned before it; yet probably the Writer chose to finish his *Gentile* Examples, before he proceeded to one of his own Nation.

Ver. 11. *And if there be one stiff-necked among the People, it is marvel if he escape unpunished.* The Argument proceeds a majori ad minus; thus, if God overthrew whole Nations for their Iniquity, as the *Sodomites*, the *Canaanites*, &c. if he spared not even his own People, but slew Six hundred Thousand of his favourite Peculium, who were gathered together, in the Hardness of their Hearts, nor even the old World itself for its universal Corruption, how shall any private Person, any single Sinner, inconsiderable in all Respects in Comparison of the former Examples, dare to rebel against his Maker, or promise himself Impunity, either for his Greatness, or his Meanness? or hope, because he is as One to Infinity, to lie concealed, and escape unpunished, amongst so many thousand Transgressors? It is proper and pleasing to observe, in what strong Terms the Mercy and Forgiveness of God is expressed in the latter Part of the Verse; he is represented there not only as placable, but as mighty to forgive; an Expression very singu-

lar, and raising Comfort from an Attribute that usually carries Terror in it. And, to invigorate this the more, δαδ' αὐτος is added in some Copies, that he is speedy and impatient, ready and desirous to forgive upon the first Motion of a real Change and Conversion in the Sinner; as it is expressed *Jer.* xviii. 7. *At what Instant I shall speak concerning a Nation or Kingdom, to pull down and to destroy it, if that Nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their Evil, I will (at that Instant) repent of the Evil that I thought to do unto them.* Nor is this Quickness of God favourably to alter his Resolutions, and change his Manner of acting, less strongly expressed in some Copies, which have μισήγων, ἔλεον, τύπων, ἰώμενος, where the Proceeding seems instantaneous, and to be expressed as it were in a Breath.

Ver. 12. *As his Mercy is great, so is his Correction also: he judgeth a Man according to his Works.* This follows very properly after what was said of his Mercy in the foregoing Verse, lest any should be encouraged to sin by a Reliance on Mercy, and presuming too much upon Pardon. For God is infinitely just, as well as good; he neither sacrifices his Justice to his Goodness, nor his Goodness to his Justice; these Attributes are so compatible in the Deity, as harmoniously to meet together, and lovingly to kiss each other. He pardons those who are truly contrite and penitent, as he is a sincere Lover of Souls; but he deals not so graciously with the Obstinate, and such as will not be reformed; in them he punishes the Odiousness of Sin with Rigour, because he detests their Continuance in it, and is as inflexible in the Execution of his Judgments, as they were in pursuing their evil Courses, and will proceed against such Sinners, not according to the Notions which they fondly conceive of God's acting, or the Methods which they sometimes presume to point out to him, but according to the real Demerit of their Works. Our Translators follow a Copy which had κείνη, but more correct ones have κείνη, in the Future. And so *Clem. Alexand.* reads, quoting this Passage, which seems confirmed from the parallel Sentence *Y* 14. and indeed from the whole Context. The Union of these two Attributes was never more truly displayed than in the Case of our first Parent; how severe, how dreadful is his Sentence, and yet how mild, how mixed with Mercy, in Comparison to what *Adam* might reasonably, and probably did expect from his offended God! while infinite Justice demanded Satisfaction and the Death of the Offenders, infinite Mercy intercedes for their Pardon, and comforts them, under the present Evidence of his Indignation, with the Promise of a Redeemer, who, by his Victory, should recover what they had lost.

Ver. 14. *Make Way for every Work of Mercy, for every Man shall find according to his Works.* Our Translators follow the *Complut.*



plut. which reads, *πάση ἐλεημοσύνη ποιήσου τὸ πόνον*, but the other Editions have, *πάση ἐλεημοσύνη ποιήσεις τόπον· ποιεῖν τόπον* in the Acceptation of this Author, often signifies, to do Honour to, or to treat with Respect and Distinction. See ch. xiii. 22. xvi. 3. xxxviii. 12. And so the Sense here may be, that God will respect, and have a regard to every Work of Mercy that a Man does, and will abundantly recompense it. See ch. xvii. 22, 23. A very learned Writer offers a different Reading, *πάσα ἐλεημοσύνη ποιήσεις τόπον, i. e.* Every Work of Mercy shall make, or prepare a Place, viz. in Heaven, for the Merciful, which seems confirmed by the next Sentence; and then the Sense will be the same with that of St. Luke, That Charity shall prepare a Place for the Righteous, and when they die, *they shall be received into everlasting Habitations.* c. xvi. 9. Hammond in loc. This Reading, it must be confessed, has some Countenance too from that of the Vulgate, *Omnis misericordia faciet locum unicuique, secundum meritum operum suorum.* As Bellarmine has abused this Passage in favour of the Romish Doctrine of Merit, it may be proper to observe upon the Vulg. rendering, 1. That it has here confounded two distinct Sentences, and made one of them. 2. It has inserted *meritum operum*, which has nothing to answer it in the Greek. 3. The Words *κατὰ τὰ ἔργα* are indefinite, and may respect either good or bad Works, and if understood of good Works, mean only that a Reward is promised to them, not that any is due to the Merit of good Works, as such, or that they are in themselves strictly meritorious. See Chamier's Panstrat. De Vulg. Edit.

Ver. 15. *The Lord hardened Pharaoh, that he should not know him, that his powerful Works might be known to the World.* See Exod. vii. 13. from whence this seems to be taken, where our Translators render, *He hardened Pharaoh's Heart*; which, according to the Hebrew, should have been, *Pharaoh's Heart became firm*, or was hardened, as the same Hebrew Words are rendred *ψ 22.* of that Chapter. And so the *6* render *καλίσχυσε ἡ καρδία Φαραώ.* and *ψ 22.* *ἐκκληρόνθη ἡ καρδία Φαραώ.* and by Ar. Mont. *corroboravit se cor Pharaonis*; and by the Vulg. *Induratum est cor Pharaonis*; and so the Chaldee. The same Reason which is here assigned for the hardening Pharaoh's Heart, we likewise meet with Exod. ix. 16. Rom. ix. 17. *For this Cause have I raised thee up*; or, according to *6*, *preserved thee, that I might shew (not my Mercy but) my Power in thee, and that my Name might be declared throughout all the Earth.* For the rehardning of Pharaoh's Heart upon the Removal of any Plague, occasioned the shewing so many more Signs and Wonders to God's greater Glory; each Respite renewed his Obstinacy, whereas the Continuance of any one Plague would have made him relent, and dismiss the Israelites.

Ver. 16. *He hath separated his Light from the Darknefs with an Adamant.*] The Meaning either is, that the Ways, Counsels, and Decrees of God are above our Understanding and Comprehension, so that to pretend to penetrate into his Secrets is Presumption; or, that God dwells in a Light, which no Man can approach unto, 1 Tim. vi. 16. Or the Sense may be, that God has placed a strong Partition, as the Margin has it, a great Chaos, between Heaven and Hell; or, as the Scripture expresses it, he has fixed a great Gulph, Luke xvi. 26. between the Seat of the Blessed, and the wretched Abode of the Wicked, at such an infinite Distance from each other, as to render all Approach inaccessible, all Communication impossible. Or, according to others, that he has made the Vicissitude of Day and Night constant and unalterable, *ἐπέσει ἀδάμαντι*, he has divided them by such a Law, as shall not be broken; accordingly *ἀδάμαντινα δέσμα* mean, Fetters which cannot be broken; and to express something unalterable, the Epigrammatist says, *τῷ ἀδάμαντι μένει.* I shall only observe, that this, and the foregoing Verse, seem to have no relation to the Context, *Revera hoc non pertinent*, says Grotius. And indeed they are wholly omitted in the Vulg. Rom. Ald. Bas. and most of the Greek Editions.

Ver. 17. *Say not thou, I will hide myself from the Lord; shall any remember me from above? I shall not be remembered among so many People: for what is my Soul among such an infinite Number of Creatures?* *Quantula est anima mea inter spiritus omnium hominum!* Syr. It is strange to observe how vain Man, who, when fired with Ambition, and puffed up with Self-Conceit, will allow none above him, and durst even aspire to an Equality with his Maker, can degrade, and depreciate himself upon occasion, when Fear of Punishment is in the Case, and comfort himself in his Meanness, as of no Worth or Consequence in the vast Creation, lost among the Infinity of Creatures, and too inconsiderable to be looked upon, or even remembered, and is happy if he can deceive himself and others with some such like false Reasoning, Does God take Cognizance of every Thing that passes below; can he enter into an Examination of all the Thoughts, Words, and Actions of each Man in particular throughout the World? He extends his Care indeed over the Fortune of the Great, determines the Fate of Princes, and the Revolutions of States and Empires; he directs and guides the principal Æras and Occurrences of remote Time, but 'tis below his Grandeur, to descend to mean Persons, and to extend his Care to trifling Matters, and the Infinity of human Concerns: Kings do not condescend to take Account or Cognizance themselves of petty and diminutive Transactions that pass in their Kingdom; these would disturb their Quiet, and detract from the sovereign Dignity. We meet with a like Instance of a



wicked and shallow Reasoner, *Job* xxii. 12, 13, 14. *Is not God in the Height of Heaven, and behold the Height of the Stars, how high they are? And thou sayest therefore, How doth God know? Can he judge through the dark Cloud? The thick Clouds are a Covering to him that he seeth not, and he walketh in the Circuit of Heaven.* Juvenal introduces an old Sinner talking in the like Manner,

*Ut sit magna, tamen certe lenta ira Deorum est. Si curant igitur cunctos punire nocentes, Quando ad me venient? sed & exorabile numen*

*Fortasse experiar: solet his ignoscere.*

Sat. xiii.

Such were the Subterfuges of Sinners, and the Objections of the Libertines of old, for want of a clear and right Notion of God's Attributes, his Omniscience, and Immenity in particular. For if God be, as even some of the Heathens have acknowledged, *totus sensus, totus auditus, totus visus.* Plin. L. ii. c. 7. the vast Number of Objects can give no Distraction to a Being of such Perfection, nor the infinite Variety of their Actions any ways disturb his Repose, or escape his Notice. For what is the whole Earth in his Eyes, or all Nations in his Presence, but, in the Language of the Prophet, *as a Drop of a Bucket, as the small Dust of the Balance?* Isa. xl. 15. Nor is the other Scruple of giving God too degrading an Office, by humbling himself to observe and take Care of what passes below, better founded; for none of his Creatures are either unworthy of, or below his Notice. 'Tis the proper Business of the Builder, and Maker of all Things, to superintend his Work; Man, in particular, is by his Nature an accountable Creature; and a Being that styles himself supreme, and either cannot, or will not take Account of Men's Behaviour, is no God. To take away all such low Conceptions, and Sentiments of the Deity, the Author probably soars on Purpose, in the two following Verses, and excels himself in the lofty Description of God's Majesty, the Effects of his mighty Power, and the dreadful Consequences of his very Looks; not unlike that of the *Psalmist*, *Psal.* civ. 7. 32. See also *Nabum* i. 5.

Ver. 21. *It is a Tempest which no Man can see, for the most Parts of his Works are hid.* See *Nab.* i. 3. *καταγυς*, signifies a violent Shock of Wind, not improperly rendered a Tempest, and might perhaps be used here in Allusion to, and in Concurrence with, the Expressions of God's Power in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Verses foregoing, which mention the Foundations of the Earth, and Rocks shaking and trembling when the Lord visits them, or looketh upon them. If by it are metaphorically meant the Works of his Justice, mentioned in the next Verse, it will then resemble *ψ* 6. of the same Prophet, *Who can stand before his Indignation, and who can abide in the Fierceness of his Anger; his Fury*

*is poured out like Fire, and the Rocks are thrown down by him.* If it relates to God's Judgments, or the secret Dispensations of his Providence, the Meaning then is, that Clouds and Darkness are round about them, so that one cannot trace out the hidden Path of them; that they are, like the great Deep, as the *Psalmist* speaks of them, unfathomable, unattemptable, as when a mighty Tempest darkens the Face of it. These are the common and most received Interpretations of this obscure Passage; but, amidst the Variety of Senses affixed to this Place, it is no improbable Conjecture, that this, with the foregoing and following Verse, contain the Answer of the Sceptic, to what was said of God's Almighty's Power, and all-searching Eye in *ψ* 18, 19. This may be collected, 1. From *ψ* 23. *ἐλατίζμεν καρδίᾳ διανοεῖται ταῦτα, i. e.* the Man of a contracted sordid Heart, or narrow Soul, or, as our Version has it, the Man that wants Understanding, thinketh in this Manner, fancies, and dwells on μάταια, such idle vain Notions as these, as some Copies, and the *Vulg.* have it, which our Translators here follow. 2. The *Syr.* and *Arab.* Versions understand it as the foolish Reasoning of those that are *excordes*: *Excordes talia dicunt, & scelerati hæc cogitant.* 3. An Answer seems to be given to these foolish Surmises, beginning at the next Verse, *My Son, hearken unto me, and learn Knowledge, i. e.* sound Knowledge; and is continued in form, and with great closeness of Reasoning, thro' the rest of this Chapter, and to the End of the 21<sup>st</sup> Verse of the next, as will appear more fully by consulting the Objection and Answers, placed Column-wise for greater Clearness at *ψ* 6. 4. This is agreeable to the Method pursued in the former Chapter, where an Objection is raised *ψ* 11, 12. and the Answer is continued to *ψ* 15. of the next, except the five first Verses, which seem not to belong to that Place or Argument.

Ver. 26. *The Works of the Lord are done in Judgment from the Beginning.* The *Epicureans* held that the World was made by a fortuitous Concourse of Atoms. Against the Mistake of these Philosophers in so important a Point, the Author here maintains, that the Creation was not the Effect of Chance, or any blind and insensible Principle, but all Things were at first made with Judgment and Wisdom, and the several Parts which compose the World not so placed by Accident, or at Random, but a wise and all-powerful Hand placed them in the beautiful Order wherein we now see them disposed with the greatest Fitness, and exact in all respects, in Number, Weight, and Measure. *Wisd.* xi. 20.

Ver. 27. *He garnished his Works for ever, and in his Hand are the Chief of them unto all Generations: they neither labour nor are weary, nor cease from their Works.* *ἐξόρμησεν εἰς αἰῶνα τὰ ἔργα αὐτοῦ, καὶ τὰς ἀρχὰς αὐτῶν εἰς γενεὰς αὐτῶν.* It should seem, according to our



our Translation, that all God's Works were not equally in his Hand, and under his Care and Protection, but only the Chief or Principal of them. *Grotius*, and some few others, understand by ἀρχαί, the heavenly Bodies, *Astra quæ rebus inferioribus præsent in Dei potestate sunt in omnia sæcula*, and of these he understands what follows to the 29<sup>th</sup> Verse. And indeed these, from their presumed Power and Influence, in the Opinion of the Ancients, over all Things below, especially the Sun and Moon, which presided over the rest, were esteemed ἀρχαί, Principalities, Powers, or Dominions; and they rejoice to run their appointed Course, continuing through all Ages to perform their settled Functions, without any Fatigue, Hindrance, or Confusion; contrary to the Opinion of some of the ancient Philosophers, who imagined that some Parts of the World grew old and decayed, through the Disunion and Separation of the Atoms; and other Parts were fashioned anew, and attained more Perfection by some lucky Jumble. But the following seems a more perfect rendering of the *Greek*, and to give the truest Sense, viz. ἐκδόμησεν εἰς αἰῶνα τὰ ἔργα αὐτοῦ, he beautifully prepared his Works for ever, or to last for Ages, ἢ τὰς ἀρχὰς αὐτῶν εἰς γενεὰς αὐτῶν, and their Principles in their Generations, or according to their Kinds, *per genera sua*; meaning the established and unalterable Principles of natural Bodies, and alluding perhaps to the Seed that every Thing hath in itself according to its Kind. How consistent with this Interpretation is the *Mosaic History*, *Gen. i. 11, 12.* and how doth the wonderful Reproduction of every Thing in this congenial Manner confirm it? which Harmony and Regularity in God's Works, is owing to the Principles he has established in them, which we call their Nature. *Calmet* concurs in this Sense, and gives the like Interpretation, *Il a formé ses ouvrages pour durer toujours, ou fort long-tems, Et il a mis dans eux des principes pour se reproduire dans la suite de tous les siècles. Depuis la Création du monde jusqu'aujourd'hui, Et jusqu'à la consommation des tems, ses Ouvrages subsistent, Et se perpetuent, les uns par la Génération, Et les autres par d'autres voyes que le Créateur leur a ouvertes.* Comm. in loc.

## CHAP. XVII.

Ver. 2. **H**E gave them few Days, and a short Time.] The Author having briefly described the inanimate, vegetative, and Brute Creation, in the Conclusion of the former Chapter, in this proceeds to speak to the Formation of Man, and to describe the Faculties and Powers wherewith God had endowed him, his Original from the Ground, and his short Continuance upon Earth, before his Return into it again, even a few Days comparatively, ἡμέρας ἀριθμῶ,

which is a *Hebraism*. Instances of this Manner of Expression occur *Gen. xxxiv. 30. Deut. iv. 27.* where *viri numeri* means, few in Number: *Isai. x. 19. The Trees of his Forest shall be* (according to the *Heb.*) *Number, i. e. few, so few that a Child may write them*, which the *ὁ* have exactly expressed, οἱ καλαεισθέντες ἀπ' αὐτῶν ἀριθμὸς ἕσονται. But there is a Passage in *Job* parallel to this, both in the Sense and Manner of Expression, *When a few Years are come, then shall I go the Way whence I shall not return*, where the *Heb.* has, Years of Number, and the LXX. ἐτη ἀριθμητὰ, c. xvi. 22. Or it may mean, that the Days of Man's Life were numbered, and a certain Time and Length of Life fixed and determined for the Species, *Job xiv. 5.* which they should not exceed, about 900 Years, before the Flood, but after contracted to 400, 200, 100, 70. which was the Term in the Time of the Writer of the xc<sup>th</sup> Psalm, whether *David*, or *Moses*. And thus the *Tigurin* Version, *Attribuit dies numeratos statumque tempus hominibus.* Or it may be applied to *Adam* personally, as the *Vulg.* seems to take it, that though originally intended to be immortal, yet on Account of his Transgression, God pronounced the Sentence of Mortality upon him, and fixed a Period to his Days.

Ver. 3. *He endued them with Strength by themselves.*] καὶ ἑαυτοῖς. According to themselves, suitable to their Nature, *Une force proportionnée à sa Nature*, as *Calmet* expounds it. At first God gave them an absolute Empire or Dominion over the Creatures, and after the Fall, though it was somewhat diminished, yet he left sufficient Authority in them for the State and Condition in which he placed them, sufficient for their Preservation and Defence against Injuries, for the procuring the necessary Supports of Life, and accomplishing their other Designs. The *Vulg.* has *Secundum se vestivit illum virtute*, following a Copy which read καὶ ἑαυτοῖς, i. e. God gave him a Sovereignty resembling his own, *Imperium quale suum*, says *Grotius*, and so the *Tigurin* Version, *Innuit ipsos virtute sua.* And in this Dominion, as well as in the Perfection of his intellectual Nature, his Likeness to God consisted: the Subjection of the Brute Creation to Man was a Consequence of his Authority, or of a Dread impressed upon them from their great Creator. *Seneca* has well expressed Man's great Prerogative in this Particular, *Quisquis es iniquus estimator sortis humanæ, cogita quanta nobis tribuerit Parens noster, quanto valentiora animalia sub jugum miserimus, quanto velociora consequamur; quàm nihil sit mortale non sub iktu nostro positum.* De benefic. ii. 20. And after it follows, (which will serve to illustrate the 6<sup>th</sup> Verse) *tot virtutes accepimus, tot artes, animum denique, cui nihil non, eodem quo intendit momento, pervium est, &c. Ita bene æstimata naturæ indulgentia, confitearis necesse est, te illi in deliciis fuisse.*

Ver.



Ver. 5. They receive the Use of the five Operations of the Lord, and in the sixth Place he imparted them Understanding, and in the seventh Speech, an Interpreter of the Cogitations thereof.] Many Editions have not this Verse at all, and some few, only the latter Part. It may properly be enquired what are the five Operations, as they are here called. Are we to understand by them the five Senses *πέντε αἰσθήσεις*? The Arab. so takes it, enumerating them severally. Philo resembles this Writer upon the Subject, *αἱ ἐν ἡμῖν δυνάμεις, κ. τ. λ. Potentiarum quæ nobis insunt sex indefinenter terra marique bella concitant, quinque sensus, & Sermo qui profertur: illi desiderio sensibilium, quibus se non potiri ægre ferunt, hic per os infrane multa silenda effutient. At septima potentia est Mens Reëtor, quæ, quando in potestate sex illas retinet, vitam serenam tranquillamque amplectitur.* De Abrahamo. And in another Place he has the like Division; only instead of the Understanding he inserts *Generatio*, and makes the whole seven, which he calls *ἐπὶ δυνάμεις τὴν αἰσθησίν*, the seven Faculties of the sensitive Soul, to serve and act under the *τὸ νηγεμονικόν*, or the Understanding. Grotius also intimates as much; but thinks this latter Part to be a Gloss crept into the Text from the Margin, by some Favourer of the Stoic Notions, who, besides the five ordinary Senses acknowledged three other, viz. *τὸ σπέρματικόν*, or Generation, Speech, and Understanding; but the first of these is now dropp'd, and omitted. Corn. a Lapide and Calmet reckon the five *ἐνεργήματα* here to be the Powers or Privileges given to Man at the Creation, which are mentioned in the foregoing Verses, viz. 1. Life. 2. Sovereignty over the Earth. 3. Force or Strength suitable, and proportionate to his Nature. 4. Likeness to God's Image. 5. Dominion over all Manner of living Things. Others transpose this Verse, or rather the sixth and seventh Operations, and put them after the Particulars mentioned in the Verse following, where indeed they seem to come in better. Thus the Tigurin Version ranges them, *Judicium, linguam, oculos, aures, & cor dedit eis ad cogitandum, sexto quoque loco mentem donavit, & septimo sermonem operibus suis explicandis.* But as the two last are omitted in some Greek Editions,

the Vulg. and Syr. Versions, tis probable they were added by way of Explanation, and inserted by Mistake.

Ibid. Speech, an Interpreter of the Cogitations thereof.] Many have been the Conjectures of learned Men about the Original of Speech; a very ingenious Writer supposes its Origin to be from God, "And that the first Man was instructed by him to speak, and that his Descendants learnt to speak by Imitation from their Predecessors. Not that God put into Adam's Mouth the very Sounds which he designed he should use as the Names of Things, but gave him the Use of an Understanding to form Notions in his Mind of the Things about him, and a Power to utter Sounds, which should be to himself the Names of Things, according as he might think fit to call them. These he might teach Eve, and in Time both of them teach their Children, and thus begin and spread the first Language of the World. The Account which Moses gives of Adam's first Use of Speech, Gen. ii. 19, 20. is entirely agreeable to this, where God sets before Adam the Creatures to put him upon using the Power he had of making Sounds to stand for Names of them, and he had only to fix to himself what Sound was to stand for the Name of each Creature, and what he so fixed, that was the Name of it." Shuckford's Connect. Vol. I. p. 3. Tully dwells upon the Privilege of Speech in Men, and places the Difference not only between them and Brutes in it, but also between Men themselves, according to the Degrees of the Perfection of it, *Hoc uno præstamus maximè feris, quod colloquimur inter nos, & quod exprimere dicendo sensa possumus. Quamobrem quis hoc non jure miretur, summeque in eo elaborandum esse arbitretur, ut quo uno homines maxime bestiis præsent, in hoc hominibus ipsis antecellant?* De Orator.

Ver. 6. The wise Man to inspire his Pupil, whom he addressed himself to, ch. xvi. 24. with worthy Sentiments of the Deity, proceeds now to answer the loose Suggestions made in the 20<sup>th</sup> 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>d</sup> Verses of that Chapter. If the Reply be set against the Objection, it will best illustrate the Argument.



## CHAP. XVI.

Ver. 20. Καὶ ἐν αὐτοῖς ἡ διανοηθεῖσαι καρδία. No Heart (here begin the Sentiments of ἐλαττωμένη καρδία, of whom it is said, *Y 23.* that he διανοεῖται ταῦτα) no Heart can think upon these Things.

Καὶ τὰς ὁδούς αὐτῆς τίς ἐνθυμηθήσεται; Who shall be able to understand or conceive his Ways?

Ver. 21. Καὶ καταιγίς, ἣν οὐ δύναται ἄνθρωπος. It is even like a sudden Gust of Wind, (*Drusus* and *Junius* both understand it comparatively,) which a Man cannot see, or know whence it cometh, and whither it goeth.

Τὰ δὲ πλείονα τῶν ἔργων αὐτῆς ἐν ἀποκρύφῳ. The most Part of his Works are hid.

*Omnes pæne veteres nihil cognosci, nihil percipi, nihil sciri posse dixerunt, in profundo veritatem demersam, nihil veritati relinqui, omnia tenebris circumfusa esse dixerunt. Cic. Acad. Quest. L. 1.*

This then, it is manifest, was an old Objection, and why might not *Jesus* in *Egypt* learn this Objection from the *Genile Philosophers*?

Ver. 22. Ἔργα δικαιοσύνης τίς ἀναγγελεῖ; Who shall declare the Works of his Righteousness? Who can find, or who can set forth and prove, any moral Rectitude or Beauty in his Ways or Proceedings?

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Ἡ τίς ὑπομενεῖ; Or who shall wait for the Declaration or Proof of his Righteousness in his Works? μακρὰν γὰρ ἡ διαθήκη, for his Covenant is afar off. If there be any such Thing as a Covenant of Righteousness and Mercy with Man, there appear no Tokens of it, and why should we wait in Expectation of its being fulfilled?

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## CHAP. XVII.

Ver. 6. Καρδίαν ἔδωκε διανοεῖσθαι αὐτοῖς. He hath given them a Heart to think. Men may think on these Things, it is their Prerogative, their Business.

Ver. 7. Ἐπισήμην συνέσεως ἐνέπλησεν αὐτοῖς. He filled them with the Knowledge of Understanding; he hath given them enough to understand, and conceive his Ways.

Καὶ ἀγαθὰ καὶ κακὰ ὑπέδειξεν αὐτοῖς, viz. though Men be not able to discover all the Operations of Nature, yet they are endowed with a better Knowledge, the Principles of Morality. Thus in *Micah vi. 8.* we have a parallel Passage, *He hath shewed thee, O Man, what is good, and what doth the Lord require, &c.* which is always understood of the natural Principles of Religion.

Ver. 8. Ἐθηκε τὸ ὄφθαλμόν αὐτῶν ἐπὶ τὰς καρδίας αὐτῶν, δεῖξαι αὐτοῖς τὸ μεγαλεῖον τῶν ἔργων αὐτῶν. Tho' Men with their bodily Eyes cannot discover all the Operations of Nature, yet God has imparted to them the Light of Reason, ὄφθαλμόν αὐτῶν, a Perception like his own, intellectual, intuitive, whereby they may discover the true Beauty of his Works, viz. the moral Design of them; or if we read ὄφθαλμόν αὐτῶν here, (as below in *Y 15.* ὄφθαλμῶν αὐτῶν, in the *Alex. MS.* is αὐτῶν) it will give another, and not a disagreeable Sense to the Passage. It had been objected, that the most Part of his Works were hid, and that no Man could see them; but the wise Man answers, that God had placed the Eyes wherewith these Things are seen in Men's Hearts; they see with the Eyes of their Understanding. It is in this Sense our Saviour says, ὁ λόγος τῆς σώματος ἐστὶν ὁ ὄφθαλμός. *Matt. vi. 22.* either of these Senses will answer the Objection.

Ver. 9, 10. Καὶ ὄνομα ἁγίασμός αἰνέσσειν, ἵνα διηγῶνται τὰ μεγαλεῖα τῶν ἔργων αὐτῶν. They to whom he hath imparted the Perception above-mentioned will praise his holy Name, and by their Praise most effectually declare, and set forth the Excellency of his Works and Ways; and in particular ἐκλεκτοί, *Israel* his Elect, his peculiar People are most engaged to do this, as they received, and were taught by his Law, and were Witnesses of so many Miracles in *Egypt*, and in the Wilderness. And thus *Calmet*, *Il les a remplis de ses lumieres & de ses connoissances pour le louer, & l'adorer dans la Consideration de ses Ouvrages.*

Ver. 11, 12. Προσέθηκεν αὐτοῖς ἐπισήμην, ἢ νόμον ζωῆς ἐκκληροδότησεν αὐτοῖς. Διαθήκην αἰῶνος ἔθηκεν αὐτοῖς, καὶ τὰ κείμενα αὐτῶν ὑπέδειξεν αὐτοῖς, viz. to the Knowledge which he imparted to them by Nature, προσέθηκε, he hath superadded ἐπισήμην, (*Disciplinam*, as the Versions have it) a Rule of holy Living, viz. by the Law of *Moses*, and has put them in present Possession of a Law of Life, (or that promises Life to them that observe it, *Rom. x. 5. Levit. x. 5. Ezek. xx. 11.*) He hath established an everlasting Covenant with them, and shewed them κείμενα αὐτῶν, his Commands and Precepts of Righteousness and Mercy. And this he did principally with regard to his own People, to whom belonged the Law, and the Adoption, and the Covenant, preferably to all others.



Here end the Objections, for *ἐξέτασις ἀπάντων ἐν τελευτῇ, i. e. The Trial of all Things is in the End*, according to our Version, is not in the *Vat.* and some other Editions. And it is observable in both Columns, that in the order of Sentiments (and Phrases too) there is a Likeness and Relation between the Verses cited from the former Chapter, and those produced as corresponding with them in this: and therefore, though this Author's Manner of writing in general is rather sententious, than argumentative, yet it is no improbable Conjecture, that a formal Answer is here designed to some sceptical Objections before advanced, and it is continued under a little Difference of Expression, *ψ* 15, 19, 20, &c. of ch. xvii. where the Discipline that the *Israelites* were under, is more plainly spoken of.

Ver. 13. *Their Eyes saw the Majesty of his Glory, and their Ears heard his glorious Voice.* Ver. 14. *And he said unto them, beware of all Unrighteousness, and he gave every Man Commandment concerning his Neighbour.* God manifested his Glory, when he appeared on Mount *Sinai* at the Delivery of his Law, when his People saw the Lightnings and heard the Thundrings, called here his glorious Voice, as the *Hebrews* ordinarily express it, *Psal.* xxix. 4. By giving the Law God did not only provide for the Establishment of his own Worship, and the decent Performance of it, but it was promulged likewise for the Good of Man, and of Society in general. He therein orders every Man to love his Neighbour, to live in Peace, and on Terms of Friendship with him, to abstain from Theft, and to do no Act of Violence and Injustice; to be tender of his Reputation, to beware of Slander and false Witnesses, and to be aiding and assisting to him under any Calamity or Distress, as may be seen at large *Exod.* ch. xx, xxi, xxii, xxiii. By Unrighteousness, *Grotius* thinks not any of the Instances of Wrong, here enumerated, to be meant; but the Worship of false Gods, and the Sin of Perjury, in Defiance of the true one, which the *Israelites* expressly engaged to avoid, *Josh.* xxiv. 16. If this last Sense be admitted, the Author may be supposed here to refer to both Tables of the Decalogue.

Ver. 15. *Their Ways are ever before him, and shall not be hid from his Eyes.* This Observation is true with regard to the Actions of all Mankind, but it rather respects the *Israelites* in particular, who are spoken of before and after, and means, that as God gave them a Law, so he took Notice how they observed it, his Eyes were over them for that Purpose. He took Cognizance of their whole Conduct, as a Legislator tender of his Rights, and jealous of his Honour, in order to punish or reward them, as they should respectively deserve. His Eye was not so intent upon the Behaviour of other Nations, who were not favoured with a like Knowledge of

his Laws, nor bound by any positive Covenant to the Observance of them, nor were under his Government so immediately; or, the Meaning may be, that during the long March of the *Israelites* in the Wilderness, God went along with them, directed their Ways, and conducted them as their Guide, in the Day-time by a cloudy Pillar, and all the Night by a Light of Fire. This Sense *Grotius* prefers: The next Verse is not in the *Vat.* nor in the *Vulgate*, it is manifestly taken from *Ezek.* xxxvi. 26.

Ver. 17. *For in the Division of the Nations of the whole Earth, he set a Ruler over every People, but Israel is the Lord's Portion.* *ἐκάστω ἔθνεϊ κατέστησεν ἡγούμενον.* When God distributed the Earth among the several Nations, and appointed Kings and Rulers over the principal Parts of it, the People of *Israel* he reserved for his own Peculium; he chose the Heritage of *Jacob* out of all Nations to be under his more especial Care, and to enjoy great and singular Privileges: for he not only put them into Possession of a fruitful *Canaan*, but did them the particular Honour of being their King; by him they were directed in all Cases which concerned their State, and by him were led forth to Battle, so that their Form of Government was properly a Theocracy, till the Time of *Saul*, when, like other Nations, they would have a temporal King over them, to their great Detriment and Disgrace. *Josephus* gives the like Account of the original Form of the *Jewish* Polity, that while other Nations preferred, some Monarchy, others Aristocracy, or Democracy, their Legislator overlooked all these, and appointed *Θεοκρατίαν τὸ πολίτευμα, θεῶν τὴν ἀρχὴν καὶ τὸ κράτος ἀναθεῖς, καὶ πείσας εἰς ἐκείνους ἀπάντας ἀφορεῖν, ὡς αἰτίον ἀπάντων ὄντα τῶν ἀγαθῶν, κ. τ. λ.* *Cont. Ap.* L. 2. Our Author here alludes to *Deut.* xxxii. 8, 9. *When the most High divided to the Nations their Inheritance, when he separated the Sons of Adam, he set the Bounds of the People according to the Number of the Children of Israel; for the Lord's Portion is his People; Jacob is the Lot of his Inheritance.* Both ancient and modern Interpreters have thought, that the Son of *Sirach* here, and also the Passage just cited, refer to an Opinion, which was pretty common, that every Nation has its tutelar Angel, an *ἡγούμενος*, or ministring Angel to preside over it, but that God himself was such in a more eminent Degree to the People of *Israel*. The Version of the *LXX* seems to have given Rise to this Opinion, for the rendring of *Deut.* xxxii. 8. is *ὅτι διμερίζεν ὁ ὕψιστος τὰ ἔθνη. . . ἐστήσεν δεσπότην καὶ ἀρχηγὸν αἰγέλων θεῶν.* And accordingly by the Prince of *Persia*, and of *Greece*, mentioned in the Book of *Daniel*, some understand particular Angels which presided over those People, as others have asserted, that the Care of the *Jewish* People was committed to the Archangel *Michael*, see *Theod.* and *Jer. Comm. in Dan.* Indeed this Opinion



nion of the Kingdoms of the World being subject to the Government of Angels, was maintained by many of the primitive, especially the Greek Fathers, but it is now plain from whence these, who followed the LXX Translation, borrowed their Notion. Bockart and De Muis agree, that those Interpreters themselves were mistaken through a bad Copy, and that the Omission of some Letters therein, led them into this Error, Phaleg. L. i. c. 15.

Ver. 18. *Whom being his first born, he nourisheth with Discipline, and giving him the Light of his Love, doth not forsake him.* *ὅς ἐστιν ὁ ἀγαπῶν* is a particular Expression, there is a parallel one, *ὁ ἀγαπῶν* *ὁ ἀγαπῶν* *ὁ ἀγαπῶν*. Out of the whole Race of Mankind did God select the Jews, among whom he dwelt in a particular and extraordinary Manner, the divine Majesty residing over the Mercy-Seat. These he singled out to be a holy Nation, and marked them as his own People by Circumcision, which was a Character of genealogical Sanctity, and by instituting the Passover, which federally united them to him, and among one another. This Seed of Jacob so dear and beloved by God, was as much blessed by him above all other People, as the first born commonly is above the rest of the Children. And so when God calls David his first born, it follows immediately, *I will make him higher than the Kings of the Earth*, Psal. lxxxix. 28. God always regarded Israel with a favourable Eye, and though he suffered other Nations to walk in their own Ways, Acts xiv. 16. and looked upon them with a Sort of Indifference in Comparison, yet to Israel he afforded the Light of his Countenance, and of his saving Truth. He gave signal Proofs of his Affection for them, by continually watching over them for good, he intended their Happiness in all his Dealings with them, and pursued it even in his Corrections, and severest Dispensations towards them, recalling them to their Duty, and inviting them, in the tenderest Manner, to return into the right Way, and receiving them to Mercy and Favour upon their Repentance and Amendment. This whole Verse is omitted in the *Vat.* and in the *Vulgate*.

Ver. 21. *But the Lord being gracious, and knowing his Workmanship, neither left, nor forsook them, but spared them.* As the Sense of the foregoing Verse is well expressed by the Psalmist, *He set their Misdeeds before him, and their secret Sins in the Light of his Countenance*, Psal. xc. 8. so this seems to allude to Psal. lxxviii. 37, 38, 39. where, speaking of the same Israelites, he says, *That though their Heart was not whole with God, neither continued they steadfast in his Covenant, yet he was so merciful, that he forgave their Misdeeds, and destroyed them not: yea, many a Time turned he his Wrath away, and would not suffer his whole Displeasure to arise, for he considered that they were but Flesh.* *Ἐμνήσθη*

*ὅτι σὰρξ ἐστί, which is more fully expressed, Psal. ciii. 13, 14. of the Faithful in general, As a Father pitieth his own Children, even so hath the Lord Mercy on them that fear him, for he knoweth whereof we are made, he remembreth that we are but Dust.* *Ἀλλὰ ἐγὼ τὸ πλάσμα ἡμῶν*, the very Expression used by this Writer.

Ver. 22. *The Alms of a Man is as a Signet with him, and he will keep the good Deeds of Man, as the Apple of his Eye.* By Alms we may here understand all the Good which a Man does his Neighbour, every Action of Piety and Mercy performed by him, which God will favourably receive, and keep in Remembrance, and lay it up among his precious Treasures, to reward and recompence it to the beneficent Man, and his Posterity. The Value God sets upon Acts of Mercy and Kindness, is expressed here by the Metaphor of the Apple of the Eye, and the Signet on the Right Hand, See *Jerem. xxii. 24. Haggai ii. 23. Cantic. viii. 6.* where the Seal or Signet denotes what is near and dear to a Man, and, as such, is preserved, and always under his Eye and Care. *Mess. of Port Royal*, from this latter Comparison, apply what is here said of Alms, to Acts of Charity done in Secret, which are as a valuable Thing sealed up, till they are laid open by God, and by him publicly rewarded. The Connection of this Verse with what precedes is not very clear; *Calmet* and *Bossuet* give the following, That as Mens unrighteous Deeds are always before the Lord, so are their good Deeds likewise, and particularly Acts of Charity and Loving-kindness, which tho' unobserved of others, and for a Time perhaps unanswered to the Giver, yet are not fruitless or lost; God deposits them among his Treasures, and when he maketh up his precious Jewels, will remember them.

Ver. 23. *Afterwards he will rise up, and reward them, and render their Recompence upon their Heads.* If we join the Words in the latter End of the former Verse, viz. *He will give Repentance to his Sons and Daughters*, to this Verse, the Sense will then be, That God will not strike or punish a Sinner immediately, or in the Act and Instant of committing the Sin, but will give Time to repent, and an Opportunity to return to him; but if after allowing him Time, he defers his Amendment, and shews no Sign of Sorrow, or Conversion, God, who seemingly connived at his Sins, will then rouse himself in his Anger, and punish him the more severely, for so the Phrase of rendering a Recompence upon Men's Heads, is more generally taken. But if we omit that Sentence, which is neither in the *Vat.* nor *Ald.* Edition, nor in the *Vulgate*, then this Verse will admit of another Sense, as connected with the foregoing, viz. that God keeps the Remembrance of Alms and good Works as precious as a Signet, and as dear as the Apple of an Eye, and though for the present he may not distinguish



tinguish the Donors, yet the Time will come when he will arise to reward them, and fill such beneficent Souls with peculiar Marks of his Favour; like a kind Master, who recompenses the Faithfulness of his Servants, or a General, who heaps upon his Soldiers such Marks of Honour, as are proportionate to their Merit. And this God will do either in this Life, by outward Blessings and Prosperity, or hereafter, by receiving them into everlasting Habitations.

Ver. 24. *But unto them that repent, he granted them Return, and comforted those that failed in Patience.*] This is but inaccurately rendred; it should either be, Unto them that will repent, he giveth them Grace to return, as the Geneva Version has it; or unto them that repented, he granted them a Return into his Favour, was willing to receive every Penitent, and to comfort the broken hearted. In the former Acceptation the Sense is, that Sinners cannot with Reason blame God who uses all Methods to reclaim them; he illuminates them by his Grace, he instructs them by his Word, he admonishes, he threatens, he corrects, he recalls such as wander from their Duty, he waits their Return with Patience, and receives them upon their Repentance, and thereby comforts such as would otherwise be discouraged, and despair. But if we take it in the latter Sense, we may then, with Grotius, understand this and the foregoing Verse of the Persons mentioned, y<sup>e</sup> 20. whose Sins being before the Lord, and obstinately continued in, he will, after waiting some Time for their Amendment, proceed to punish them; and then it follows by way of *Antithesis*, But to such as repented, and whose Sins were thereby done away from before the Lord, whether Israelites, or others, he was disposed to be merciful and gracious, and to bestow his Grace upon them, to keep them again from falling.

Ver. 27. *Who shall praise the most High in the Grave, instead of them which live, and give Thanks?*] i. e. The Living only can pay their Devotions to God, and therefore Repentance should not be deferred till the Time of Death, when it will be too late to think of it. In this Author's Time *αἰὼς* was used by the Jews, as it was also among the Greeks, to signify the Grave, or Death, and Death and *Hades* are frequently joined as synonymous, See 2 Sam. xxii. 6. *Eccles* xlviii. 5. and particularly *Isai*. xxxviii. 18, 19. where *οἱ ἐν αἰῶσι* and *οἱ ἀποθανόντες* are the same, and opposed to the Living, the Living, who alone have the Ability to praise God; for as the same inspired Writer goes on, Such as go down into the Pit cannot hope for his Truth, *τὴν ἐλεημοσύνην*, his Mercy. In Death, says the Psalmist vi. 5. *there is no Remembrance of thee, and who shall give thee Thanks in Hades, in the Grave, or Pit?* And so *Psal*. cxv. 17. *The Dead praise not thee, O Lord, neither all they that go down into Silence, but we will praise the Lord*; which the LXX render more explicitly, *οἱ ἐν νεκροῖς αἰετοῦσά σε*

*κύριον. . . ἀλλ' ἡμεῖς οἱ ζῶντες διδοῦμεν ἔκλειον, κ. τ. λ.* Thus also *Psal*. lxxxviii. 10. *Dost thou shew Wonders among the Dead, or shall the Dead rise up again, and praise thee?* where the rendring of the LXX is surprizingly faulty, *μὴ τοῖς νεκροῖς ποιήσεις θαυμάσια, ἢ ἵασι τοὶ ἀναστήσει, ἢ ἐξομολογήσονται σοι*; the Hebrew Word is *מֵתִים*, and signifies *Gigantes*, or *Mortui*; they fell into this Error by mistaking the Radix, and deriving the Word from *נָפַת*, *sanatus fuit*. The Vulgate too, implicitly following that Version, retains the same Mistake.

Ver. 28. *Thanksgiving perisheth from the Dead, as from one that is not: the Living and Sound in Heart shall praise the Lord.*] i. e. The Duties of Religion cannot be performed by one who is not in a State of Existence, nor by one that is taken away from the Land of the Living. *Νεκρός*, or *μὴ ὢν* means not one that is annihilated, or quite ceased to be, or is become as nothing, as is the Vulg. exceptionable rendring, *Ante mortem confitere, a mortuo quasi nihil, perit confessio*. Josephus, in the very Chapter, in which he asserts the Immortality of the Soul, says, We have received from God our Being, *καὶ τὸ μηκέτι εἶναι πάλιν ἐκείνῳ δίδομεν*, i. e. to him we render again, or owe our not-being, by the Return of that Soul which he had given us. *De bell. Jud.* L. iii. c. 25. By the living and sound in Heart, we are not to understand, such only as are alive and in Health, or who are easy in their Minds, and flourishing in their Circumstances; but such as are alive unto Righteousness, and turn unto the Lord in Holiness; who are contrite, and even broken-hearted, who have experienced, or hope to taste of God's Mercy to them, under a lively Sense of their Guilt, or the Smart of some great Calamity and Affliction: and so the Sense will be nearly the same with *Baruch*, ii. 17. *The Dead who are in their Graves, whose Souls are taken from their Bodies, will give unto the Lord, neither Praise nor Righteousness; but the Soul that is greatly vexed, which goeth stooping and feeble, shall give thee Praise and Righteousness, O Lord.*

Ver. 30. *For all Things cannot be in Men, because the Son of Man is not immortal.*] Great Reason is there that God should be so merciful to his Creatures, and condescend to pardon their Weakness and Follies, for Men are neither impeccable nor immortal, they are so encompassed about with Infirmities, that Perfection is not to be expected from them; they are, as *Abraham* in great Humility says of himself, sinful Dust and Ashes, and their Days are few, as well as strictly and literally evil, and therefore is the Lord gracious, knowing his Workmanship, of what perishable, corrupt, and frail Materials it is made. The Author enlarges here upon God's Mercy, as a farther Argument to invite Men to Repentance, and upon the Shortness of Life, as a powerful Motive to set about it speedily.



Ver. 31. *What is brighter than the Sun? yet the Light thereof faileth: and Flesh and Blood will imagine Evil.*] Our Translators seem to have understood the Sentiment expressed here, by their Reference to a parallel Passage in the Margin, *Job xxv. 4, 5.* (which is to the very same Sense in other Words) but they have not rendred it so accurately as they might have done. What is brighter than the Sun? *ἢ τὸ ἐκλείπει*, yet it hath its Eclipses. If it be said, that *τὸ* cannot be referred to *ἡλιος*, I answer, neither is it necessary that it should, but may be referred to *τί φαινότερον* immediately preceding. If among God's Works there be any Thing brighter than the Sun, yet even that is not without its Defects. And thus *Bossuet*, *Quid lucidius sole? Et tamen hoc (lucidissimum) eclipsin patitur*: Much less can human Nature be accounted perfect, for Flesh and Blood will imagine Evil. I prefer this Reading, not only because it is confirmed by the *Alex. Copy*, but because the other *πονηρὸς ἐνθυμηθεῖσθαι σάρκα καὶ αἷμα*, is limited only to bad Men, whereas the Passage seems rather to relate to the whole Species, which is naturally more subject to Failings, than the Sun is to Eclipses, and the Defects of both cannot be concealed.

Ver. 32. *He vieweth the Power of the Height of Heaven, and all Men are but Earth and Ashes?*] *δύναμιν ὕψους ἑρανεῖ αὐτὸς ἐπισκέπτεται*. It should rather be rendred here, he visiteth, chideth, finding Fault with the Powers of Heaven, *Syr. Virtutes cali judicat*, as before c. xvi. 18. *Behold the Heaven, and the Heaven of Heavens shall be moved*, *ἐν τῇ ἐπισκοπῇ αὐτοῦ*, when he shall visit, or animadvert upon them. *δύναμιν ὕψους ἑρανεῖ* is either the Sun mentioned just before, who is represented as going forth in his Strength like a Giant, &c. or the whole Host of Heaven, viz. the Stars, the Powers of Heaven that shall be shaken at his Coming. *δύναμιν ὕψους* is only a Hebraism for the high Powers. *And all Men are but Dust and Ashes*, viz. Greatly abased in God's Sight, in Comparison of some of his other Works: So in *Job*, *The Stars are not pure in his Sight, how much less Man that is a Worm?* These which shine so bright to our View, are but as Darkness to his all-piercing Eye, and in Comparison of the infinite Purity of his Nature; whom if God considers, and looks down upon as infinitely beneath him, of how small Consequence and Account is the Race of Men who are Earth in their Principle, and Ashes at their Dissolution? When our Author thus beautifully sets forth the Greatness of God, and the Meanness of Man, how affecting is the Comparison, and how just the Contrast! How does it enlarge our Ideas, and exalt our Sentiments of the Deity, and at the same Time shame and confound all human Pride and Greatness? The Sense given of this Passage is confirmed by the true rendring of the first Verse of the next Chapter.

## CHAP. XVIII.

Ver. 1. *HE that liveth for ever created all Things in general.*] *ἐκτίσας τὰ πάντα κοινῇ*. *Creavit omnia simul. Vulg.* which means according to some, that without him was not any thing made that was made, in Opposition to such as would have God to be an idle Spectator, not minding, or concerning himself with the World, especially the lesser, and seemingly more insignificant Parts of it. Or such, especially the *Manichees*, who held, that Part only of the World was created by God, and not the whole. Others, and particularly *St. Austin*, have from hence maintained, that all Things were created by God, not in the Interval of six Days, as is the *Mosaic Account*, but in *Eodem momento, seu in eodem nunc*, that the Heavens, and the Earth, and the future Seeds, from whence all other Things were to be produced, were all created in the same individual Instant. Others have held, that God created at once all the Matter of the Universe, a Chaos to serve as the Basis upon which all Things were to be built, and from whence all Things to be produced in the successive Work of the six Days, were to have their Rise and Materials. But none of these Opinions give so just an Account of the Creation, as that of *Moses*, for neither were all Things created together, nor the shapeless Mass of Matter by itself, nor were they all made at once in point of Time. *Κοινῇ* in this Place does not respect the Time of the Creation, but rather the Universality of it, See *Possel. Præfat. ad Syntax. viz.* that all Things in general were made by God, without Exception, or Distinction; that they were created by him, not merely set in Order, by Intervals, and Degrees of Time, and particularly that the Cosmogony was the successive Work of six Days. *Junius* understands by *κοινῇ*, that God created all Things upon a Level, *communi lege*, subject to one common Law, both of Production, and Dissolution. *Comm. in loc.* See *Jackson's Works*, Tom. ii. p. 132. where this Passage is very fully and learnedly discussed. But though the Sense of our Version is a good Interpretation of *κοινῇ*, yet I conceive it is not the true one, for undoubtedly the Original, which is rendred *κοινῇ* was *κοινὴ* *commune*, in the Sense of *profanum*. *Κοινὸς* is the same as *ἀκάθαρτος*, and by it the *ὁ* generally, if not always, expresses it. It occurs in this Sense, *1 Macc. i. 50—69.* so *κοινὸν ἢ ἀκάθαρτον* in *St. Peter's Vision*, is common or unclean; and *ἐκτίσας τὰ πάντα κοινῇ, κύριος μόνος δικαιώθησεται*, therefore means here, that God hath created all Things (comparatively) unclean, and the Lord alone will be justified, or found just, when he is judged, *Psal. li.* The *Arab. Version* hath glanced upon this Sense, *Totus mundus corrumpetur*. But indeed



deed our Translators have themselves confirmed it. *3. He is King of all, by his Power dividing holy Things among them from the profane.* The Opposition between *לך* and *שׁוֹפָר* is well known; the latter is proper to God alone, in Comparison of whom all Things besides are common and unclean. From hence to *15.* is a Continuation of the Subject of the last Chapter, *viz.* the Majesty and Power of God, and the Weakness and Frailty of Man. And in the Sense which is now offered, the Connexion is certainly more visible, and the Comparison or Contrast better preserved. See the last Note.

Ver. 3. *Who governeth the World with the Palm of his Hand, and all Things obey his Will, for he is the King of all, by his Power dividing holy Things among them from profane.* Almost all the Editions have *οὐκ ἔστιν ἡ δυνάμις αὐτοῦ*, which Junius, and most of the Latin Interpreters here follow, but the true Reading undoubtedly is *οὐκ ἔστιν ἡ δυνάμις αὐτοῦ*, as Hæschelius, and Grabe have it. Our Translators have wrongly placed the Comma after *King of all*, it should be; *He is the King of all by his Power*: The Geneva Version accordingly has, *he governeth all Things by his Power*, which is agreeable to all the Greek Copies, which read, *αὐτὸς βασιλεὺς πάντων ἐν χειρὶ αὐτοῦ*. And indeed it suits this better than the following Sentence, *dividing holy Things among them from profane*, which was rather an Act of Wisdom than of Power, for he made some Days and Places for weighty Reasons more holy than others, as some Parts of the Sacrifices also were more so than the rest: The like may be observed with respect to Persons, for he separated the People of Israel from the whole Gentile World, to be a holy Nation to him, and among these, the Tribe of Levi to be in a more peculiar Manner his own. And in general it may be said, that he has put an essential Difference between holy and profane, and hath commanded all Mankind to be holy, and to touch not the unclean Thing. The *Vat.* wholly omits this Verse, as does the *Vulgate*.

Ver. 5. *Who shall number the Strength of his Majesty? and who shall also tell out his Mercies?* As his Majesty is, so is his Mercy infinite, *Eccles. ii. 18.* and cannot be sufficiently displayed. According to *Calmet* the Sense is, that though a Man should be able to speak of, and describe the Might of his marvellous Acts, *δυνάμει καὶ φερόμεν αὐτοῦ*, *Psal. cxlv. 6.* or according to this Writer, *καὶ ὅτις μεγαλυνεῖ αὐτοῦ*, yet who could be able to declare and publish the many Instances of his Mercy, which are the most surprizing of all his other Works, and far beyond them. *Et quand on pourroit annoncer ses grandeurs & ses merveilles, qui pourroit publier ses miséricordes? Car sa miséricorde est au-dessus de toutes ses œuvres.* And in this Sense he understands, *Psal. cxlv. 9.* where the Psalmist, after having given this remarkable Character of God, *that he is gracious and merciful,*

*long-suffering, and of great Goodness,* adds immediately, *Miserationes ejus super omnia opera ejus*, which *De Muis* says, many expound, that his Mercy is above all his (other) Works. But this is not countenanced by the rendering of the *LXX*, which is not *ὑπερ*, but *ἐπὶ πάντα τὰ ἔργα αὐτοῦ*, which expresses his very great Regard for all his Works, but gives no Preference to his Mercy: *Psal. xl. 5, 6.* best expresses the Sense of this Place.

Ver. 6. *As for the wondrous Works of the Lord, there may be nothing taken from them, neither may any Thing be put unto them, neither can the Ground of them be found out.*

Ver. 7. *When a Man hath done, then he beginneth; and when he leaveth off, then he shall be doubtful.* *ῥότε ἀρχήσεται*, then he is to begin again; or perhaps the true Reading may be, *ῥότε ἀρχήσεται*, then he must begin again, he is as far off as ever, and when he has finished his Enquiry, or Search, he will be doubtful, or rather, as the Word is used *Maccab. i. 3, 31.* he will be perplexed, and confounded. The Sense of the whole is, *Tho' a Man should exert himself to the utmost to penetrate into, and fathom the Depth of God's Greatness, to explain his Nature, or unravel the Mysteries of his Providence, or should exhaust his whole Store of grateful Eloquence to praise him for his noble Acts, yet he will find, nevertheless, that he can neither conceive, nor speak high enough of his Perfections, nor invent any thing that can come near, or resemble what he is.* And when he thinks that he has made a good Progress towards a Discovery, he will acknowledge, with profound Astonishment, that more remains to be added than is hitherto done. One is not properly convinced that he is ignorant of God, that he cannot understand all or any of his Secrets, the Causes of his Will, or the Design of his Operations, till he has well considered, and studied him: The more he meditates, and thinks upon him, the more he will find him out of reach, that his Counsels are deep, his Dispensations mysterious, and his Nature as impenetrable, as his Glory is inaccessible. Each Person will find himself in the Condition of *Simonides*, who, being asked what God was, demanded first two Days, then four, afterwards a longer Time to deliberate, and at length was obliged to confess, that the more he studied, the less he found himself able to satisfy the Enquiry. The Attempt to comprehend God, and to account for all his Works and Proceedings, is, to use the Comparison of an ancient Writer, like that of numbring the Sand of the Sea; by going about it, you are confounded, and by doing something of it, you find it impossible to do the rest. *Nazianz. O-rat. i.* Our Author speaks of God in the same sublime Manner, *ch. xlii. 21.*

Ver. 8. *What is Man, and whereto serveth he? what is his Good, and what is his Evil?* *Grotius* understands this in a Sense different from our Translators, *i. e.* what Profit is there to



to God from Man, what is his (God's) Good, or Advantage from him, and what is his Evil or Hurt that can come from Man? What can he do or render to God by any Good or Evil which he does? If he is evil, what can he attempt against God; if he is good, what can he do for him, that is of any great Moment? See *Psal. xvi. 2.* where the old Translation has, *My Goodness is nothing unto thee.* See *De Muis in loc.* God indeed requires us to be good, but 'tis for our Profit, not his own, that he requires it; according to that of *Eliphaz, Job xxii. 2, 3.* Can a Man be profitable unto God, as he that is wise may be profitable unto himself: is it any Pleasure to the Almighty that thou art Righteous, or is it Gain to him that thou makest thy Way perfect? And again *ch. xxxv. 6, 7, 8.* If thou sinnest, what dost thou against him; or if thy Transgressions be multiplied, what dost thou unto him? If thou be righteous, what givest thou him; or what receiveth he of thine Hand? Thy Wickedness may hurt a Man as thou art, and thy Righteousness may profit the Son of Man. St. *Augustin*, conscious of human Imperfection, and the Nothingness of our best Services to profit God, very justly enquires, *Quid tibi sum, ut amari te jubeas à me, & nisi faciam, irascaris mihi, & mineris in gentes miseras?* Confess. L. i. c. 5.

Ver. 9. *The Number of Man's Days at the most are an hundred Years.*] The Author of the xc<sup>th</sup> Psalm, composed, as it should seem, in the Time of the Captivity, fixes the ordinary Term of Man's Life at 70, or at most 80 Years; in this Writer's Time Men sometimes lived to a hundred, but that was the longest Term. *Macrobius* agrees with the former, when he says of his Time, *Cum septuaginta deni computantur anni, hoc à physicis creditur meta vivendi, & hoc vitæ humanæ perfectum spatium terminatur:* And *Seneca* with the latter, *Pervenisse te ad ultimam humanæ ætatis videmus, centesimus tibi, vel supra premitur annus.* De Brevit. Vitæ, c. iii. Some Greek Copies point the Verse thus, ἀριθμὸς ἡμερῶν ἀνθρώπων, πολλὰ ἐστὶν, ἑκατὸν, i. e. the Number of Man's Days are many Years, even an hundred. But this seems not to agree with what this Writer says *ch. xvii. 2.* and πολλὰ should rather be taken here adverbially, as our Translators, and the Vulgate understand it: In some Copies also at the End of the Verse is added, ἀλογιστὸν δὲ ἐκαστὸν πᾶσιν ἡ κοίμησις, i. e. the Time of each Man's Death is unknown, and cannot certainly be fixed; or, as the Geneva Version has it, *No Man hath certaine Knowledge of his Death,* i. e. of the Time or Manner of his Death, which cannot by Art or Calculation be determined. *Cuique præsumitur obdormiendi tempus, ratiocinio non potest computari,* as *Juvenius* renders.

Ver. 10. *As a Drop of Water unto the Sea, and a gravel Stone in Comparison of the Sand, so are a thousand Years unto the Days of Eternity.*] The Sense of this Verse, as connected

with the former, seems to be this, that even though a Man should live a thousand Years, yet is that Term nothing to Eternity. The *Psalmist* has a Thought not unlike this, *A thousand Years in thy Sight are but as Yesterday, seeing that is past, as a Watch in the Night,* *Psal. xc. 4.* And St. *Peter*, *One Day is with the Lord as a thousand Years, and a thousand Years as one Day.* 2 *Pet. iii. 8.* And to this latter the Oriental Versions undoubtedly refer, *Mille anni in sæculo præsentis non sunt comparandi uni diei sæculo justorum.* *Aiôn* is used in the Sense it is here taken by *Philo*, who distinguishes between *aiôn* and *χρόνος*, the former belongs to incorporeal Beings, as the latter is the Measure of all sublunary Things and Persons. *Nazianzen* hath well noted the Difference, *ὅτι οὗτος ὁ χρόνος, ἡ δὲ αἰὼν ἀμείβεται, τὸ τοῦ αἰῶνος ὁ αἰὼν.* Orat. xxxviii. The *Vat.* omits *χρόνος*, and reads *ὅτι οὗτος ὁ χρόνος ἐστὶν ἐν ἡμέραις αἰῶνος*, which very much weakens the Comparison. Possibly both might have been in the Original Text to the following Sense, That a thousand Years are but as a few, compared unto the Days of Eternity. The Author endeavours to illustrate this Difference by the diminutive Proportion, which a Drop of Water bears to the Sea, or a Gravel Stone to the Sand on its Shore; but these Images do but faintly represent it, for there is a greater Disproportion between Time and Eternity, than between the Extremes of any assignable finite Quantity whatsoever. But if a thousand Years are as nothing with respect to Eternity, how short must we account the longest Term of Man's Life, if compared to it? And by what diminutive Name shall we call it, when we reflect upon a Duration that shall never end? Or what Comparison shall we be able to make, between the Ages of the World itself, from its first Creation to its final Dissolution, and Eternity, which was from everlasting, and shall be to everlasting?

Ver. 11. *Therefore is God patient with them, and poureth forth his Mercy upon them.* Ver. 12. *He saw and perceived their End to be Evil, therefore he multiplied his Compassion.*] As God knows the Weakness of Man, and his Propensity to Evil, the Shortness of his Life, and the many Infirmities which encompass him, therefore he does not proceed against him upon every Offence, but bears with him for a Time, waits for his Amendment, and shews his great Tenderness toward him, by giving him many gracious Calls, and seasonable Warnings, to raise in him a Sense of his Danger, and to put him upon a speedy Repentance, in order to prevent his Ruin. *Kalaspogon* is thus taken *ch. ix. 11.* 2 *Tim. ii. 14.* 2 *Pet. ii. 6.* Instead of proceeding against him with extreme Rigour, he makes Man's Misery and Infirmities, rather a Motive for his Mercy towards him. Hence Mercy is said to rejoice over Judgment, and by *Philo* to be older than Justice,



stice, and by the *Psalmist*, to reach unto the Heavens, in Comparison of the other, which reacheth but to the Clouds, *Psal. lvii. 11.*

Ver. 13. *The Mercy of Man is towards his Neighbour, but the Mercy of the Lord is upon all Flesh: he reproveth, and nurtureth, and teacheth, and bringeth again, as a Shepherd his Flock.]* The Compassion which a Man shews his Neighbour, and the Inclination which carries him to do Good to one like himself, differs in many Respects from the Mercy of God. The Compassion of a Man has too often a Tincture of Self-Interest in it; a Man expects, if not a Return, at least some Sort of Acknowledgment from the Person he obliges, and as God has promised to reward Acts of Charity and Benevolence done to others, he may have a Respect unto the Recompence of the Reward. Besides, the liberal Man may be induced thus to act from a Motive of Prudence, considering himself as subject to Accidents, and under the like Power of Fortune with others, and therefore may one Day fall into Misfortunes, and stand in like Need of Assistance, which a Readiness to serve others may be the most likely Means to procure. But the Love and Compassion of God is entirely gratuitous, and free from any selfish Views; he neither needs nor requires any Return, but that of Duty; he has no View of providing against a Day of Calamity, as not being liable to be affected by any Change or Vicissitude of Things; he is superior to all Accidents, and out of the Reach and Power of them. *Philo* has very justly observed of the Bounty of God, that he alone gives freely, *μόνος ὁ Θεὸς ἔμνη πωλητῶν ἐστίν*, whilst all his Creatures are to one another no better than cunning Hucksters, *Εὐρήσεις ἀπαντας καὶ τὰς λελομένους χαρίζεσθαι, πωροσκοπίας μάλλον, ἢ δωρεμένους. . . . ὁ δὲ πρὸς τὸ δωρεῖσθαι ὀνόματι κυρίως πρὸς τὸν ἐραζόμενον. Περὶ Χερουσίμ.* The wise Man here extols God's Mercy from the Universality of it, that it extends in general to all Creatures, to them that serve him, and them that serve him not; nay, these last seem to have a greater Share of it, as indeed they stand more in Need of it. These he admonishes, reproves, chastises, and instructs, and such as improve under his kind and wholesome Corrections, that receive and profit by his Discipline, he hath Mercy on them, and receiveth as his own again after their Wandring, and, like a true Shepherd, bringeth them home on his Shoulders rejoicing: Here the Author finishes his Answer to the Objections brought ch. xv. 11, 12. ch. xvi. 17, 20, 21, 22.

Ver. 15. *Blemish not thy good Deeds, neither use uncomfortable Words when thou givest any Thing.]* *ἀνὴρ λόγων, Non des tristitiam verbi mali, Vulg.* The Author begins here a new Subject, which regards principally the Manner of doing a Kindness; he recommends not only doing good to our Neighbour, but the doing it with a good Grace, to give willingly, and chearfully, without Delay or Excuses,

with kind Words, and affectionate and winning Looks: for the Manner of doing a Kindness is often beyond the Act itself, and gives as much or more Satisfaction to the Receiver. *Seneca* has a most apposite Passage to this Purpose, *Latius facit, [beneficus] et induit sibi animi sui vultum. Ingentia quorundam beneficia silentium aut loquendi tarditas, imitata gravitatem et tristitiam, corrumpit, cum promitterent vultu negantium. Quanto melius adjicere bona verba rebus bonis, et praedicatione benigna commendare quae praestes? Sic efficies, ut animum tuum pluris aestimet, quam illud, quicquid est, ad quod petendum venerat. Tunc est summa virtus tribuentis, ubi ille qui discessit dicit sibi, Magnum hodie lucrum feci. Malo quod illum talem inveni, quam si multiplicatum hoc ad me alia via pervenisset, huic enim animo nunquam parem referam gratiam.* L. ii. de Beneficiis c. 3.

Ver. 16. *Shall not the Dew assuage the Heat? so is a Word better than a Gift.]* The Sense may either be, As the Heat is refreshed by the coming Dew, so a Gift pleases more accompanied with kind Expressions; or the Comparison may perhaps be made out thus, that as the Dew, a gentle Thing, and of small Force in Appearance, assuages the Heat, or lays the hot Wind, for so I think *καύσων* always signifies in ὁ, and may signify in the Places where it is used by this Writer; so a Word, especially a mild one, which is compared to the Dew, *Deut. xxxii. 2.* produces a more powerful Effect than a Gift; which may either mean a Gift from the same Person, which agrees best with the preceding Verse, or one offered by another Person by way of Bribe, *ἀργύρεον δίδόμενον μετὰ δόλου*, according to the LXX, *Prov. xxvi. 23.* so I apprehend the Syriac understood it, translating it, *A Word will turn back a Gift.* Or may not the Sense be, As the cooling Dew is more agreeable than the scorching Air, so is a (kind) Word than a Gift. *i. e.* Such a Gift as that of the envious, and churlish Upbraider, *ψ 18.* Lastly, which seems the best and closest, As the Dew moderates and assuages the Heat, so a Word, or soft Answer turneth away Wrath, *Prov. xv. 1.* sooner than a Gift.

Ver. 17. *Lo is not a Word better than a Gift?] ἐκ ἰδὲ λόγος ὑπὲρ δόμα ἀγαθόν;* is not the Sense of this exactly the same, according to the present Reading, with the End of the former Verse? and does *ἰδὲ* any Way alter, or enlarge the Sense? What then is the Use of it here, or to what does it particularly point? I suspect the Reading to be corrupt, and that the true one is, *καὶ ἡδὺς λόγος ὑπὲρ δόμα ἀγαθόν*, and then the Sense of the whole will be, As the cooling refreshing Dew is preferable to the scorching Heat, so is a Word to some Sort of Gifts: nay, is not sweet obliging Speech even above a good Gift itself, which loses its Value when given churlishly, and is enhanced, when accompanied with kind Expressions? As *ἀγαθόν* is ad-



ded to invigorate the Expression, so ἰδὲ, or some such Word, seems necessary to help forward the Comparison. This may seem confirmed by the Syriac, which has, *Est sermo bonus qui dono prestantior est*: And by St. Chrysostom's Comment upon this Passage, *Sæpe sermonis obsequium, ἢδὲ λόγος, magis recreat accipientem, quam donum ipsum. Proinde scientes hæc, ne simus difficiles erga eos qui ad nos accedunt. Quod si poterimus eorum inopiam sublevare, hoc faciamus cum gaudio; quod si non possumus, ne simus asperi in eos, sed vel verbis eorum curam agamus, & in mansuetudine respondeamus eis, &c.* Hom. xli. in c. xviii. Gen.

Ibid. *But both are with a gracious Man.*] ἀμφοτέρω παρὰ ἀνθρώπου καλοειπούμενα, i. e. Both Gifts and good Words come from a kind beneficent Person. Such a one will add comfortable Words to the good Deeds he does; he will not content himself with kind Salutations, with saying, Go in Peace, be thou warm or filled, but will likewise give what is wanted; nor will he barely give, but in such an obliging Manner as to double the Gift. Καλοειπούμενος signifies an acceptable Person, or one possessed of the Qualities that make Persons so. Thus Symmachus uses it, *Psal. xviii. 25.* See also *Luke i. 28.* Cappellus prefers καλοειπούμενα here, *Spicileg. p. 52. i. e.* Both Gifts and kind Speeches are agreeable to Men. But had this been the true Reading, which Syr. and Vulg. both oppose, I think ἀνδρῶν would have been ἀνδρῶν or ἀνθρώπων, for the Plural seems fittest to express all Men, or Mankind. Besides I think the common Reading gives the stronger Sense; it scarce need be said that Men love both good Words and Gifts. But that one, who would be acceptable, must be ready to give both, is an Observation of some Importance; because there may be Persons apt to think, either that Liberality without Affability, or Affability without Liberality, will answer the Purpose of being agreeable and popular. The *Port Royal Comment* has a fine Reflexion here, There are some who give liberally to the Poor, and at the same Time speak roughly or reproachfully to them; and there are others, who speak to them with great Humanity and Tenderness, but give them nothing. True Charity does not consist in either the one or the other of these; for the Liberality of the former is spoiled by his Churlishness, and the Affability of the other, by his Covetousness. But both these meet in a truly good Man. He gives liberally to the Poor, and is so far from exalting himself above him through Pride, by speaking haughtily or contemptuously to him, that he learns Humility from such an Object.

Ver. 18. *A Fool will upbraid churlishly, and a Gift of the Envious consumeth the Eyes.*] i. e. The Gift of a covetous Man, who grudges, and even seems to envy what others receive from him, is the Occasion of great Grief and Concern to the Poor, who is re-

buked, and reproached by him for what he cannot help. A civil Denial would be preferable to Charity so extorted, and ill-condition'd: The Advice here, to give in an obliging Manner, not only respects our Behaviour to such as are poor, but, according to St. Austin, to all others, whom at any Time we do kind Offices to. To give in a taunting and contemptuous Manner is sure to give Offence; instead of obliging, it grieves the Eyes of the Receiver. A reproachful Answer to a Suppliant, is changing Liberality into a Sort of Tyranny, and he that upbraids others with Favours done them, and expects a servile Compliance in Return, makes his Gifts as so many Chains to entangle another's Liberty, and which they had better have refused than to have bought them so dearly. It is therefore a wise Remark of an ancient Philosopher, That he that receives a Favour should never forget it; and he that confers it, should never remember it. A polite Person is admired and commended for the complaisant and obliging Manner in which he does a Favour, which gains more upon the Hearts of Men than the Favour itself. See c. xx. 13, 14, 15. c. xli. 22.

Ver. 19. *Learn before thou speak, and use Physic or ever thou be sick.*] This Advice respects the Body, and includes Diet, Exercise, Evacuations, and other such like Preservatives of Health; but, as it stands connected with the Context, it regards the Soul likewise, and its Diseases, which with Care may as easily be prevented, as those of the Body; for the latter are generally unknown to us, and unforeseen by us, and often attack us in a Way and Manner that we could not be aware of; whereas the Diseases of the Soul are in some Sense voluntary, and the Danger of falling into them well known, and might easily be prevented, either by avoiding such inviting Occasions and Temptations as betray us into Sin, or resisting and subduing the Evil before it be grown too strong, and is become a Habit. Or by following the Caution and Advice of Friends, or listening to the Directions of an able spiritual Guide; or, lastly, by preventing Grace added to all these, to be obtained by earnest Prayer. *Mess. of Port Royal* apply the former Part of the Verse to the Pastors of the Church, who should be well instructed, and grounded themselves, before they attempt to teach others: A Maxim often inculcated in the Sapiential Books, and of the last Importance towards the right Discharge of the ministerial Office, as upon their Knowledge and Skill in the respective Offices of their Function, the Good and Improvement of others in a great Measure depends; who can neither be fit Guides, if they either wander, or are not well acquainted with the right way of Salvation, nor proper Physicians to superintend the Cure of others, if they themselves are often out of order, and want to be reminded, *Physician, heal thyself.*

Ver.



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Ver. 21. *Humble thyself before thou be sick, and in the Time of Sins shew Repentance.*] The Advice in this, and the foregoing and following Verses is nearly the same, viz. to begin in Time. As applied to the Body the Sense is, Use Abstinence before you are sick; for so we may understand Humility here. The Hebrews express fasting by *תענית*, Lev. xvi. 29, 31. xxiii. 29. as fasting brings the Body low; and this is confirmed by *יגדל* being joined to it in some Copies. As applied to the Soul, the Direction is, that a Man should often examine his Conscience, even in the Pride of Health, should review his past Life in order to be acquainted thoroughly with the State of his Soul, should not wait till the last Gasp before he asks God Pardon for his Sins, nor defer to alter an evil Course of Life, till Sickness, as it were, compels him. The Meaning of the whole is, If when you perceive any Symptoms of an approaching Illness, you prudently endeavour to prevent its coming to a dangerous Height by Diet and Abstinence, use the like Circumspection and Care as to the Diseases of your Soul; let an early Application prevent all Danger, that so you may find Favour before the great Judge *ἐν ᾧ καὶ ἐπισκοπῆς*, in the Day of his Visitation. If Pride be the Sin that most easily besets thee, learn to practise Humility; if Intemperance, subdue thyself by Fasting; lie in Sackcloth and Ashes, and take away the Fuel that inflames thy Passions, and feeds thy Distemper. And if thou hast at any Time fallen into Sin, restore thyself by a speedy Repentance, and let a thorough Reformation effect the Cure.

Ver. 23. *Before thou prayest, prepare thyself, and be not as one that tempteth the Lord.*] Before we presume to address ourselves to God in Prayer, we should remove the Impressions of all sensible Objects, all earthly Cares, and wandering Thoughts; we should purify our Hearts by Faith, Contrition, and Repentance, and endeavour to possess our Souls with the Idea of the Presence and infinite Majesty of the great God. To approach him rudely, without any Preparation or Respect, without Fear and Trembling, with a Soul taken up with Trifles and Impertinences, is an Affront to him, and betrays a mean Opinion of him, as if God was obliged to hear our Prayers, and to grant us what we ask of him with so much Carelessness and Indifference. God expects that we should prepare our own Hearts, and also pray to him to assist us in that holy Work. There may also another Sense be given of this Place, viz. Engage not lightly or rashly in Vows, consider first whether you are resolved, and are likely to be able, to fulfil them; for God looks upon such Promises and Engagements as an Insult, where there is no Intention of making them good. This seems to be countenanced by the foregoing Verse.

Ver. 27. *A wise Man will fear in every*

Thing, and in the Day of Sinning he will be aware of Offence.] *ἐν παντὶ διδασκόμενος*, will be careful to keep from sinning in every Thing he says or does, or will in all Times and Places be upon his Guard; and so it will be parallel to that of Solomon, *Happy is the Man that feareth always*, Prov. xxviii. 14. And especially in Times of general Corruption and Degeneracy, and when evil Examples are many, and powerful, he will be more watchful and circumspect, that he be not led away with the Multitude to do Evil, nor be infected with the reigning and popular Contagion. As connected with the former Verse the Sense may be, that a wise Man, considering the State of the World as variable and uncertain, will in every Condition of Life expect and prepare for a Change; he will not be dejected in Adversity, nor too elate in Prosperity, but will demean himself agreeably under either State of Fortune, as a Change of Condition can soon, and easily be effected by God; but a Fool, who attends not to such Revolutions, provides not against Accidents, nor in any respect consults his Safety.

Ver. 28. *Every Man of Understanding knoweth Wisdom, and will give Praise unto him that found her.*] To understand Mankind is a Piece of useful Knowledge, but the most valuable and important Part is to find out, and be well acquainted with Persons of the most worth; and after having discovered true Merit, to do Justice to it, to set it in the most advantageous Light, to commend and speak of it without Jealousy, Envy, or Detraction, and upon all Occasions to give it its due Praise, and the Testimony of our Acknowledgment and Approbation, *ἱσομολόγησιν ἡμῶν*.

Ver. 29. *They that were of Understanding in Sayings, became also wise themselves, and poured forth exquisite Parables.*] *σοφῶτες ἐν λόγοις καὶ αὐτοὶ σοφίσαντο*. There may be several Senses given of this Passage, viz. Men of Understanding are wise in their Talk, they know when, and what to speak; this is *Druſius's* Exposition, who points the Greek thus, *σοφῶτες ἐν λόγοις καὶ αὐτοὶ σοφίσαντο*. Or the Meaning may be, Persons wise in their Talk and of Understanding in Discourse, will themselves be prudent also in their Conduct, for Wisdom is best displayed by an Exactness in both; and according to this Sense, the Greek should thus be pointed, *σοφῶτες ἐν λόγοις καὶ αὐτοὶ σοφίσαντο*. And thus the Syriac understands it, *Scientes doctrinam, ipsi quoque sapienter se gerent*. There may be also a third Sense, That such as have attained unto great Skill and Experience, made just Observations upon Men and Things, and have formed upon them useful Maxims for the Conduct of Life, will not only be beneficial to themselves, but improve others by communicating sound Rules of Œconomy and Morality for the Use and Convenience of Life, *παρουσίας ἀρετῆς ἐν ζωῇ*. And thus



thus *εὐφροσύνη* is used in the Sense of teaching, *Psal. xix. 7. cv. 22.*

Ver. 32. *Take not Pleasure in much good Cheer, neither be tied to the Expence thereof.* In the foregoing Verse the wise Man observes, that Luxury or Voluptuousness will expose a Man to the Censure of the World, and particularly that his Enemies *βασκανιστῆς*, will reproach him for it; here he takes Notice of the Inconvenience arising from it, and the Damage it does to Mens Circumstances. It may also be a Prohibition not to keep disorderly and extravagant Company, not to link one's Self with Libertines and Spendthrifts, nor lavish away a Fortune by high Living, and expensive Entertainments. The *Vulgate* renders, *Ne oblecteris in turbis, assidua est enim commissio illorum*, i. e. Delight not in Crowds and Assemblies, which are full of Irregularities and Temptations to Sin, following a Copy which read, *μη δὲ φροσίνε ἐν πολλῇ τέρβῃ, μηδὲ προσδεθῆς συμβολῇ αὐτῆς*, but the true Reading is, *μη δὲ φροσίνε ἐν πολλῇ τέρβῃ, μηδὲ προσδεθῆς συμβολῇ αὐτῆς*, which our Translation follows. The *Geneva* seems to comprize both these, *Take not Pleasure in great Voluptuousness, and intangle not thyself with such Company.*

Ver. 33. *Be not made a Beggar by banqueting upon borrowing, when thou hast nothing in thy Purse, for thou shalt lie in wait for thine own Life, and be talked on.* Profuseness is a Reproach to Men's Discretion, and a Reflexion upon their Judgment; for they that suffer their Expences to swallow up their Revenues, are sure to be stigmatized with Folly as well as Beggary, and the Weight of their Calamity has sometimes been so heavy and intolerable, that Men have chose to force themselves out of Life in a violent Manner, rather than endure the Smart and Anguish of Poverty, and others' severe Reflexions upon them. The Civil Law, which is the Result of the Wisdom of many Ages, ranks Prodigals in the Class of Children and Madmen, and appoints Curators for the Management of their Concerns; but to be made a Beggar by banqueting, and to borrow, and take up Money to supply such Extravagance, is a still higher Instance of Folly; 'tis purchasing Superfluities at the Hazard of wanting Necessaries, for the tedious Remainder of a mispent Life. And they who lend to such Extravagants, supply them with no other View, but to undo them, and could not afford to trust them in the Manner they do, if they did not propose excessive Gain by them. If Men contracted Debts for the Necessaries of Life, which they could not otherwise procure, they were excusable; but to purchase Niceties, and furnish out needless Entertainments, at the Expence of Character, Fortune, and Liberty, at the Hazard of every Thing that is dear and valuable in Life, is Folly past Forgiveness. How far do such Men outdo the Folly of *Esau*? He sold his Birthright to satisfy a real and crav-

ving Want, and yet he sinned in selling it; but these Spendthrifts sacrifice theirs to such Wants, as are false and fantastical, to Fashion and Affectation, to Pride and Emulation, and their Health to Appetites that will not be satisfied, and ought not to be indulged, even to Wantonness, and Fulness, a nice Palate, and fondness for Rareties. See *Delany's Social Duties*, p. 242, &c.

## CHAP. XIX.

Ver. 1. *A Labouring Man that is given to Drunkenness shall not be rich.*

At the End of the last Chapter the wise Man advises not to take Pleasure in much good Cheer, nor to frequent Meetings, Assemblies, or Entertainments, where great Expences are incurred, especially if a Man's Circumstances are but indifferent, and his Business or Way of Life does not comport with such Extravagance. 'Tis spending Money foolishly, in fashionable perhaps, but not good Company, and is the Ruin of private Persons especially, without any real Necessity or Obligation. What this Writer says of the Labourer, is applicable to all Artisans and Mechanics who are fond of Company, and neglect their Occupation and Business through Debauchery and Excess. Their Intemperance disqualifies them for their Work, and squanders away all the former Gains by their Labour; as their Expence is too great for their Income, every Sum that goes out unnecessarily, the Want of it, and of what might have been industriously gotten in the mean Time, will be felt in their Families; and it is generally seen, that Poverty is the Lot of such as neglect Business, and the Advantages of a good Calling, to pursue Diversions, and join in the Revels of disorderly and loose Company. *Solomon* hath expressed the same Thought in more general Terms, *He that loveth Pleasure shall be a poor Man, and he that loveth Wine and Oil, shall not be rich.* *Prov. xxi. 17.*

*Ibid. He that contemneth small Things shall fall by little and little.* This Maxim which is of Consequence in Oeconomy and Politics, is more so when applied to Morality. A Man should be careless and negligent in no Part of his Conduct, should continually make a fresh Progress in Goodness; not to advance is to go back. One should carefully avoid the very least Faults, for fear of falling into greater, and what the World calls venial Sins are perhaps more carefully to be guarded against, than what it calls mortal ones, as the latter are more shocking in their own Nature, and inspire a Sort of Horror in the committing them; but the other, through their Smallness, are generally over-looked, and being thought of no Consequence are not attended to, questioned, or startled at. As a Man is shocked at jumping down a Precipice, but scruples not to attempt the same



same by gentle Approaches, and to descend insensibly by small Steps and Degrees. See *Chrysoft. Hom. lxxxvii. in Matt.* 'Tis a just Observation of an ancient Writer, μικρόν & μικρόν ὅταν εἰς μέγα ἐκφέρειν, a small Sin ceases to be so, when it leads to a greater, and besides they are so many, and so often returning, that these little Indiscretions, to say no worse of them, combine and cluster to such a Degree, that, like the Grapes mentioned *Num. xiii. 23.* they become too great a Load for one Man to carry.

Ver. 2. *Wine and Women will make Men of Understanding to fall away, and he that cleaveth to Harlots will become impudent.*] The Prophet *Hosea* accordingly observes, that Whoredom and Wine take away the Heart, *ch. iv. 11. i. e.* from God, they incline Men to renounce him, to rebel against him, and even to turn Apostates. These are the two Rocks upon which there is so much Danger of splitting, that few approach them, but make Shipwreck. *Solomon* has the like Observation in some of his Writings, and was himself a melancholy Instance of the Truth of one Part; and to him we may add *Sampson*, and the whole People of *Israel*, whose Defection was occasioned by the Seducement of the *Midianitish* Women. The Consequence of such Company is here very justly observed to be Effrontery and Impudence. Some Copies read *τολμηρότερος*, which improves the Sense, and is more proper; for he that cleaveth to Harlots, is not only in danger of becoming impudent, but has already given Proofs of his Boldness, and want of Modesty; it means, that such loose Company will make a Man grow more hardened and profligate, and will strip him of all Sense of Decency: The abandoned Rake in Time scruples no Vice, and often out of an Air adopts some which he never was guilty of, and blushes at Modesty, as Persons of a better Disposition do at Wickedness.

Ver. 3. *Moths and Worms shall have him to Heritage, and a bold Man shall be taken away.*] *i. e.* His Lewdness and Intemperance will throw him into many Diseases; Corruption and Rottenness, and all the dreadful Consequences of a vicious Life appear upon his Body, he is emaciated and consumptive, the very Shadow of himself, and the Abhorrence of others, he dies a sad Spectacle, and a dreadful Monument and Warning to Men of Pleasure; *ἐξαεθήσεται ἐν παραδείσματι μύρμηκες καὶ σκώληκες*, as some Copies have it, his Death shall be in the most scandalous and ignominious Manner. *Solomon* speaking of the strange Woman, lays open her Artifices, and the Dangers which attend the Company of such an Enchantress, *Prov. v. 3, 4, 5, 8, 11.* *Her Lips drop as a Honeycomb, and her Mouth is smoother than Oil; but her End is bitter as Wormwood, sharp as a two-edged Sword; her Feet go down to Death, and her Steps take hold of Hell. Remove thy Way far from her, and come not nigh the Door*

*of her House; lest thou mourn at the last, when thy Flesh and thy Body are consumed.*

Ver. 4. *He that is hasty to give Credit is light-minded.*] Some Interpreters understand this of Credulity in general, as a Sign of a weak Mind; *Drusius* takes the Place in this Sense, and refers to *Prov. xiv. 15.* *The Simple believeth every Word*, as a parallel Passage; and so the *Oriental* Versions. Others expound it of a faulty Proneness both to believe, and speak ill of our Neighbour, the crediting and spreading evil Reports to his Disadvantage, instead of acting the good Man, who is cautious and suspends his Assent, and neither believes all he hears, nor officiously reports, even what he knows or believes to be true; to the Prejudice of another. But *Calmet* says, the Author is here speaking, *de ceux qui se livrent inconsidérément aux plaisirs honteux*, of such, who give themselves up to shameful and forbidden Pleasures, who rashly go after, and weakly listen to Women of infamous Characters, and are drawn into Ruin by trusting to their artful Insinuations. And *Grotius* prefers this Sense, and indeed the Context manifestly leads to it. It follows, *He that sinneth*, by Acts of Uncleanness, *offends against his own Soul*, *i. e.* sinneth against himself, as well as God, which may either respect his Soul; and then the Sense will be the same with *Prov. vi. 32.* *Who so commiteth Adultery, lacketh Understanding, he that doeth it, destroys his own Soul*; or it may refer to his Body, that he ruins his Health and Constitution by such Irregularities, and offers a sort of Violence to himself, like that of *St. Paul*, *Flee Fornication; every Sin that a Man doth is without the Body, but he that committeth Fornication, sinneth against his own Body.* *1 Cor. vi. 18.*

Ver. 5. *Who so taketh Pleasure in Wickedness shall be condemned.*] There are two Senses given of this Place from the different pointing of the *Greek*, the first is that followed by our Translators *ὁ ἀφραιόμενος ἐπὶ κακοεξίᾳ, κατὰ σὺν ὁμολογίᾳ*, the other is *ὁ ἀφραιόμενος, ἐπὶ κακοεξίᾳ κατὰ σὺν ὁμολογίᾳ*, *i. e.* the Man of Pleasure shall be punished with the Loss of his Health, shall be condemned by God to a bad Habit of Body; *κακοεξία* in this Sense means what the Physicians call *κακία* technically. But the virtuous and chaste Man that resisteth such unlawful (venereal) Pleasures, as it follows in the next Sentence, crowneth his Life, maketh his Life sound and healthful. *Ἀνισοφθαλμοὶ ἡδοναῖς*, is a most beautiful figurative Expression, which the Versions but faintly reach. We meet with the like Expression in *Josephus*, *παθήμασιν ἀνισκέψαι*. *Antiq. L. vi.* and in *Lucretius*. *Cupidinibus responsare* in *Horace*, comes not very short of it. See *Acts xxvii. 15.*

Ver. 6. *He that ruleth his Tongue, shall live without Strife; and he that hateth Babbling shall have less Evil.*] The first Part of this, is clear enough, reading *ἀμάχως συμ-εῖωσι*, and not *ἀμάχω*, as most Copies have it.



The latter has two Readings *καρδία* and *κακία*, the Preference of either of which depends upon the Construction of *λαλία*, which if it be understood properly of Speech or Discourse, then he who hateth it, *ἐλαττονέω καρδία*, wanteth Understanding. But if *λαλία* be taken in that other worse and less common Sense for Loquacity or Babbling, as our Translators render it; then he that hateth it, *ἐλαττονέω κακία*, is devoid of Malice, *malitia*, as the *Vulg.* has it; *ἐλαττονέμεν καρδία* seems to mean in this Writer what St. Paul means by *παιδία τὰς φρεσίν*, Children in Understanding, and *ἐλαττονέμεν κακία* what he means by *τῇ κακίᾳ νήπιοι*, 1 Cor. xiv. 20. And this seems to be a better Sense of *ἐλαττονέμεν κακία* than that which our Translators give, *He shall have less Evil*, for *κακία* is more properly a Vice, a personal Fault, than an Evil, or Misfortune. After the first Sentence, *He that ruleth his Tongue, shall live without Strife*, it very naturally follows, *And he that hateth Babbling shews he hath not a malicious or contentious Disposition*, though that followed by our Translators is good Sense, and *κακία* is so used Matt. vi. 34. and by the *ῥ* sometimes.

Ver. 7. *Rebears not unto another that which is told unto thee, and thou shalt fare never the worse.* *ἐντελέσαι λόγον*, signifies in general to use Repetitions, as it is taken ch. vii. 14. and then the Sense is, Be not troublesome by tedious and unnecessary Repetitions, which will not make you better understood, nor get you any Credit or Advantage. Or it sometimes signifies to reply, contest, or dispute a Matter with any one with Affeuration and Positiveness, which exchanging of Words begets Quarrels, and often ends in real Hurt and Mischief. The *Latins* use *commutare verba* in this Sense. It has also a third Meaning, *viz.* to repeat what one hears, which is the Sense of our Translators here, and ch. xli. 23. and of the *Tigurin* Version. The *Vulg.* rendring, *Ne iteres verbum nequam & durum*, furnishes yet a fourth Sense, *i. e.* if you have said any hard, rash, or unjust Thing of any Man, do not stand in it, or repeat it, and so make the Fault worse, but be silent for the future on that head, or rather endeavour to recall it, and take Pains to excuse it. Or it may mean, lastly, if you have heard any thing to the Disadvantage of your Neighbour, do not repeat it again, or spread the Report, and you will gain Esteem, *Nemo te criminabitur*, Syr. and have the Character of a discreet and friendly Person. He that is thus cautious of his Conduct with respect to others, taketh the surest Way to live peaceably with all Men, and not to offend through Breach of Charity.

Ver. 8. *Whether it be to a Friend or Foe, talk not of other Mens Lives.* Enquire not into other Person's Affairs, which no ways concern thee, for such a Curiosity is impertinent, and often ends in Censure and Detrac-

tion; or spread not an ill Report of any Man, neither of Friend nor Foe, as the *Margin* has it, nor say any thing to affect his Character, unless you are under a Necessity to do it, to save your own, as *Junius* understands it; for however we may please, or satisfy our Ill-nature, by publishing the Faults of others, yet such a Liberty is neither commendable nor allowable, nor should their Failings be the Subject of our Conversation or Raillery either before Friends or Enemies. The *Vulgate* renders, *Amico & inimico noli narrare sensum tuum*, which may furnish another Sense, *viz.* not to reveal or trust with any body our personal Faults, or Secrets of Importance respecting ourselves, or those of others, which have been imparted to us in Confidence. These even our Friends have no right to know, much less our Enemies, who will make an ill Use of such Intelligence, and turn the Discovery we have made to our Damage and Disadvantage.

*Ibid.* *And if thou canst without Offence, reveal them not.* The *Geneva* Version has, *If the Sinne appertaine not unto thee, reveal it not*: And *Coverdal's*, *If thou hast offended, tell it not out*. The *Greek* is *ἐῖ εἰ* (probably for *εἰ & etiam si*) *μὴ ἐστὶ σοὶ ἀμαρτία*, *i. e.* though there be no Sin in thee, reveal not the Sins of others, on account of the Consequences after-mentioned: Or talk not of, nor censure other Mens Faults, unless you be free from Faults yourself, in the same Sense that our Saviour said, *He that is without Sin amongst you, let him throw the first Stone*. John viii. 7.

Ver. 10. *If thou hast heard a Word, let it die with thee, and be bold, it will not burst thee.* *i. e.* Says St. Chrysostom, suppress it, forget, extinguish, bury it, be as though thou hadst not heard it, or as one, that doth not remember. *Hom. iii. ad Pop.* Some Copies have *ἐναποθανέτω σοι*, let it die in thee. The *Vulg.* properly adds, *Audisti sermonem adversus proximum tuum?* which makes the Sense more determinate and clear. The suppressing or concealing within our Breasts what we have heard of Moment, the wise Man elegantly compares to Liquor in a Cask without any Vent. There is the like Comparison applied to Speech, *Job xxxii. 17, 18, 19, 20.* where *Elisha*, when about to answer and shew his Opinion, says, *I am full of Matter, the Spirit within me constraineth me. Behold, my Belly is as Wine which hath no Vent, it is ready to burst like new Bottles, I will speak that I may be refreshed, &c.* On the contrary, such as are too open and communicative, are compared to Sieves, or Vessels full of Holes. *Plenus rimarum sum, hac & illac perfluo. Ter.* Or the Comparison may perhaps be taken from Poison, which a Person unhappily swallowing, is in Danger of swelling to that Degree, as to be even burst, unless it be speedily thrown off; this may seem to suit best with the Venom of Detraction.

Ver.



Ver. 11. *A Fool travaileth with a Word, as a Woman in Labour of a Child.* ἀπὸ πρὸς λόγῳ is a Hebraism. The Sense is, that an idle Person, or a busy Body when he has been told a Secret, or has picked up a Piece of Scandal, is so big with it that he has no Ease or Quiet, through a certain Levity of Mind, or Malignancy of Spirit, till he has brought it to Light; is as impatient to be delivered of it, as a Woman of the Burden of her Child. This too is an elegant Comparison, we find it often applied to what passes in the Mind, whose Thoughts at their Birth, and during their Continuance, are styled Conceptions; when brought forth, and communicated, they are its Offspring, and the Formation of them is the Labour of the Brain. Hence *Clemens Alex.* describes the wise Man, who knows when to speak, and when to be silent, as bringing forth at the full Time, and a careless and indiscreet Person, as one that suffers Abortion. *Strom. L. vi.* It is also applicable to evil Schemes, and clandestine Mischief: Thus the *Psalmist* describing the wicked Man says, *He travaileth with Mischief, he hath conceived Sorrow, and brought forth Ungodliness.* Psal. vii. 14. In the following Verse, a Secret in a Fool's Breast is compared to an Arrow sticking in a Man's Flesh, which frets and galls him till it is drawn forth. So neither has the other any Ease or Quiet till he publishes what he knows or has heard, and discharges his Arrow at his Neighbour. The Comparison of Detraction to an Arrow is very apposite and beautiful. *St. Bernard* very frequently uses it, and the *Psalmist* speaking of malicious and ill-designing Persons says, *That their Teeth are Spears and Arrows, and their Tongue a sharp Sword.* Psal. lviii. 5. See also *Prov. xxv. 18.* *Jer. ix. 8.*

Ver. 13. *Admonish a Friend, it may be he hath not done it, and if he have done it, that he do it no more.* Ver. 14. *Admonish thy Friend, it may be he hath not said it, and if he have, that he speak it not again.* Ver. 15. *Admonish a Friend, for many Times it is a Slander, and believe not every Tale.* i. e. Have an Explanation, or an *Eclaircissement* with your Friend, when any one acquaints you that he has said or done something contrary to the Friendship betwixt you; for such Reports are either false or true; if they are absolutely false, you owe him that Justice not to condemn him without hearing him; this is due even to an Enemy, and much more to a Friend: If they are true, it is however just and reasonable, that he should have an Opportunity to clear himself, and to state his Account of the Matter. For often an Expression, which was innocent in itself, has appeared harsh and unkind by the particular Turn which the Relator gave to it, and, through the Addition of some ill-natured Circumstances, and a partial Representation, has had a contrary Effect to the Intention of the Speaker. On such an Occasion one should remember and

observe the Advice of an ancient Writer, Not to judge of the Person by the Words, but of the Words by the Person; if he is a true Friend, and proved himself always such before, you may either conclude he has not said or done what he is charged with; or, if the Fact is past doubt, you should inform him of it, that you may know from what Cause it proceeds, which you will find rather to be owing to some Inadvertence, than to any Baseness of Heart or Alienation of Affection. All that the wise Man says or means in these Verses is briefly this: Remember that almost all Reports are false, and therefore you should not make yourself uneasy about uncertain Rumours; remember that your Friend loves you, and has given you upon different Occasions many Proofs of his Sincerity, and therefore you should not easily be induced to suspect his Fidelity; remember that your Friend is a Man, and you should not be surprized, if now and then he does or says an indiscreet Thing; remember that you yourself too are a Man, and you will easily excuse in another what you would desire to be pardon'd in yourself; remember that it was an accidental Slip, and would it be just to take Offence, or break Friendship for what may happen to the best of Men, and is common almost to all? *Comm. Port Royal.*

Ver. 17. *Admonish thy Neighbour before thou threaten him, and not being angry, give Place to the Law of the most High.* ἐλεγξον ἢ παροίειν. This and the foregoing Verses are to be understood of Reproof; but before Reproof, first know if what your Friend is accused of be true, and whether it be not misrepresented, through the adding or omission of some Circumstances, which would quite alter the Case. If he shews no Signs of Repentance or Concern for what he has done, nor offers to make any Excuse or Reparation, do not instantly exasperate him by any violent Methods, or rough Usage; if you would take the likeliest Way to soften and recover him, speak to him mildly, and reprove him gently; if he hears thee, and shews Signs of Amendment, attempt not any Thing further against him. But if he justifies his Fault, you may then proceed with more Severity, and make him sensible of his Obstinacy in a more publick Manner. And so the Law is with respect to a stubborn and rebellious Son, *Deut. xxi. 18.* This is exactly agreeable to what our Saviour appoints upon the like Occasion, *If thy Brother trespass against thee, tell him his Fault between thee, and him alone; if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy Brother; but if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, and if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the Church; and if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as an Heathen, and a Publican.* Matt. xviii. 15, 16, 17. See *Levit. xix. 17.* *Gal. vi. 1.* *Ambr. L. iii. de Offic.* *Senec. de Ira. i. 16.* *Cicero* prescribes the like Method of proceeding from



from a Son to a Father, *Quid si Tyrannidem occupare, si Patriam prodere conabitur Pater? filebitne filius? Imo vero obsecrabit Patrem, ne id faciat; si nihil profecerit, accusabit, minabitur etiam.* De Offic. Where *accusare* means private Admonition, or Reproof; *minari* a publick Charge or Process, *delatio publica*. This the Climax seems necessarily to require. The same Writer makes mutual brotherly Reproof essential to true Friendship, *Monere, & moneri proprium est verae amicitiae*—De Amicit. The Port Royal Comment applies this Advice to the Rulers of the Church, whose Office as it is to reprove, to exhort, and to admonish, so they should be careful to do it with all Long-suffering, not giving Ear to every Report, nor carried away by uncertain Suspicions, but to enquire first with all the Caution and Circumspection which Wisdom directs, and then to censure or reprove according to the Merits of the Case. For want of observing such Caution and Rules with respect to Reproof, Friendship has been often dissolved, and the Law of God, which enjoins brotherly Love, Forgiveness, and Peace, slighted and disregarded. *δέναι τόπον*, besides the Sense given in our Version, signifies to esteem and respect. See ch. xiii. 22. xvi. 14. xxxviii. 12.

Ver. 18. *The Fear of the Lord is the first Step to be accepted of him, and Wisdom obtaineth his Love.*] *φόβος Κυρίου ἀρχὴ προλήψεως, σοφία δὲ παρ' αὐτῆ ἀγάπησιν ἐκτελείται.* I presume *προλήψεως* is the true Reading, and *πὸ προσηλυθῆναι* σε ὑπ' αὐτῆς, ch. xxiii. 38. seems the right Interpretation of it. Our Translators manifestly understand this of obtaining God's Love, *Junius* of the Love of our Neighbour, and that the Fear of the Lord is the Root or Cause of Charity towards him; *Grotius*, that the Fear of the Lord is the Recommendation and Cause of the Intimacy and Friendship that is among good Men. According to *Calmet*, the Sense is, The Wisdom which is from above, which comes from him, *σοφία παρ' αὐτῆς*, is amiable, and procures Men's Favour and Love, *La sagesse qui vient de lui, gagne l'Amitié, gagne les cœurs.* Some Copies for *σοφία*, have *σοφός*, which *Grabe* prefers, and it makes good Sense as well as the other. It should be observed, that this and the following Verse, for the Sense of which see 2 Esdr. vii. 53. Rev. ii. 7. xxii. 2. are not in the *Alex. Vat.* nor *Vulg.* The 21<sup>st</sup> Verse too is generally rejected, as being in very few Editions, and having no Relation to the Context.

Ver. 20. *The Fear of the Lord is all Wisdom, and in all Wisdom is the Performance of the Law, and the Knowledge of his Omnipotency.*] Few Copies have this last Sentence. The Sense of the whole is, The Fear of the Lord is complete Wisdom, which consists in Obedience to God's Laws, and contains likewise the Knowledge of God, and his Attributes, and so is both speculative and practical.

Ver. 22. *The Knowledge of Wickedness is not Wisdom.*] All the Art and Invention, Cunning and Attainments of the Wicked deserve not the Name of Wisdom. 'Tis the Abuse of Mens Faculties (which were given them for noble Purposes, to lead them to Good, and to point out their Duty) to be employed in evil Arts or Schemes of Iniquity. To understand the several Ways and Sorts of Wickedness, to know the most effectual and securest Method of acting 'it, to be acquainted with the Vices of past Ages, and to improve upon them by inventing new ones, to be ingenious in finding out fresh Schemes for Luxury and Expence, and to stand distinguished for an elegant Taste in Debauchery and Wickedness; in short, to have such a Knowledge which a Man ought to be ashamed of, and which is a Disgrace to his Nature, is far below native Simplicity, or Ignorance attended with Innocence.

Ver. 23. *There is a Wickedness, and the same is an Abomination, and there is a Fool wanting in Wisdom.*] Learning and Parts do not always command Esteem, nor is the Want of Wisdom always to be ridiculed or despised. There is a Wisdom falsely so called, which is often more dangerous than useful; a Man of great Talents and Abilities, of a busy enterprizing Spirit, and at the same Time of a corrupt Heart, is infinitely more to be dreaded, than one who is simply evil, and from whose mean Capacity no great Harm can be apprehended. A Person of such a Genius, is not to be compared with one whose only Misfortune is the want of a more improved and better Understanding, especially if he is, though weak, a virtuous and good Man. Fine Parts are to a Man just as he uses them, they are Blessings to a Man, if employed to right Purposes, to the real Good of the Owner, and to the Glory and in the Service of the Giver. But if they administer only to Pride and Self-opinistry; if they serve only to give a Man a light Turn of Mind, and, instead of opening to him a clearer Insight into his Duty, make him think himself above it; if they are made use of to expose what is serious, or burlesque what is sacred, instead of being more worthily employed in the Defence of Religion and Truth, they are then a Curse to him, and enable him to do the greater Mischief: As *Satan's* superior Parts qualified him after his Fall to be a more effectual Seducer of the Brethren, and to be the Chief among the Devils. Some Copies instead of *πανουργία*, read *ἰσὶ πανουργία, ἢ καὶ τὴν βδελύξμα*, which is confirmed by the Syriac Version, *Est calliditas quæ generat peccata.* Mess. of Port Royal prefer this Reading, and follows it in their Comment; and indeed some such Word seems necessary to preserve the Antithesis. It seems also from the other Reading, as if there were some Sorts of Wickedness, which were not Abominations. By *πανουργία*, which must necessarily be taken in a bad Sense here, I would understand



understand that false Cunning, which, in the Esteem of the World, passes for Wisdom, and is founded upon Self-interest. Its Ingenuity lies in doing Evil with Artifice, and covering its Wickedness with the superficial and plausible Mask of Virtue, though it no otherwise regards Virtue; than as a Veil which may serve to cover its odious and criminal Designs, which not being restrained by any Fear of God, or Checks of Conscience, thinks all Means good and allowable, which may promote what it hath in View. This in the Opinion of the World is often mistaken for Prudence, and Oeconomy, but as it is devoid of Justice should rather be called Knavery, or Craft; for, according to *Plato*, *Tully*, and other Moralists, *Scientia quæ remota est a justitia calliditas potius, quam sapientia, appellanda est.*

Ver. 25. *There is an exquisite Subtlety, and the same is unjust, and there is one that turneth aside to make Judgment appear; and there is a wise Man that justifieth in Judgment.* There is such a Variety and Disagreement in the Versions here, that the same Greek Text could never have produced them; nor is there any Passage about the Sense of which the Interpreters are more at a Loss, ἐστὶ πανουργία ἀκριβής, καὶ αὐτὴ ἀδικία, καὶ ἐστὶ διασφύρων χάριν τῷ ἐκφάναι κρίμα, is the Reading of almost all the Copies. Πανουργία is used in Scripture in a good Sense, particularly in the *Book of Proverbs*; and by this Writer, ch. xxi. 12. xxxvii. 15. and may seem to be taken here by the Epithet added to it, ἀκριβής, accurate, and in that Sense just, yet in another Sense is unjust. A Man of Art and exquisite Subtlety may keep within the Distinctions of the Law, nay, and even within Truth, and yet plead a bad Cause, or may even in a good Cause, stick too much to the Letter and Rigour of the Law, and offend against Equity. There is also a Cunning which does Evil, or seems to do so, that Good may come of it. There is an Art of perverting and confounding Right and Truth in Appearance, in order to do Justice, and make Truth appear: An Instance of which we have in *Solomon*, when he commanded the Child to be slain, with an artful Design only, that he might discover the true Mother. It is one Species of Art and Finesse, says the wise Man, to do Injustice under the strict Forms of Law; and another to do strict Justice, by seeming to break through the Forms and Fences of Right; but there is a third Person, who is wisest of all, who does only what is right, and by rightful Means only. *Drusus* and *Junius* among the *Latin* Interpreters, understand χάριν, not adverbially as our Translators do, but render it by *Gratiam*, *Est qui pervertat gratiam in proferendo judicio*; joining διασφύρων χάριν, it may be translated, There is one that turneth aside, disregardeth Favour and private Friendship, to shew forth Judgment. The Phrase διασφύρων κρίμα, *Exod.* xxiii. 6. *Hab.* i. 4. might

perhaps lead the Author to say in opposition to it, διασφύρων χάριν, τῷ ἐκφάναι κρίμα. *Calmet* understands the Place of Craft, or unjust Subtlety, of a faulty Exactness, and oppressing the Innocent, by adhering too rigidly to strict Justice; of tempering the Severity of the Law by Mildness and Equity, and moderating the *summum jus*, to prevent Hardships and Injuries. *Mr. Pope* well expresses the former Part,

*In vain thy Reason finer Webs shall draw,  
Entangle Justice in her Net of Law,  
And Right too rigid harden into Wrong.*  
Essay on Man.

The rendring of the last Part of the Verse is not very accurate; *Grotius* translates it much better, *He that acteth righteously in Judgment is wise*, though I should observe, that neither the *Roman* Edition, nor that of *Hesychius*, nor the *Vulg.* have that Sentence.

Ver. 26. *There is a wicked Man that hangeth down his Head sadly, but inwardly he is full of Deceit.* ἐστὶ πονηρόδωμος, There is one that is meditating and contriving Evil, συγκεχυφὼς μελάνια. *Grotius* says this is a Mistake arising either from Affinity of Sound, or συκεχυφών in the next Verse. He contends that the true reading is, συγκεχυφὼς μελάνια, and justifies his Conjecture from *Horace*,

*Pulchra Laverna,  
Da mihi fallere, da justo sanctoque videri;  
Noctem peccatis; et fraudibus objice nubem.*  
Epist. L. i.

Where *Nox*, he says, answers to μελάνια; and indeed there seems to be a Necessity for an Alteration either here, or at the beginning of the next Verse, to prevent Tautology. Humility is in itself so amiable a Quality, that even such as are the farthest from it, will assume it, to carry on some sinister End. Pride itself can upon Occasion condescend to wear this Garb, to serve some vile Purpose, and will stoop and cringe where it can gain any Thing considerable by it. But excessive Complaisance, affected Civilities, and studied Artifices are always to be suspected, as carrying some latent Design of Mischief. The *Psalmist* accordingly describes the Wicked, as *falling down and humbling himself, that the Congregation of the Poor may fall into the Hands of his Captains.* *Psal.* x. 11. See *Prov.* xxvi. 24. in 6.

Ver. 29. *A Man may be known by his Look, and one that bath Understanding by his Countenance, when thou meetest him.* This Observation is true in general, though one sometimes sees some with an unpromising Look, and heavy Countenance, who are known to be Persons of fine Understanding, and great Abilities. Their Vivacity is lost in Contemplation, and the Man appears lifeless and absent, while he retires into himself. There are others who carry Modesty and Ingenuity in their very Aspect, and others whose Looks betray a weak Intellect, or a



loose Turn of Mind. *Socrates* acknowledged, that his Body testified against him for the Deformity of his Soul, and that the Evidence it gave was naturally true, but that by Study he had corrected what was amiss, and by the Benefit of a good Education had altered, and improved his Mind. *St. Ambrose* hath well expressed our Author's Meaning, *Vultus est quidam cogitationis arbiter, & tacitus cordis interpres: facies index plerumque est Conscientiæ, & tacitus sermo mentis.*—*De Elia. c. 10.*

Ver. 30. *A Man's Attire, and excessive Laughter, and Gait shew what he is.*] If a Man's Attire be odd and singular, foppish or slovenly, it shews the Taste of the Man. One may form a pretty true Judgment of Persons Wisdom and Prudence, of their Folly and Vanity, of their Modesty or Levity, by the Nature of their Dress, and their more or less Fondness for fine Cloaths and costly Apparel. The like may be said of immoderate Laughter, which is no Recommendation of a Man, nor any Sign of his Wisdom. That this is the Meaning we are assured from ch. xxi. 20. where it is observed of the Fool, that *He lifteth up his Voice with Laughter, but a wise Man doth scarce smile a little.* "Seriousness, says a very judicious Writer, if it be not a Virtue itself, "is at least the Soil wherein it naturally grows, "and the most visible Mark whereby to "know those that have it. This is that "whereby a Man is chiefly distinguished "from a Child, and a wise Man from a "Fool." *Norris's Miscell.* *Pliny* observes of *Socrates*, *Clarum sapientia, eodem semper visum vultu, nec aut hilari magis, aut turbato.* And of a greater it is recorded, that he never laughed. The Discipline of Silence was a great part of the *Pythagoric* Institution; and therefore Loudness and Noise expressed by excessive Laughter, was of course banished his School. *St. Chrysostom* condemns it, on account of its Attendants, *Orta ex immoderato risu paulisper scurrilitas, a scurrilitate turpiloquium, a turpiloquio wpaîs aîgexâ profecta est.* *Hom. lxxxvii. in Matt.* To make it innocent and allowable, the Moralists insist upon the Degree of it, as well as upon the Time, the Place, the Person, and the Occasion. *Seneca* has a pertinent Observation, which includes all the Particulars here-mentioned, *Argumentum morum ex minimis licet capere. Impudicum et incessus ostendit, & manus mota, & unum interdum responsum, & relatus ad caput digitus, & flexus oculorum. Improbum risus, insanum vultus habitusque demonstrant.* *Epist. lii.* As Religion and Goodness does not consist in outward Appearance, it may be thought that a Judgment cannot be formed of Men's Morals, or inward Qualities by the outside: But if what is good or evil, faulty, or commendable in outward Appearance, has its Denomination from the Regularity or Corruption within, a Judgment then may be formed this Way. A

Person, for instance, would not love Finery in Cloaths, or Superfluity of Dress, if Vanity was not in the Heart. One would not be excessive, or immoderate in Fits of Laughter, without a certain Levity of Spirit; and indecent Gestures or Motions come only from an unsteady, or a wanton Disposition. *Removeatur ergo*, says *Tully*, whose Sentiments often agree with those of this Writer, *et a forma omnis viro non dignus ornatus, & huic simile vitium in gestu motuque caveatur. Adhibenda est munditia non odiosa, neque exquisita nimis, tantum quæ fugiat agrestem & inhumanam negligentiam. Eadem ratio habenda est vestitus, in quo, sicut in plerisque rebus, mediocritas optima est. Cavendum autem est, ne aut tarditatibus utamur in gressu mollioribus, aut suscipiamus nimias celeritates: Ex quibus magna significatio fit non adesse constantiam.* *De Offic. L. 1.*

## CHAP. XX.

Ver. 1. **T**HERE is a Reproof that is not comely.] *ὁς ἐν ἑστῷ ὤπατο.* i. e. Which is not well-timed, or seasonable, as the Margin has it, and is often attended with bad Consequences. The *Vulg.* confines this to the Time when a Man is in a Passion, when Reproof is neither comely, nor like to have any good Effect. *St. Austin* properly compares the Reprover to a Surgeon, who is about to perform some Incision upon a distempered or maimed Body, which cannot be well executed without great Coolness and Composure in the Operator. Probably this Father borrowed the Thought from *Tully*, who says, *Objurgationes etiam nonnunquam incidunt necessariae; ... id agendum, ut ne eas facere videamur irati: sed ut ad urendum & secandum, sic et ad hoc genus castigandi raro invitique veniamus. Nec unquam, nisi necessario, si nulla reperietur alia medicina. Sed tamen ira procul absit, cum qua nihil recte fieri, nihil considerate potest.* *De Offic. L. 1.* *St. Austin* adds a necessary Piece of Advice upon the Occasion, that when we are about to reprove any one, if we perceive Passion arising, or any sudden and violent Emotion within us, to be then altogether silent, and suspend our Intention, and rather think of calming and composing our own Spirit, than pretend to meddle with the Case of another, when we are not fit for it. This Verse in the *Vulg.* and many Editions, is added to the End of the last Chapter, and with some following Verses concludes our Author's Observations on brotherly Reproof, begun *ψ 13.* of the former Chapter. The Subject seems to end with *ψ 3.* which seems more properly placed there than after the fourth Verse, or in the seventh, as some Copies have it: The *Vat.* and *Syriac* wholly omit it.

Ver. 4. *As is the Lust of an Eunuch to deflower a Virgin, so is he that executeth Judgment*



ment with Violence.] Justice is by this Writer, as it is also by the Poets and Philosophers, compared to a chaste and beautiful Virgin; and a corrupt Judge who perverts Justice, to an Eunuch attempting her Chastity, though he has the Charge of her, and has engaged to watch over her with Strictness, and to preserve her with Faithfulness. If a Judge has sinister Inclinations, is covetous, and, like the other, insatiable in his Desires, if he is encouraged to make an Attempt upon her from a presumed Secrecy, and the little or no Danger of a Discovery, or if he is only disposed to violate her, tho' impotent perhaps from some Accident to effect it, all the Mischief that is done, and even that which was only meditated, is chargeable upon him. This Instance of an Attempt, in itself the most base and unnatural, is with great Judgment applied to discountenance any Attack upon Equity in judicial Proceedings. We meet with the like Simile in Tully, who styles Clodius's Perverting Judgment by Corruption, *Emptum constupratumque iudicium*. Ep. ad Att. L. 1. Instead of ἐν βίᾳ Grotius prefers ἐν βίῳ, which is countenanced only by one Copy, As is the impotent Desire of an Eunuch, so fruitless is the Judgment which is made of Mens Happiness or Misery, ἐν βίῳ, in their Lifetime. And refers to ch. xi. 28. as a Confirmation of this Sense. But the former seems preferable.

Ver. 8. *He that useth many Words shall be abhorred, and he that taketh to himself Authority therein, shall be bated.*] ἐνέξοντα ζῶντες. Which means one who assumes such a Sway in Company and Conversation, as is attended with an overbearing Tyranny, with a Contempt of others, and a prescribing to, and lording it over them. This affected Superiority is contrary to that Equality and Freedom which is the Life of Conversation, and the Right of each Person engaged in it. Cicero has well determined this Point, *Sit sermo lenis, minimeque pertinax: nec vero, tanquam in possessionem suam venerit, excludat alios; sed cum in reliquis rebus, tum in sermone communi, vicissitudinem non iniquam putet.* De Offic. L. 1.

Ver. 9. *There is a Sinner that hath good Success in evil Things, and there is a Gain that turneth to Loss.*] ἐστὶν ὁδία ἐν κακοῖς ἀγαθὰ, καὶ ἐστὶν ὄφελος ἐς ἡττῶσιν. Besides that of our Version the Meaning may be, There is a Prosperity which happens to a wicked Man, which may be numbered among Evils. Like that of Solomon, *The Prosperity of Fools shall destroy them.* Prov. i. 32. Some Editions omit ἀγαθὰ, and thus Bossuet renders, *Est felix successus qui malo vertat*; and Grotius, *Interdum in malis homini prosperitas sita est.* And the Vulg. *Prosperantur provebunturque nonnulli, at in malum & perniciem suam*; following a Copy probably which had ἐς κακόν, agreeably to ἐς ἡττῶσιν, which immediately follows; but

there needs no Alteration, as the Greeks often put ἐν for ἐς. Instances of this Observation are Haman, Jehu, Abab, &c. who made a miserable Exit. See Psal. xxxvii. 20. where the LXX Translation is very full to this Purpose. Other Copies have ἐστὶν ὁδία ἐν κακοῖς ἀγαθὰ, i. e. There are some Men, Sinners particularly, that take Pleasure in Evil, or Wickedness. And thus Junius, *Placent mala viro peccatori*; ὄφελος is badly rendred by the Vulg. and other Interpreters, *inventio*. It signifies Gain, as it is well translated here, and the Antithesis is better preserved. And so ὄφελος is taken by the LXX. But our Translators, though they happily succeeded here, yet have generally mistaken the Sense of this Word. See Eccclus xxix. 4, 6. Jer. xxxviii. 2. xxxix. 18. xlv. 5. in all which Places our Version is faulty, and even contrary to the Sense of the Context.

Ver. 10. *There is a Gift that shall not profit thee, and there is a Gift whose Recompence is double.*] There are some Services and Favours done by a Man, which are lost and signify nothing, which gain him neither Credit nor Advantage, and others which turn to a good Account. Sometimes this is owing to the Ingratitude, and other ill Qualities of the Receiver; and sometimes to the Manner of bestowing them by the Giver himself. For it is a useful Piece of Knowledge to understand how to give, where, and in what Manner to place our Favours best, and to do them in a winning and engaging Manner. Drusus, by the Gift that does not profit, understands that which is given to the Rich, according to that of Solomon, *He that giveth to the Rich shall surely want.* Prov. xxii. 16. and by the Gift whose Recompence is double, that which is given to the Poor. Prov. xxviii. 27.

Ver. 11. *There is an Abasement because of Glory, and there is that lifteth up his Head from a low Estate.*] There are Posts of Honour sought after with great Eagerness by the Ambitious, which have in the End proved their Ruin; through Tyranny, Pride, Oppression, or some Mismanagement, they have been deprived of their Power and Dignity, and sometimes even of Life itself. Sometimes a Man's Advancement to some Piece of good Fortune, or Preferment, turns to his Disgrace, as his Elevation makes his Faults more discernible, which in a private Station were not so easily discovered. Galba, before he succeeded to the Empire, was thought the most worthy of it, *Omnium consensu capax imperii, si non imperasset.* Tac. Hist. L. 1. But upon his Promotion he soon forfeited the high Opinion which they had conceived of him. Every Man before he aspires to a Dignity, ought to consider what he is, and how far his Capacity and Abilities will reach; but few are impartial to themselves in the Estimate of their own Merit, which they are apt to think



is greater than it really is, and thereby deceive themselves, and disappoint the Expectation of others. *Haman* and *Nebuchadnezzar* are Instances of Abasement from a high Station, as *Joseph*, *David*, *Job*, are of as remarkable an Elevation from a mean one. In like Manner he who affected to seat himself in the highest Place at the Wedding, is threatned to be removed with Shame to the lowest; and to him whose Modesty is content with the meanest Room, the Reward is, *Friend, go up higher.* Luke xiv.

Ver. 12. *There is that buyeth much for a little, and repayeth it sevenfold.*] The covetous Man is here meant, who always purchaseth what is cheapest, and generally what is worst, and therefore is never a Gainer by his Bargains. He thinks indeed that he has acted cunningly because of the lowness of the Price, but in Effect he is a Loser, because that which is worth little, or nothing, must always be bought too dear. We see the Truth of this Observation in those that buy bad Goods through Cheapness, or unwholesome Meat, for the same Reason. In those likewise who purchase Houses badly built, or Estates with bad Titles, contenting themselves with the Thought of having bought them at a lower and easier Rate on that Account. But in the End they prove dear Bargains to them; the House is crazy, and must speedily be rebuilt; and the Estate must be parted with at a still lower Rate, to pay the Expences in clearing and defending the Title.

Ver. 13. *A wise Man by his Words maketh himself beloved, but the Graces of Fools shall be poured out.*] *χάρις* rather mean Gifts and Favours than Graces or merry Conceits, as the Margin has it, which do not suit with the Character of a Fool. See ch. xxi. 16. In the next Verse it is more plainly expressed, and called the Gift of a Fool; and so *χάρις* is used ch. xvii. 22. and ch. xl. 17. it is rendred Bountifulness, and so it is often used in the *New Testament*, particularly in *St. Paul's* Writings. The Sense is, A wise Man recommends his Kindness by his Words, and the agreeable manner in which he does a Favour; but a Fool, when he does a good Turn, loses all the Merit of it, by his disobliging Way, and improper Behaviour. His Benevolence is lost and disregarded, *ἐκχυθήσεται*, it shall fall to the Ground, like Water that runneth apace. What is here said of the Fool, may also be observed of the envious or covetous Man, mentioned in the next Verse, who gives unwillingly *διὰ ἀνάγκην αὐτοῦ*, as it were through Force, or a Necessity laid upon him, and expects to receive as much or more in return, *πολλὰ ἀντὶ ἐνός*. Some Copies read *ὀφθαλμοὶ αὐτοῦ πολλοί*, as the Margin also has it. The *Vulg.* well expresses his Greediness, when it renders, *oculi ejus septemplexes sunt*, i. e. He looketh to receive seven Times as much from thee.

Ver. 15. *He giveth little, and upbraideth much, he openeth his Mouth like a Crier.*]

See ch. xviii. 18. This is a farther Description of the Fool mentioned in the former Verse, who spoils all his Favours by his impertinent Behaviour and Discourse. If he makes you a Present, he is sure to reproach you with it; so that all the Merit, if there be any in so small an Act of Kindness, as is here mentioned, is taken away by his upbraiding Temper. *Isthaec commemoratio est quasi exprobratio immemoris beneficii.* It is a wise Observation, That we should forget the Kindnesses which we ourselves do, and never forget those which we receive. *Seneca* observes, that it took off from the Grace of *Dido's* Hospitality, when she reproachfully told *Aeneas*,

*Ejectum littore, egentem  
Excepi, & regni demens in parte locavi.*

How contrary is such a selfish, churlish Temper to that of the all-sufficient and bountiful God, whose peculiar Character it is, that *he giveth liberally and upbraideth not*: he has nothing in View, but the Good and Happiness of his Creatures, and neither wants nor expects any Return, but that of a dutiful and grateful Heart. He is, as *Philo* describes him, *δωρητικός τῶν ἀπάντων, ἀμοιβῆς ἐκ ἐφ' ἑαυτοῦ*, *De Cherubim*. Another Character of the covetous Man we have in the latter part of the Verse, that, if he lendeth Money, his Temper is so uncertain and suspicious that he presently calls it in again; his Covetousness not suffering him to be long without the Sight of his beloved Idol. Such a sudden and hasty Demand of the Loan is rather insulting him to whom he pretended to do a Kindness; 'tis suspecting his Credit, Honesty, or Circumstances; 'tis depriving him of the Advantage which he proposed by longer Use of it, and by distressing him on a sudden, does him more Injury than he received Kindness from first advancing it.

Ver. 17. *He knoweth not aright what it is to have, and it is all one unto him as if he had it not.*] This is not in the *Roman* Edition, *ὅτι γὰρ τὸ ἔχειν ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖς εἶληφαι*, i. e. He has not the Art, or Gift, or Blessing of using what he has well, and 'tis the same thing to a Fool, or a covetous Person, to be poor or rich, as to any Use of their good Things; for neither one nor the other know what it is to have, i. e. to enjoy, or employ their Riches. The *Vulg.* gives another Sense of the Place, That the Fool knows not either to give, or to keep his Goods; he gives improperly that which he ought to give, and he reserves that which he ought to keep: he gives to such as ought to have no Share of his Favours, and refuses to give to such, as he ought to distribute them to with Liberality and Abundance, *Neque enim quod habendum, aut quod non habendum, directo sensu distribuit*, i. e. He doth both without Discretion, or Judgment;



ment; following a Copy which read *διδάσκει*.

Ver. 18. *To slip upon a Pavement is better than to slip with the Tongue, so the Fall of the Wicked cometh speedily.*] i. e. It is less dangerous to make a false Step in walking, and thereby to stumble upon the Ground, than to offend or slip with the Tongue, for one unguarded Word may be a Man's Ruin, so great and sudden is the Mischief arising from an ungoverned Tongue. And as Falls of this Nature happen more frequently thro' the Abuse of Speech, so the Danger must consequently be greater. The *Vulg.* understands this of a false, evil, and malicious Tongue, which creates Trouble to itself, as well as others. Some Copies have instead of *αὐτὸ ἰσχυρὸν, αὐτὸ ὀρεόν.* *Drusus* renders according to this Reading, *Lapsus de tecto tolerabilior est quam lingua.* In the next Verse *ἀνθρώπος ἀχαεὶς*, in all the Editions, makes a part of the Text, though undoubtedly it was either some marginal Annotation, or, which seems more probable, the Title only to what follows, of which there are many Instances in this Book; and in some Copies they are in larger Letters to distinguish them. Our Translators seem to have been of this Opinion by flinging the Words into the Margin.

Ver. 21. *There is that is hindered from sinning through Want, and when he taketh Rest he shall not be troubled.*] There are many who are regular only through Necessity, who would have done as others did, and taken the same Liberties, if they had had the Means, the Opportunity, and Power. Such Persons are not to be applauded for their Self-denial or Moderation, since their Virtue is wholly involuntary. A Man, who, through a bad Constitution, or a weak Habit of Body, is hindered from Intemperance, Debauchery, or Wantonness, has no Merit on that Account, since not the Will was wanting, but the Power of sinning.

*Hæc si neque ego, neque tu fecimus, Non sivit egestas facere nos: tu nunc tibi Id laudi ducis, quod tum fecisti inopia. Injurium est: nam si esset unde fieret, Faceremus.* Ter. in Adelp.

There is however this Advantage in wanting a Power or Opportunity to commit a Sin, that there is no Remorse of Conscience attending it. If a Man has no Merit on that Account, he has likewise no after Reflexions to torment him; though the Will indeed cannot be pronounced innocent if the Inclinations were consenting, and nothing wanting but the Opportunity.

Ver. 22. *There is that destroyeth his own Soul through Bashfulness, and by accepting of Persons overthroweth himself.*] Two Senses may be given of this Place, according as we understand *ἰσχυρὸν* either of the Soul strictly, or of Life, and its Conveniences only. See Note on ch. iv. 20. In the former Sense it may

mean, one who is afraid to shew his Zeal, and to appear in behalf of Virtue and Religion, and to do or commend any good Action openly and in publick, from some Motives of Fear or Interest. Or of one who dares not refuse to do or oppose any evil Action pressed upon, or recommended to him, for fear of disobliging Company, or being thought precise and singular; whereas in the Exercise of religious Duties, or where the Cause of Truth calls for our Testimony and Defence, we should rather despise and laugh at any Offence of this Nature, which shall be taken at us on that Account. Nothing being a greater Impediment to a Progress in Piety than an Attachment to secular Interest, and a fantastical Concern about pleasing, or displeasing others. If *ἰσχυρὸν* be taken in the latter Acceptation, the Sense may be, That there are some who hurt their Circumstances, and expose themselves to great Inconveniences, either in not daring to ask and demand what is necessary for them, or is their Due, or in not having Resolution enough to refuse what another unreasonably asks of them. One should know both how to ask when there is Occasion, and how to refuse when asked improperly. For there is a civil and complaisant way of denying, of which a Person cannot justly complain; but if through Bashfulness, as it follows in the next Verse, or fear of disobliging, we rashly engage our Word to do, or grant something which we afterwards repent of, and find reason not to do; such a Breach of our Promise will betray our Levity, and create us Enmity.

Ver. 25. *A Thief is better than a Man that is accustomed to lie.*] The Preference here given may perhaps seem singular, but we may state the Comparison thus: The Thief only takes away a Man's Money; the Liar attacks his Reputation and Character, which is more valuable than Riches. The Thief steals, perhaps through Necessity, *Prov. vi. 30.* the Liar often does an Injury without any Reason or Occasion. The Thief may possibly make Restitution when taken, he may restore sevenfold, *Prov. vi. 31.* but the malicious Liar cannot, his Poison has reached too far. The Thief can occasionally keep his Word; but the Liar is always an Enemy to Truth. The Thief attacks openly; the lying Slander is more secret and dangerous. The Author does not mean to excuse or justify the Thief, but would expose the Liar through the Odioufulness of the Comparison.

Ver. 29. *Presents and Gifts blind the Eyes of the Wise, and stop up his Mouth that he cannot reprove.*] This seems to relate to Magistrates, who sit in Judgment, and take Cognizance of civil Causes, who, if they shew themselves mercenary, and their right Hand is full of Gifts, will not be disposed to examine into the Merits of the Cause, nor to determine it impartially, *Male verum examinatus*



*omnis Corruptus iudex.* Hor. Or it may be applied to Persons in Authority in the Church, and to the Ministers and Pastors of it, as *Mess. of Port Royal* understand it, who, if moved by Flattery, or Favour, Interest, or filthy Lucre, will palliate or pass over Offences, and neither exhort, nor reprove, as their Station and Occasions shall require. Thus when the Prophet complains, that *the Heads of the House of Jacob abhor Judgment, and pervert Equity*, he immediately adds, *they judge for Reward, the Priests thereof teach for Hire, and the Prophets thereof divine for Money.* Micah iii. 1. The Egyptians represent their Judges without Hands, and the Chief, or President with his Eyes closed, to intimate, that Judges should receive no Gifts, and that the Chief should pronounce his Decree and Sentence without any respect of Persons.

Ver. 30. *Wisdom that is hid, and Treasure that is boarded up, what Profit is in them both?* We are here advised not to bury or suppress the Powers and Abilities which God has given us, nor to render useless the Means which he has bestowed, not for our own Service only, but for the Benefit and Advantage of others. Wisdom, without the Manifestation of it, confined to a Man's own Breast, is here well compared to valuable Treasure hid in the Ground, which no body is the better for. Our Saviour would have our Light shine before Men, and not be concealed under a Bushel; not to imitate the Man, who having received a considerable Sum from his Master to improve, and make the best of, wrapt it in a Napkin, and hid it in the Earth, without circulating it among the Exchangers, or returning any Interest or Profit to his Master, *Matt. xxv. 25.* A wise Man should not secrete himself, nor be wrapt up in Contemplation only, but communicate the Word of Wisdom and Knowledge liberally, *Wisd. vii. 13.* and bring forth out of his Treasures, for the Convenience and Improvement of others, *Things both new and old.* Such as through Pride, or, which may be the Case, through an ill-judged Humility, will not serve their Neighbour with the Talents they are possessed of, are not improperly compared by an ancient Writer, to one who in a Time of Scarcity and Want shuts up his Granary, and lets his Corn, which he has in great Quantity, rot, and be spoiled. *Tully* therefore well determines, *Pudeat illos qui ita in studiis se abdidderunt, ut ad vitam communem nullum fructum proferre possint.* Pro Arch.

Ver. 31. *Better is he that hideth his Folly, than a Man that hideth his Wisdom.* The first does it out of a Principle of Humility, as conscious of his own Weakness and Insufficiency; the other hides that which was given for the Advantage of others, as well as of himself, through a false Modesty. The Man who knows how to be silent, and to hide his Ignorance and Defects, so far gives

an Instance of his Prudence and Judgment; but he that ingloriously buries his Parts in Sullenness, or Retirement, and deprives his Neighbours, or the Public, of the Advantages which they might hope to receive from so exalted a Genius, offends God, in not employing that Gift which was given him for the Use of edifying, and assisting others; and disoblige Men for want of Kindness, and a publick Spirit. Here the *Vulg. Oriental Versions, Vat.* and some other Editions conclude the Chapter; but others add, which our Translators follow, *Necessary Patience in seeking the Lord, is better than be that leadeth his Life without a Guide.* The Sense of which seems to be, That it is far better for a Man to live in an humble Dependence upon God, in a painful and conscientious Search to know his Will, and a constant Submission and Obedience to it, than to be guided by himself only, and be under his own Conduct, without any farther Help than the feeble Light of his own Reason. The *Greek* of this Place is pretty remarkable, *ἀδελφὸς τετραχλάτης τῆς ἰδίας ζωῆς*, which either means, *Proprie vite gubernator absque Domino*, one who lives without God in the World, and seeks not the Guidance of his Spirit, nor values and regards the Light of his Revelation, but sets up for his own Ruler: Or in general, an uncontroled Director of his own Life and Actions, driving furiously and madly, without any Check or Restraint. A Life led, without the Fear of the Lord, or a Regard to his Precepts, and which consists rather in Licentiousness, than true Liberty, is very properly here compared to a Chariot run away with by unruly Horses, without a skilful Driver to manage them. Such ungovernable Things are Men's unruly Lusts and Passions; so helpless is Reason itself unassisted!

#### CHAP. XXI.

Ver. 1. **H**AST thou sinned, do so no more, but ask Pardon for thy former Sins.] The most wise and cautious find themselves frail, and are often falling into Sin, but they do not persevere or continue long in it, they rise again by confessing their Faults, repenting sincerely of them, and avoiding them for the future. Whereas the Wicked are continually relapsing, and by repeated Acts strengthen themselves in their Iniquities. They are rolling down as it were from one Precipice to another, and have neither Grace, nor Strength to recover themselves. *St. Chrysostom* well observes *ἐκ αὐτοῦ τοῦ ἀμαρτεῖν χαλεπὸν ὡς πρὸς τὸ ἀμαρτεῖν ἐπιμένειν*, that it is not so bad to fall into Sin as to continue in it, and illustrates this from the Instance of *Noah*, whom we may infer, from the Silence of Scripture, to have fallen into the Sin of Drunkenness but once, and that



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that this was recorded in Scripture, that if we should offend in the like Particular, we should be more cautious for the future, and not wallow again in the Mire. *Hom. 29. in c. ix. Gen.* The Advice of a most learned Writer is very seasonable and pertinent, "Let not Sin enter the first Door of Sense, "either Eye or Ear, nor the second of "Fancy, nor the third of Understanding, "nor the fourth of Will, lest it break out into "Act; and one Act will produce more, and "so it will encrease infinitely, till the Heart "is made hard and insensible; and the very "Principles of Nature and Grace are ob- "literated." *Jackson's Works, Tom. 3.*

Ver. 2. *Flee from Sin as from the Face of a Serpent, for if thou comest too near it, it will bite thee.*] The *Vulg.* renders, *Si accesseris ad illa, suscipient te*, following a faulty Copy probably, which had *δὲλαί* instead of *δὲλαί*. Sin is what Men bring upon themselves, it does not attack them till they go in Search of it; like a Serpent indeed it is always ready to bite, but it does not seize upon any, but those who rashly come too near it. *Solomon* uses this Comparison with regard to the Sin of Drunkenness in particular, *Prov. xxiii. 31.* Our Author very probably uses this Simile, and mentions it in the first Place, as our first Parents were deluded under this Form, and the Effects of its Sting are yet felt. And as Sin has the Venom of the Serpent, so it has likewise the Fierceness of the Lion; but this Lion does not prey at random, it fastens upon those only, who either imprudently throw themselves into its Paws, or whom it finds asleep, and off their Guard. It is also well compared in the next Verse to a two-edged Sword, as it attacks both God and Man; the Majesty of the former, and the Safety of the latter, and its Wounds are mortal, and only the sovereign Physician can cure them. The wise Man did not without reason make use of so many Comparisons, because if we join together all the Ideas that can any ways create Fear, they are few, and little enough to possess a Man with that Dread and Horror, which he ought to have of Sin.

Ver. 4. *To terrify and do wrong will waste Riches: thus the House of the proud Man shall be made desolate.*] The Proud and Insolent oppress the Weak for a Time, but by such imperious Usage they create themselves Enemies, and the great Number of those whom they have insulted and injured, will at length join together, and prove their Overthrow. *Rehoboam* by the Advice and Instigation of the young Men returned the People, who sued for a Removal of some Grievances, a haughty and threatening Answer, *My Father chastised you with Whips, but I will chastise you with Scorpions*, and thereby alienated the Hearts of ten Tribes from him, *1 Kings xii.* Pride and Oppression were the Cause of the Expulsion of the *Tarquins* from *Rome*. And it appears from the Annals of almost

all Histories, that Tyranny and arbitrary Power have been of short Continuance.

Ver. 5. *A Prayer out of a poor Man's Mouth reacheth to the Ears of God, and his Judgment cometh speedily.*] *ἡ φωνὴ τοῦ πτωχοῦ ἔρχεται εἰς τὰ ὦτα τοῦ κυρίου.* The Generality of Interpreters, and the Oriental Versions understand this of God's Care for the Poor, that he listens to their Cry, is always ready to help them in their Affliction, and to revenge the Injuries done them. So *Coverdale's* and the *Geneva* Version. This indeed is a Truth confessed by all, and confirmed by numberless Passages of Scripture, which may be the Reason of its being so expressed here. But the Words [of God] are not in any Greek Copy, nor in the *Vulg.* and therefore another Sense of this Place has been offered, That the Prayer of the Poor reacheth to the Ears of the proud Man mentioned in the former Verse, and is neglected and disregarded by him, and toucheth not his Heart. *Ad aures solum illius*, according to *Junius*, as the humble Supplications of *Lazarus* were by the rich Man in the Gospel, *Luke xvi. 20.* And therefore his Judgment, i. e. the proud Man's Punishment, shall not slumber. This is *Grotius's* and *Badwell's* Sense. *Castellio* is particular in rendering the latter Part, viz. that the poor Man ought to be answered speedily, because his Case will not admit of Delay. But either of the former seem preferable.

Ver. 6. *He that hateth to be reprov'd is in the Way of Sinners, but he that feareth the Lord will repent from his Heart.*] i. e. He treads in the Steps, and will go on in the Way of Sinners, and become incorrigible. For if he will not listen to the seasonable Advice given him for his good, how shall he reform? If he is angry at the Attendance of the Physician, and rejects his salutary Prescriptions, how shall he be cured? If he throws aside, or breaks the Mirror which shews him his Deformity, how shall he know to remove, or correct them? but he that feareth the Lord, *ἐκτρέφεται ἐν καρδίᾳ*, will sincerely repent, or to be converted thoroughly. *Clemens Alex.* reads *ἐκτρέφεται ἐν καρδίᾳ κυρίου*. And so the *Vulg.* and *Jerom's Bible*, *Convertetur ad cor suum*, i. e. will return to himself, like the penitent Prodigal, will change his Way of Life, acknowledge with Contrition his past Faults, and keep his Heart with all diligence for the future.

Ver. 7. *An eloquent Man is known far and near, but a Man of Understanding knoweth when he slipperh.*] If by *δοῦλος ἐν γλώσσῃ* we understand with our Translators the eloquent Man, who harangues plausibly on any Subject, and recommends himself to the Notice and Admiration of others, by his ready and artful manner of talking, the Sense then is, that though one of such Talents does not often offend by a Mistake, nor is easily detected in a Fault, if he occasionally slips, through the Art he has to conceal it, or an



evasive way of excusing it, yet the Man of Understanding, who coolly attends to, and weighs the Strength of his Arguments, and is not easily carried away or imposed upon by Flourish and Artifice, soon finds out the Fallacy, or Misrepresentation, and detects the Weakness, or Inconclusion of his reasoning. Or if with the *Vulg.* we apply this to the bold, rash, and talkative Man, *Potens lingua audaci*; the Meaning then may be, that a Man of a great flow of Words, who attempts to speak on all Occasions, is subject to a Number of Mistakes, and to give Offence by the Liberties which he takes; but a Man of sound Sense and Understanding is more cautious and reserved, and less liable to displease or make a false Step: he sees the Faults of the talkative and bold Person, and prudently avoids them, and forms his Conduct with Judgment and Discretion from the Observation of the others Rashness and Miscarriage.

Ver. 8. *He that buildeth his House with other Men's Money, is like one that gathereth Stones for the Tomb of his Burial.* [i. e. Is heaping up Ruin to himself.] Calmet thinks this relates to the ancient Custom of heaping up Stones over the Graves, or dead Bodies of Persons remarkable for some Crime. See *Job. vii. 26. 2 Sam. xviii. 17, 18.* This they did to perpetuate the Infamy of the Person, and to shew the public Abhorrence of such Crimes. In like manner, he that builds his House at the Cost and Expence of another, by making use of his Money, and defrauding him, or by running in Debt to raise the Fabrick, labours to his own Hurt and Shame, and erects a Monument of his Folly and Injustice, as long as it is in being, and instead of being a House to shelter him in, will bury him under its Ruins. *Jeremiab.* boldly rebukes *Jeboiakim* King of *Judah*, for building his House by Unrighteousness, and his Chambers by Wrong, and acquaints him, that by his Oppression he was hastening his own Ruin, and instead of long enjoying his stately Palace, built with the Wages of the Poor and Hireling, he should be buried with the Burial of an *Ass*, and be cast forth in the most indecent, and contemptible Manner. *xxii. 13.* See *Is. v. 8. Hab. ii. 9, 10, 11. Lev. xix. 13. Deut. xxiv. 14, 15.* Some Copies have, *de ανδρων λεωντων τις λιβος*; *de ανδρων λεωντων τις λιβος* is as him that gathereth Stones against Winter, which is the *Vulg.* and *Concordant's* Rendering. This seems to be a proverbial Saying for doing something useless, *Lapides pro inutilibus.* See *Erasm. Adag.* And in this Sense we may understand that of our Saviour, *If thy Son ask thee a Fish, wilt thou give him a Stone?* *Matt. vii. 9.* i. e. what will do him no Good. And so to lay up Stones against Winter, instead of Food and Provision, is to be a Fool to ones own Destruction; 'tis in effect building ones own Sepulchre. Or perhaps the Meaning may be, that he that runs in Debt by building, or defrauds the Workmen of their just Pay,

is like him that lays in Stones and Materials to build in Winter. The Creditors will seize upon his House, and not permit him long to enjoy the Fruits of his Extravagance and Injustice: no more than a Builder at so improper a Season as Winter is, can expect a long Continuance, or firm Foundation of his House, which the Winds and the Rain, as well as the Imperfection of the Work, conspire to overthrow.

Ver. 9. *The Congregation of the Wicked is like Tow wrapped together, and the End of them is a Flame of Fire to destroy them.* All their Eclat and Splendour, their State and Magnificence, their Prosperity and overgrown Fortunes, their Tyranny and Haughtiness, and the Terror which they scatter round them, shall be as nothing, or rather shall prove so many Combustibles to consume them. Thus the *Psalmist* speaks of God's Dealings with the Wicked, *All thine Enemies shall feel thy Hand, thy right Hand shall find out them that hate thee: thou shalt make them like a fiery Oven in the Time of thy Wrath, the Lord shall destroy them in his Displeasure, and the Fire shall consume them.* *Psal. xxi. 8, 9.* And the Prophet *Malachi*, *Behold the Day cometh that shall burn as an Oven, and all the Proud, yea, and all that do wickedly shall be stubble, and the Day that cometh shall burn them up, that it shall leave them neither Root nor Branch.* *ch. iv. 1.* and in the Gospel, they are compared to a Bundle of Tares intended to be burnt. *Matt. xiii. 30.*

Ver. 10. *The Way of Sinners is made plain with Stones, but at the End thereof is the Pit of Hell.* See Note on *ch. iv. 17.* The Author probably alludes to *Prov. xiv. 12.* *There is a Way which seemeth right or strait to a Man, but the End thereof are the Ways of Death.* Our Saviour teaches us the same Truth in the Gospel, when he says, *Wide is the Gate, and broad is the Way that leadeth to Destruction, and many there be that go in thereat: but strait is the Gate, and narrow is the Way which leadeth unto Life, and few there be that find it.* *Matt. vii. 13, 14.* *Virgil* describes the Entrance to *Tartarus* almost after the same Manner.

*Mania lata vidat triplici circumdata muro,  
Quæ rapidus flammis ambit torrentibus amnis  
Tartareus Phlegethon.* *Æn. vi.*

Where *Servius* remarks, that *lata* means the broad Way of the Wicked, frequented by the many, leading to Destruction. But this is not the only particular in which that Poet's Description of the other World agrees with Scripture; his placing the Wicked on the left Hand, and the Godly on the right, is too observable to be passed over.

*Hic locus est, paries ubi se via findit in ambas,  
Dextera, quæ Ditis magni sub mania tendit:  
Hæc iter Elysium nobis; at læva malorum  
Exerces paries, Et ad impia Tartara mittis.* *Ibid.*

The *Pythagoreans*, whose Manner of teaching was symbolical, marked out these two Ways by the Greek Letter *τ*. One of the Branches denotes the Way to Perfection, narrow at the Entrance, but afterwards more open and large; the other the Way of Perdition, large and spacious at the first, but in the End, leading those that follow it into an Abyss of Misery. See *Epiqr. in τ inter Op. Virgil.* *Bdges* *αδς* is well rendered the Pit of Hell, the Place of Souls condemned to Punishment and Pain for their bad Lives on Earth. The Writer of the *Book of Wisdom* calls these subterraneous Caverns, *μυχαι αδς*, and such they seem to be according to the Parable of the rich Man, who being *εω τω αδς* is said to lift up his Eyes from thence, and behold *Lazarus* afar off in *Abraham's Bosom*. The learned *Barrow* observes, that the Hebrew Word *יִנְיָ* (upon the true Notion of which the Sense of the Word *αδς* must depend) does originally, most properly, and most frequently design the whole Region pretended downwards, from the Surface of the Earth to a Depth indefinite and unconceivable, vastly capacious in Extension, very darksome, and dungeon-like in Quality; whence it is called the Pit, the lowest Pit, the Abyss, the Depths of the Earth, the Darknes, the Depths of Hell, &c. *Vol. II. p. 399.* The *Vulg.* renders it by *Inferi, Tenebra, Pæne.* *Grotius* thinks this too full and explicit for the Times of this Writer, and hints as if it was an Interpolation by some Christian Hand. By *Βδges αδς* he only understands, that the Sinner shall come to a bad End, by Punishment inflicted on him either by the Magistrate, or the Parties whom he has injured, or the Vengeance of God.

Ver. 11. *He that keepeth the Law,getteth the Understanding thereof.* *αυτην οτι εωσιν αληθινη.* Some expound this, that he that keepeth the Law, subdues and governs his Appetites, and Passions, and Thoughts. Thus the *Figurin Version*, *Qui servat legem Domini, cogitationibus suis imperat*; and the *Syrac.* *Qui custodit legem, subigit appetitum suum.* But the Sense given by our Translators seems preferable, viz. that the Understanding and Knowledge of God's Laws is better learnt by Obedience, than by Enquiry; *Obey, and ye shall understand,* says the Prophet. And our Saviour assures us, that if we continue in his Word, then we shall know the Truth; and if any Man will do his Will, he shall know of the Doctrine, whether it be of God, *John vii. 17.* For the Love of God, as this wise Man observes, *passeth all Things for Illumination,* *ch. xxv. 11.* See *Dan. ix. 13.* There are some Sciences purely speculative, which require only Study; these one learns by consulting proper Masters, and by making Reflexions within one's self, on what has been communicated and taught; but Justice, Temperance, and other Virtues of Practice, are not to be got or at-

tained by Speculation, but by Exercise and Use. *Non enim has, says St. Bernard, lectio docet, sed unctio; non litera, sed spiritus; non eruditio, sed exercitatio in mandatis Domini.* *Epist. cviii.* Calmet illustrates this by the Instance of Painting; let a Man have the finest Notions and Speculations, let him be acquainted with the most material and important Rules of Art, let him have the most just Taste, and nice Discernment of Beauty and Proportion, yet if he has not Practice and Experience added to this, he will after all not be able to give any finished Piece; whereas one with much less of the Theory Part, and more Practice and Application, shall succeed to Admiration. And the like may be observed of all other Arts and Graces, a Perfection in any one of which depends principally upon Use and Habir. The latter Part of the Verse is exegetical of the former, viz. that the greater any Man's Obedience is, and the more Progress he makes in Virtue and Piety, so much greater is his Wisdom, and the more is his Understanding in the Way of Godliness enlarged. See *Psal. xxv. 11, 13.*

Ver. 12. *He that is not wise will not be taught, but there is a Wisdom which multiplieth Bitterness.* In the former Verse the wise Man observes, that true Wisdom consists in Obedience, or the Observance of the Laws of God; here he adds, that he that is not wise, i. e. towards God, *Sapiens in bono*, as the *Vulg.* has it, is not capable of true Wisdom. As Piety then is the Perfection of Wisdom, so there is a Counterfeit, or false Wisdom, called here *παρρησια*, which consists in Knavery and Wickedness, for so *παρρησια*, which is here rendered Bitterness, often means. See *Act. viii. 23.* where the Gall of Bitterness, and the Bond of Iniquity are synonymous; and *Heb. xii. 15.* *Jer. iv. 18.* where falling from the Grace of God, and the Root of Bitterness by which many are defiled, are joined together. See also *Deut. xxix. 18.* where turning away from the Lord, is expressed by a Root that beareth Gall and Wormwood. The rendering of the *Vulg.* confirms likewise this Sense, *Est autem sapientia quæ abundat in malo.* Such a Sort of Wisdom which is displayed only in Schemes of Wickedness, or in the Mischief which it does to others, is sensual, earthly, devilish. The Prophet describes such as delight in it, when he says, *They are wise to do Evil, but to do Good they have no Knowledge.* *Jer. iv. 22.* Such shall multiply Bitterness, properly so called, and shall inherit Misery and Sorrow.

Ver. 16. *The Talking of a Fool is like a Burden in the Way, but Grace shall be found in the Lips of the Wise.* Ver. 18. *As is a House that is destroyed, so is Wisdom to a Fool, and the Knowledge of the Unwise is as Talk without Sense.* There is such an engaging Sweetness in the Discourse and Conversation of a truly good and wise Man, and



so much useful Knowledge is to be learned from him, that such as are desirous of Improvement, listen to him with Eagerness and Pleasure, and treasure up his Observations for their own Use and Conduct. *Job* beautifully describes this, speaking of himself, *When the Ear heard me, then it blessed me; unto me Men gave Ear, and waited, and kept Silence at my Counsel. After my Words they spake not again, and my Speech dropped upon them. They waited for me as for the Rain, and they opened their Mouth, as for the latter Rain,* ch. xxix. 11, 22, 23. This happy Talent of pleasing and profiting others by Discourse, the wise Man expresses by Grace or Sweetness. Thus it is said of our Saviour, *ἰθαύμαζον ἐπὶ τοῖς λόγοις τῆς χάριτος,* i. e. by an Hypallage, or a rhetorical Change of Words, they wondred ἐπὶ τῇ τῶν λόγων χάριτι, at the Sweetness of his Speech and Words, *Luke* iv. 22. This by *Plutarch* is styled *τῶν λόγων σιγήν*, and by this Writer is said to be more agreeable than *Musick*, ch. xl. 21. Hence the Ancients feigned *Mercury*, their God of Eloquence, to be attended by the Graces. But the Person who is devoid of Wisdom, or who has a smattering in Knowledge, and a small Tincture of Learning, is here aptly compared to a Heap of Rubbish, or a Chaos of Ruins. In his Ideas, Discourse, and the whole Conduct of his Understanding, there is nothing but Confusion, neither Order, Grace, Regularity, or Connexion.

Ver. 19. *Doctrine unto Fools is as Fetters on the Feet, and like Manacles on the right Hand.*] The Fool hates Discipline and Instruction, he considers them as Fetters and Shackles. He looks upon Learning and Study, as a Weariness of the Flesh, as an intricate troublesome Thing, a Hindrance to the Pursuit of his Inclinations, and an Obstacle to his Pleasures. Whereas Learning adds a Grace to the wise Man, and is as an Ornament of Gold about his Neck: he looks upon Wisdom, Prudence, Regularity, Moderation of Lusts and Passions, and the Observance of strict Rules of Morality, as the Glory and Improvement of his Nature; he takes Pleasure in acting up to the Dignity of it, and thinks himself not abridged of true Liberty, by being forbid Licentiousness, or denying himself sinful Enjoyments. This, and the 21<sup>st</sup> Verse should be joined and connected together, they set off one another; placed thus by way of Contrast, the intermediate Verse spoils the Connexion and Beauty, and agrees in Sense with ch. xix. 30. See Note on that Place.

Ver. 22. *A foolish Man's Foot is soon in his Neighbour's House, but a Man of Experience is ashamed of him.*] Of whom? of the Fool, or his Neighbour? *Gr. αἰσχυνθήσεται ἀπὸ προσώπου,* i. e. will reverence his Neighbour's Presence, will pay a Regard to him when he is before him. *Ἰδοὺ* in Hebrew, from which *ἀπὸ προσώπου*, is no more

than *coram*. I presume the meaning is, that as a Fool rusheth without Regard into other Men's Presence, and even into their Houses to see what is doing there, so a discreet Man will not be guilty of such Rudeness; he will not intermeddle nor concern himself with the Affairs of others, he will observe a more wary and reserved Conduct, and will pay to others a ceremonious Respect both without and within Doors. *Junius* renders, *Peritus multarum rerum pudore a domo se continebit*; with which agrees the *Geneva* Version, *A Man of Experience will be ashamed to look in.* The *Vulgate* understand this of a proper Carriage towards a great and powerful Man, *Homo peritus confundetur a persona potentis*, i. e. He will be backward and reserved in coming before, or visiting a Person of such Distinction. *Est fort. réservé à visiter une personne puissante*, says *Calmet*; and according to him the Sense is, that as a wise Man will be ashamed to go to, or enter, in a disrespectful manner, another's House, especially one that is a Stranger, without a real Necessity or Occasion, without an Invitation, and the Observance of a proper Distance, so a Fool rusheth in at all Times, at the Hazard of being ill received, of being impertinent and troublesome to others, of being evil treated, and perhaps turned out of Doors. *Solomon* gives the like Advice, *Withdraw thy Foot from thy Neighbour's House*, or, as the Margin more properly has it, *Let thy Foot be seldom in thy Neighbour's House, lest he be weary of thee, and hate thee*, *Prov.* xxv. 17.

Ver. 27. *When the Ungodly curseth Satan, he curseth his own Soul.*] i. e. Whenever an ungodly Man condemneth Ungodliness, he condemneth himself. Or whenever the Wicked blame Satan, as the Author of their Failings, when they accuse him as their Tempter and Betrayer, when they complain of his Snares and Wiles, they ought rather to blame themselves. The Devil indeed invites and solicits, but he compels none to sin, he hurts none but those who come too near him, and voluntarily engage in his Service. The *Jews* always looked upon wicked Men, as related to the Devil; and the Scripture says expressly of them, that *they are of their Father the Devil*, i. e. Sons of *Belial*. And therefore they act inconsistently, they do a Wrong or Injury to accuse, or curse the Master they have chosen, and whom their Conduct so much resembles. If they curse their Father, they in effect curse also themselves, as the Blessings and Cursings, according to the *Jewish* Notions, affected also the Children, and descended to Posterity. In this Light the Proverb might be used, that whoever, being a Child of *Satan*, cursed his Father, in effect cursed also himself. Or if we understand *Satan* in the Sense of *δῆλος*, to mean an Adversary, an Accuser, a Calumniator; and the Context is not averse to this Sense; the Meaning then may



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may be, that when a wicked Man, or Slanderer, blames or curses another for Censoriousness, he condemns himself, for his listening to, and acting like the Devil, in being an Accuser of the Brethren, and by the Imputation cast upon others, he reflects Guilt upon his own Soul. Coverdale's Version favours this Sense, and so does the Port Royal Comment, *Lorsque le méchant maudit le calomniateur, il se deshonore lui même.* Cotelerius also so expounds it, and says, *πᾶς ὁ μάρτυρ λοιδόγων, ἐαυτὸν αἰσχύνει*, in the Apostol. Constitutions is equivalent to it. See Note on L. iii. c. 15. St. Cyprian seems to have had this Passage in View, when he says, *Turpes turpis infamat, alios, qui talis est, increpat, & evasisse se consciunt credit, quasi conscientia satis non sit. Idem in publico accusatores, in occulto rei. In semetipsos censes pariter & nocentes: Damnant foris, quod intus operantur, & quod libenter admiserunt, criminantur.* Ad Donat.

## C H A P. XXII.

Ver. 1. **A** Slothful Man is compared to a filthy Stone, and every one will hiss him out to his Disgrace.] According to the Vulg. the Sense is, That a slothful Person is so despicable, that Men pursue him with Stones and Dirt, as a Shame to the Species, or with reproachful Language and Speeches, according to Bossuet, as so many filthy Stones, *Omnium scommatis, velut, injeclis lapidibus lutosi, conspurcabitur.* But that followed by our Translators seems better: by a slothful Man we are here to understand, one who will apply himself to nothing, who has neither Industry, Application, Capacity, nor Understanding, who will not vouchsafe to stir, or exert himself, either for his Friends, or even himself. He is like to a Stone which falls into the Dirt, no body will foul his Hands to draw it from thence: and if this slothful Person comes to Disgrace or Misfortune, as is natural to expect, no body will interpose to help or vindicate him, but rather laugh at and expose him, *ἐκσυνέει ἐπὶ τῇ αἰτιμῇ αὐτοῦ*, will hiss at his Disgrace. Whoever comes near him will hasten from him, as from some disagreeable Filth or Infection; he that has served him once, will wash his Hands of him, and have nothing more to do with him. Such a Sluggard is so offensive, that, according to Solomon, *He is as Vinegar to the Teeth, and as Smoke to the Eyes,* Prov. x. 26.

Ver. 3. **A** foolish Daughter is born to his Loss.] The Greek has only *θυγάτηρ δὲ ἐπ' ἐλατῶσει γίνεσθαι*, i. e. a Daughter is to Loss. Some Copies have *γενᾶται*, is born to Loss, or to the Damage and Detriment of the Father. But this seems to bear hard upon the Sex without Reason; and therefore the Geneva Version of the Place is much less to be admitted, *And the Daughter is least*

*to be esteemed.* Our Translators have added, *foolish*, to make the Sense more complete. *Ἀπαίδευτος*, or some such Epithet, seems to be understood, for a wise Daughter follows, by way of Antithesis, in the next Verse. We have an Instance of the like Omission, ch. xxxvi. 24. *He that getteth a Wife, beginneth a Possession, &c.* where the Sense is, *He that findeth a good Wife.* This Author often observes, that as good and hopeful Children are the Glory and Happiness of their Parents, so those that are vicious, and ill-disposed, are a Plague and Shame to them. It is recorded of *Augustus*, who was unhappy in his Daughters, that he would often cry out,

*Αἰδοῦ' ὄφελον γ' ἀγαμὸς τ' εἶμεναι, ἀγονός τ' ἀπολείδω.*

And so may every Parent with Reason, who has the great Misfortune of undutiful or wicked Children, whether they be Sons or Daughters.

Ver. 4. **A** wise Daughter shall bring an Inheritance to her Husband.] *κληρονομήσει ἀνδρα αὐτῆς*, i. e. She shall enrich him by her good Economy, and prudent Conduct. *Locupletabit*, says Grotius. What the Hebrews express by the Conjugation *Hiphil*, the Hellenists, and others express actively; and so *κληρονομεῖν* is used *Prov. xiii. 22.* Solomon, in the Picture which he has drawn of a good Wife, one who openeth her Mouth with Wisdom, and in whose Tongue is the Law of Kindness, represents her, as wholly employed in Household Cares and Business, as looking well to the Ways of her Household, and eating not the Bread of Idleness. She not only divides a Portion to her Maidens, but worketh willingly with her own Hands; *She layeth her Hands to the Spindle, and her Hands hold the Distaff,* Prov. ch. xxxi. Among the Hebrews, Daughters did not inherit, when they had Brothers; the wise Man therefore observes here, that a prudent Daughter brings a rich Portion to her Spouse, by her Economy and Wisdom, and the good Qualities she is possessed of; that she is a Fortune of herself, and will improve that of her Husband. The Tigurin Version accordingly has, *Filia prudens viro est vice hereditatis.* There is also another Sense given of this Place, that a discreet and virtuous Woman shall have for her Lot and Inheritance a good Husband, and shall so recommend herself to his Affections, as to be the Heir of his Fortunes.

Ver. 6. **A** Tale out of Season, is as Musick in Mourning.] As the Use of Instruments of Musick in a Time of Lamentation, is mentioned here among the *ἀναίσχρητα*, or unseasonable Things, one may conclude that they were not anciently used by the Jews at Funerals. This was of Heathen Extraction, and came in but late among the Jews. Musick at such a Time is as unseasonable, as that Request, or rather Insult of the Babylonians



bylonians over the captive Jews, to sing one of the Songs of Sion in their Heaviness: as improper, as in epulo cum toga pulla accumbere, to appear at a Feast in Weeds; which Tully mentions as a thing unusual, *Quis unquam cenavit atratus?* Epist. ad Attic. Equally absurd, says the wise Man, is Conversation, or even Instruction, when misapplied, or unseasonable with respect to Time, Place, or Persons. Thus *δύσινος* is used ch. xxxviii. 25. And so Calmet, *Un discours à contre tems est comme une Musique pendant le deuil.* 'Tis not sufficient only to tell Men the Truth, but there is also a Time to be observed in speaking. He that would succeed most effectually, must do it *à propos*, at such a Time, and in such a manner, as Wisdom shall direct. The like may be observed of Reproof, which is then chiefly to be applied, when Souls are so worked upon, and disposed by the Spirit of God, as to be made sensible of their bad Estate, and of the want of such Remedies, as at first may be disagreeable to Sense, but are necessary to be used to bring Men out of that profound Lethargy, under which they have languished in a Forgetfulness of God, and a Disregard of their own Happiness.

Ibid. *But Stripes and Correction of Wisdom are never out of Time.* *μάστιγες καὶ παιδεία ἐν παντί καὶ πρὸ σοφίας.* Here our Version seems not accurate. Besides the Sense given by our Translators, which is a good, though perhaps not the true one, there is another favoured by some Interpreters, viz. Musick is an Entertainment unseemly and improper in the Time of Mourning; but Correction and Discipline are always proper to teach Children Wisdom, in the Time or Season of Learning, *ἐν καιρῷ σοφίας.* The Arab. may seem to favour this, *Correctio & disciplina sapientiam conciliant.* But others understand the Place very differently, that Stripes and Correction are *καὶ πρὸ*, improper to be used to Persons generally reputed wise, who, if they accidentally offend, are reformed sooner by Discourse with them, than by any Correction that can be used: According to that of Benfra in his Alphabet, *Sapientem nutu, & stultum fuste.* But both these Expositions seem forced, nor are our Translators to be justified for joining *σοφίας*, with a Word so distant from it. There may be, I think, another Sense given of this Passage, which none of the Commentators have touched upon, which to me seems preferable, viz. Musick is unseasonable in the Time of Mourning, and an Instance of Impertinence and Indiscretion; but Correction and Stripes, properly and seasonably applied, are the Effect of Wisdom, and Instances of it, and bring forth its Fruits; and none but a wise and discreet Man knows how to apply these in Season, and to Advantage. Accordingly the Geneva Version has, *Wisdom knoweth the Seasons of Correction and Doctrine.* And the Syriac, *Eruditio ac disciplina*

*quovis tempore sunt sapientia.* And the Vulg. *Flagella & doctrina in omni tempore sapientia.* I would point the Place thus, *μάστιγες καὶ παιδεία ἐν παντί καὶ πρὸ σοφίας, i. e. sunt sapientia.* *Sapientia congruunt*, according to Bosquet. Some few Copies omit *παντί*, and it may perhaps seem too harsh; but there is greater Authority for retaining than omitting *παντί*; and it agrees with our Author's Doctrine ch. xxx. 1. but is not to be understood with the utmost Strictness. And therefore though *ἐνδελεχής*, there used, means *continual*, yet the Translation in this last Place (often) is right. At least if *continual* be put, a due Abatement must be made, or understood.

Ver. 7. *He that teacheth a Fool, is as one that gluetb a Potsherd together.* After these Words Dr. Grabe inserts the two following Sentences, *εἰς αἰδομένην ἄγων τὴν γῆν, καὶ τὸν ἀπληπισμένον εἰς σύνεσιν ὀξύων*, which is exactly the reading of Clemens Alex. *Padag.* L. i. c. 8. By a Fool we may understand one that wants both Understanding and Parts, and hath also a corrupt Heart, see y 12, 13. for there are Hopes of reclaiming or instructing such as have Sense and Capacity, though they be ignorant, or even vicious and irregular. In these, Passion is not always uppermost, nor equally strong and domineering, and the Profligate may have sometimes Seasons of Recollection, or may happily be reclaimed by some seasonable and well-timed Admonition of others; but it is lost Labour to hope for, or attempt the reclaiming a vicious Fool, in whom Obstinacy and Ignorance meet, and Passions prevail without any Controul. To attempt to teach a Fool is supposed by this Writer to be a natural Impossibility; and the Comparison here used, is an excellent Emblem, according to Mess. of Port Royal, of the Fall of the Soul; God at Baptism made it a precious Vessel, and filled it with his Grace and Holy Spirit, but when this Vessel is broken and ruined, by falling into mortal Sins, it will be difficult, if not impossible, by mere Discourse, or Instruction to restore such a Lapse, and to set all right again. The Glory of that Work belongs to God only, it is he that must make anew the Soul, and restore it to its first Perfection, by the same Power which at first created it.

Ver. 8. *He that telleth a Tale to a Fool, speaketh to one in a Slumber; when he hath told his Tale, he will say, what is the Matter?* *τί ἐστίν, i. e.* He knows not what he hath been talking of, and is never the wiser. The Vulg. renders, *Cum dormiente loquitur, qui enarrat stulto sapientiam, & in fine narrationis dicit, Quis est hic?* Applying it to the Person of the Speaker, as if the reading was *τί ἐστίν ὁ στος*; we have an Instance of the like Rudeness, Acts xvii. 18. when St. Paul preached Jesus and the Resurrection, the Epicurean and Stoiic Philosophers, (foolish and blind Guides) encountered him, and said,



τι δὲ θάλοι ὁ παρεμολόγος ἄνθρωπος λέγει; all that one gets by addressing a Discourse to such, as either do not understand it, or through Prepossession do not relish it, is to be reckoned, disordered perhaps, or one that is out of the Way. Thus when the same St. Paul before Festus spoke the Words of Sobriety and Truth, Festus's Reply only was, Μαλὴν, Παῦλε· τὰ πολλὰ σε γραμμάτια εἰς μάστιγιν περιέρπει, Acts xxvi. 24. A proper Disposition in the Hearer is necessary to make what is delivered to have its due Effect; hence such as are led away by their Lusts, and have an Affection for Sin, are represented in Scripture as in a fast Sleep, as blind, as deaf, and even as dead in Trespasses and Sins; and the Advice given to such is, to awake to Righteousness, and be alive again unto God. Nor does our Saviour mean any Thing more than a suitable Disposition in the Hearers, when he says, *He that hath Ears to hear, let him hear.*

Ver. 9. *If Children live honestly, and have wherewithal, they shall cover the Baseness of their Parents.* Ver. 10. *But Children being haughty, through Disdain and Want of Nurture, do stain the Nobility of their Kindred.* These Verses are not in the *Kat.* nor *Vulg.* nor *Syriac.* The Greek Copies, which our Translators follow, read τέχνη ἐν ἀγαθῇ ζωῇ τὴν τροφὴν ἔχουσα, &c. but they are generally inserted immediately after the 6<sup>th</sup> Verse. Others have τέχνη ἐν ἀγαθῇ ζωῇ τὴν τέχνην ἔχουσα, which is the marginal Reading; but if τέχνην be read, the Sense of the 9<sup>th</sup> Verse, and its Contrast with the next, will be much the same with that of ch. x. 27. Nor will the Difference be great if τροφήν be read, for such a Man's τέχνη is his τροφή. The Sense of the two Verses taken together, is briefly, Virtue with a sufficient Competency makes amends for a Descent from a mean and low Parentage; whereas Pride, Ignorance, or Wickedness disgrace a noble Birth: Or thus, that the good Life of one in ordinary Circumstances, is more honourable than a high Extraction, or great Fortune with a bad and scandalous Life.

Ver. 11. *Weep for the Dead, for he hath lost the Light: and weep for the Fool, for he wanteth Understanding: make little weeping for the Dead, for he is at Rest; but the Life of the Fool is worse than Death.* Ver. 12. *Seven Days do Men mourn for him that is dead, but for a Fool and an ungodly Man, all the Days of his Life.* Abraham lamented his Dead, and mourned for his beloved Sarah, and so did Christ sorrow for his Friend Lazarus. We too are permitted, and laudable Custom hath ever allowed it, to pay a decent Tribute of Tears, observing always a proper Moderation. As for the precise Time, it is no where preremptorily fixed: the Scriptures sometimes say that such a one was mourned for many Days, without particularizing always the Number; but that this of seven Days was the most usual Time of mourning

among the Jews, appears from many Instances. The solemn publick Mourning for Jacob was seven Days, Gen. l. 10. The seventy Days, mentioned 1 Kings xxi. 12. were preparatory to the Funeral, and while the Body was embalming. See also 1 Sam. xxxi. 13. Judith xvi. 24. 1 Kings xxxi. and just so long their Joy lasted at solemn Weddings. This was so settled and fixed among them, that it was a common Proverb, *Septem dies ad Convivium, & septem ad Luctum.* It is an Observation of St. Austin, that though the Ancients had their *Novendialia*, or solemn Sacrifices in honour of the Dead, nine Days, yet there is no Instance of above seven Days Mourning for any of the holy Men in Scripture: as the Novendial was of Heathen Extraction, so the Number Seven probably, he thinks, might be pitched upon in Allusion to the Sabbath, which was a Time of rest, and therefore was applied to the Dead, as being at rest from all their Labours. Quæst. in Gen. Josephus, speaking of Archelaus appointing seven Days mourning in honour of his Father, adds, τὰς γὰρ διατεταγμέναις νόμον τὸ πένθαι, &c. De Bell. Jud. L. ii. c. 1. Antiq. L. xvii. c. 8. But though the usual Time for Mourning was seven Days, yet they seem sometimes to have shortened it, See Eccles. xxxviii. 17. where a Day or two only is mentioned; and sometimes occasionally they enlarged the Time for great Persons, as for Aaron, Num. xx. 29. and Moses, Deut. xxxiv. 8. both of whom the Children of Israel mourned for thirty Days, though a Week sufficed for private ones. The wise Man, 1 Kings xxi. 8. compares a Fool to one in a Slumber; here he compares him to a dead Man, and shews that his Condition is indeed worse than one that is no more; that a Week is the usual Time of mourning for the Dead, but that for the foolish and ungodly Man, the whole Term of Life is little enough. Thus Samuel lamented Saul all the Days of his Life, because he saw in him no Sign of Repentance, though often reprov'd, 1 Sam. xv. 35. and the Reason of this Difference is, because Death finishes, and puts an End to all the Evils and Miseries of Life, and is the Entrance upon a better State; but the Life of a Sinner is worse than Death, because he goes on continually ruining himself, and hugs his Enemy and Destroyer, and unless God touches his Heart, his Life will be an endless Death, if I may use the Expression, a Source of eternal and infinite Misery to him. We are sensibly affected at the Death of Friends and Relations, and pay a decent Respect to their Memory, but are not sorry as Men without Hope, but comfort ourselves, that, if they depart hence in the Lord, they are in Joy and Felicity, but the Death of the Soul is without Hope or Remedy; 'tis only spiritually discerned, and we want Tears to lament sufficiently the Loss and Misery. By Fools the Author understands such as



are absolutely so, who give no Prospect or Hope of ever arriving at Sense and Understanding; of these, and the incorrigible Sinner there is little or no Hopes; but such whom some violent Temptation has hurried into Sin, one should indeed lament their Fall, but not despair of their Recovery and Reformation. The pious *Monicha* for many Years lamented the Failings of her Son, *St. Austin*, and at length prevailed for his Conversion by the Power of her many Tears. *Fieri non potest ut filius tantarum lachrymarum pereat*, founded to her like a Voice from Heaven, and she never ceased her Importunity, till she had gained her Son. *Confess. L. iii. cap. ult.*

Ver. 13. *Talk not much with a Fool... and thou shalt never be defiled with his Fooleries, and never be disquieted with Madnes.* *ἵνα μὴ μολυνθῇς ἐν τῷ ἐκλίνασμαυ ἀνθρώπου.* *Sputo ejus*, with his Spittle, or opprobrious Language, as *Grotius* understands it. *Καὶ ὁ μὴ ἀναδιδόνς ἐν τῇ ἀπηνία ἀνθρώπου*, with Instances of his Folly and Madnes. *Stultitia illius.* The *Vulg.* understands it of the Contagion of Sin through his evil Communication or Example, *Coinquinaberis peccato illius.* *Castellio* renders, *Cave ne eo excusso contamine-ris*, Beware lest he defile thee by shaking himself, like a Sow after wallowing in the Mire; and thus the *Syriac*, *Cum sue ne abeas in via, ne te conspurcet cum sese excusserit*, which is likewise the marginal Reading.

Ver. 15, 16, 17, 18.] The first of these Verses seems an Imitation of *Prov. xxvii. 3.* *A Stone is heavy, and the Sand weighty, but a Fool's Wrath is heavier than them both.* See *Ecclus. xxi. 16.* The several Comparisons here made use of are intended to shew the Difference between the Actions of a wise Man and a Fool, and the Issue and Event which attends them. The Scripture in like manner compares the wise Man, whose Thoughts, and the Actions proceeding from them, are well grounded, to a House founded on a Rock, against which neither Wind nor Rain had any Power. A Fool, on the contrary, is like a House built on high without a good Foundation, exposed to every Assault of Weather. The *Vulg.* compares him to a Wall built without Mortar, which wants Cement to keep it together, or to one daubed with untempered Mortar, *Ezek. xiii. 10.* As he acts without any fixed Principle, nothing but Uncertainty and Irresolution can proceed from him: for want of a right Heart, a Heart well established on a proper Basis, he yields to the first Impressions of Fear, and is overthrown for want of a Support and Foundation. But the *Psalmist* describes the good Man, who acts upon a religious Principle, and is influenced by the Fear of God, and a firm Trust in his Word, as one who shall never be moved, whose Heart is established and shall not shrink, as one who shall not be afraid of any evil Tidings, for his Heart

standeth fast, and believeth in the Lord, *Psalm. cxii. 6, 7.*

Ver. 19. *He that pricketh the Eye, will make Tears to fall, and he that pricketh the Heart, maketh it to shew her Knowledge.* *ἐκπαίει αἰσῶνα*, Displays its Sense and Feeling, i. e. when one provokes another, especially his Friend, by Injuries, Abuse, or ill Language, he raises his Indignation, and awakens his Resentment. Or the Meaning may be, When a Person reproves another in a home Manner, and touches him to the Quick, he gives him the Knowledge of himself, or a lively Sense of his Faults, and by his affectionate Admonitions teaches him Wisdom, or a better Conduct for the future, as *Bossuet* explains it. This Simile is brought to illustrate the Damage done to Friendship through Misconduct, some Instances of which are mentioned in the following Verses; and from the known Tenderness of the Eye, which cannot bear the least Stroke, the wise Man instils the like Caution to be observed with respect to Friendship, which too may be wounded in a sensible Part. The *Syriac* so applies it, and this Sense is more agreeable to the Context.

Ver. 21. *Though thou drawest a Sword at thy Friend, yet despair not, for there may be a returning [to favour.]* Ver. 22. *If thou hast opened thy Mouth against thy Friend, fear not, for there may be a Reconciliation, except for Upbraiding, or Pride, or disclosing of Secrets, or a treacherous Wound; for these Things every Friend will depart.* Injuries done to a Friend by Word or Deed may be passed over, which are occasioned by Passion, or some sudden and violent Emotion, as a hasty Word, or rash Expression, which comes from a Man in a Heat, vented perhaps in the warmth of a Debate, and arising from a Contrariety of Sentiments on the Subject; nay Threats, and even an Assault upon a Friend in a Fit of Anger, may be forgiven, for these, though they indeed provoke, and may occasion a Shyness, or even a Rupture between Friends for a Time, yet are not always attended with that bad Consequence as wholly to dissolve Friendship. For if the injured Friend be a wise Man, he will consider that he himself is subject likewise to Frailties; that the Fit of Passion might be sudden and transient, and proceeded not from any settled Rancour in the Heart; and therefore, upon a submissive Acknowledgment of the Offence, he will be disposed to pass it over, and receive his penitent Friend into his Bosom and Confidence again. But such Injuries as are done on Purpose, premeditatedly, and upon Deliberation, and offered as it were in cold Blood, these proceeding rather from Malice, and an ill-disposed Heart, than from Surprise or Passion, are not so easily forgot or forgiven by a Friend or Brother. See *Prov. xviii. 19.* Of these the wise Man reckons four Sorts, *ὀνειδισμὸς*, malicious Slander, the speaking Things



## Chap. xxii. the Book of ECCLESIASTICUS. 119

Things to the Detriment or Disparagement of a Friend's Credit and Character, as reflecting upon his Birth, his Parts, or Capacity; or, which is more inflaming, upon his Honesty. Or upbraiding a Friend with Favours received, accusing him of Baseness and Ingratitude on that Account, or for not making any, or unsuitable Returns. 2. *ὑπερηφάνεια*, Pride or Insolence, which are so much the more improper and disagreeable, as Friendship is a Union founded upon Equality, Likeness of Sentiments, Inclinations, Interests, and even of State and Condition. And tho' Friendship may sometimes be between Persons of different Rank and Condition, yet in that Case, he that is superior in point of State and Fortune, must condescend and abate something to proportion himself to the Level and Standard of his Friend, without which there can be no sweet Union, agreeable Familiarity, sincere Confidence, true Friendship, nor even a Shew of Liberty itself kept up, and preserved. St. Ambrose therefore well advises, *Defer amico ut equali, amicitia enim nescit superiorem*. De Offic. L. iii. c. 16. 3. *Μυστήρια ἀποκάλυψις*, The revealing of Secrets, which is an Instance of Perfidiousness. He that is capable of such Baseness, especially if he does it coolly, and with Deliberation, is unfit for Friendship, and unworthy of any Confidence. 'Tis possible indeed a Man, through Inadvertence, Heedlessness, Levity, or Weakness, may by Accident drop a Secret, without any Thought or Intention to injure his Friend; but in general it may be affirmed, that nothing should be kept more inviolable, as it is as dear to a Man as his Honour, and cannot be disclosed for the most Part without a sensible Injury done to it. See ch. xxvii. 17, 21. Prov. xi. 13. 4. *Πληγὴ δόλια*, A treacherous Wound or Stroke, which is the last and worst Species of Unfaithfulness that can happen in Friendship, the Rights of which it not only infringes, but even those of Humanity and Charity: Such a one is not only unworthy of our Confidence, but unfit for human Society. He is a publick Enemy, will attempt the like against any other, and all the World should be aware of such an Assassin. When these Instances happen, they shew the Affections to be alienated, and that the Injuries are wilful and premeditated. Mr. Norris has a fine Reflexion upon this Passage: "'Tis with the Union of two Friends, as with the Union of Soul and Body: there are some Degrees of Dis-temperature, that although they weaken and disturb the Union, yet however are consistent with it; but then there are others again, that quite destroy the vital Congruity, and then follows a Separation. As to the Cause that may justify a Dissolution of Friendship, it can be no other than something that is directly contrary to the very Design and Essence of Friendship, such as, notorious Perfidiousness, deliberate Malice, and a desperate and re-

solved Continuance in them. For as long as there is any hopes of Amendment, the Man is rather to be advised than deserted; but if hopeless and irreclaimable, we may and must desert him; but let it be with all the Tendernefs imaginable, with as much Unwillingness and Reluctancy, as the Soul leaves her over-distempered Body. In such a Situation, our greatest Care must be that our former Dearness turn not to inveterate Hatred, for though the Friend be gone, yet still the Man remains, and though he has forfeited my Friendship, yet still I owe him common Charity." *Theory of Love*, p. 132, &c.

Ver. 24. *As the Vapour and Smoke of a Furnace goeth before the Fire, so reviling goeth before Blood.*] The Observation of Mess. of Port Royal upon this Place is well worth inserting, To keep out of Danger and Mischiefs, it is necessary to shun the least Approach to it, for there are some small and inconsiderable Things in appearance, which nevertheless are as so many Sparks, to occasion in the End a great Fire and Combustion. As Man is naturally proud, so he is of Course fond of his own Opinion, even in Things the most indifferent; not because his is the best or truest, but because it is his own. Another equally loves his own Sentiments too for the same Reason, and is as much attached to them: from this Contrariety arise Jealousy and Disputes, which are inflamed by the Heat of Words, and the Warmth of jarring Expressions; from Words they proceed to Affronts, from Affronts to Injuries, from Injuries to Threats, which often terminate in Bloodshed and Murder. The Tongue executes what Pride of Heart dictates, and the Hand at length finishes what the Tongue first began. *Comm. in loc.*

Ver. 25. *I will not be ashamed to defend a Friend, neither will I hide myself from him.* Ver. 26. *And if any Evil happen unto me by him, every one that beareth it will beware of him.*] Ver. 23. the wise Man advises to abide stedfastly by a Friend in the Time of his Troubles, *διαμένειν αὐτῷ*, which is a very significant Word, See Luke xx. 28. 2 Tim. ii. 12. that upon any Change of Condition we may share in his good Fortune, or the Inheritance that falls to him. This he resolves to do when such an Opportunity to serve a Friend shall offer; nothing shall hinder me from succouring my Friend, I will not fly from his Presence, though for his Sake I may suffer Inconveniencies or Evils. I will not be influenced by the Example of others, who may keep from him, nor so far consult my own Repose, as not to assist him with my Presence, my Advice, my Interest, and even my Goods; nay, for his Sake, will expose myself, if necessary, to Hardships, Ill-will, Detraction, and the Opposition of such as would oppress his Innocence. And thus the *Vulg.* takes it, *Amicum salutare non confundar, a facie illius non me abscondam, Et si mala mihi per illum evenerint,*



*rint, sustinebo.* & here is the same as *adv.* And so the Geneva Version understands it. Horace well observes,

*Absentem qui rodit amicum,  
Qui non defendit alia culpante, hic niger est.*  
Sat. L. 1.

And accordingly he defends the Character of Virgil, to whom some trifling Objections had been made in point of Dress and Carriage, in the kindest Manner,

*At est bonus, ut melior vir  
Non alius quisquam... at ingenium ingens  
Inculto latet hoc sub corpore.*

Ver. 27. *Who shall set a Watch before my Mouth, and a Seal of Wisdom upon my Lips, that I fall not suddenly by them?* Calmet refers this to the last Sentence of the foregoing Verse, and makes the Sense to be, He that hears another speaking, may guard against any thing evil or disagreeable in his Discourse, by stopping his Ears, or flying from him, *φύλαξαι τὸν λόγον*, for so some Copies read. But who will give me a proper Guard for my own Mouth, a Seal of Prudence and Discretion as a Security to my Lips, that I offend not with my Tongue? Or perhaps it may be an Introduction to the Prayer immediately following, like that of Psal. cxli. 3. *Set a Watch, O Lord, before my Mouth, and keep the Door of my Lips.*

#### CHAP. XXIII.

Ver. 1. *O Lord, Father and Governor of all my whole Life, leave me not to their Counsels, and let me not fall by them.* If this is connected with the last Verse of the former Chapter, which seems proper and necessary; and indeed some Copies begin this Chapter with it, the Sense will be, O thou Father of my Life, and Ruler of every Part of it; or, as some Copies have it, which is still more lofty, O thou Father of all that have Life, of all Living, *πάντων ζώντων*, give me not up to the Indiscretion of my own Lips, permit me not to be carried away by their Rashness and Volubility of talking, so as that they should prove the Occasion of my Falling; and so Bossuet, *Ne me derelinquas in consilio lingue & labiorum.* The Generality of Interpreters suppose Sinners, or Fools, or Adversaries, or some worthless and dangerous Persons to be understood, to the Mischief of whose Counsels the wise Man here prays not to be abandoned: but the former Sense seems preferable. If we consider well that Solomon says, *Life and Death are in the Power of the Tongue*; that St. James calls it a Fire, a World of Iniquity, ch. iii. 6. we shall not wonder that the wise Man here asks of God the Guidance of his Spirit, to keep him from this Evil, that he would watch over him to prevent any intemperate Sallies of his Tongue, or the multiplying Transgressions

by a Habit of evil speaking, or speaking too much.

Ver. 2. *Who will set Scauges over my Thoughts, and the Discipline of Wisdom over mine Heart? that they spare me not for mine Ignorances, and it pass not by my Sins.* The Variety of Readings of this Place shew it to be corrupt; our Version of it is obscure, to say no worse of it. As the wise Man before begs of God a Bridle for his Tongue, he here asks the like for his Thoughts and Heart, that they may not wander, nor betray him into Wickedness, that God would enlighten his Mind, and purify his Heart by his preventing Grace; that he would keep him in his Duty by proper Correction, and that his Conscience may be such a faithful Monitor, as truly to represent to him his State and Condition, and set before him his Sins in so full a Light and Proportion, as to fill him with sincere Compunction of Spirit, and engage him to condemn himself without Partiality or Unwillingness; lest God should enter into Judgment with him, and spare him not for his Sins. By Ignorances we are here to understand Sins, and so the Oriental Versions take it here, and in the following Verse; and thus *ἀγνοῖα* is used often by the Hellenists. See *Judith* v. 20. *Numb.* xii. 11. *1 Esd.* viii. 77.

Ver. 3. *Lest mine Ignorances encrease, and my Sins abound to my Destruction, and I fall before mine Adversaries, and mine Enemies rejoice over me, whose Hope is far from thy Mercy.* i. e. Lest the Abuse of Speech should make me fall into Sin frequently, and my Sins should draw upon me the Wrath of God, and he should deliver me over into the Will of mine Enemies. There is a Tincture of Judaism, says Calmet, in this Reason: For we ought to avoid Sin, not because it is attended with Punishment, but because it is displeasing to God. But though Conscience, and the sincere Love of God, are, it must be confessed, more noble and disinterested Motives, yet the wise Man may be thought to speak here *ἀνθρωποπαθῶς*, as the Reasons which act upon our Hopes and Fears make the liveliest Impressions, and affect the Mind most powerfully. The latter Part, *Whose Hope is far from thy Mercy*, is not in the *Vat.* nor *Vulg.* and has indeed a strong Tincture of Jewish Prejudice in it, for they were a Nation full of spiritual Presumption, and looked upon all others with the utmost Contempt, imagining themselves to be the only Righteous and Accepted, and that Salvation belonged to them only; that, as God had shewed a particular Kindness to them, in chusing them for his People, he would never reject them: all other Nations they supposed were disregarded by him, and had no Ground to hope for his Favour and Mercy. See *Wisd.* x. 15. xix. 22.

Ver. 4. *Give me not a proud Look, but turn away from thy Servant always a haughty Mind.*



*Mind.*] μελεωρισμόν ὀφθαλμῶν μὴ δῶς μοι, καὶ γυμνάσῃ ψυχὴν ἀπόσῃσόν. The first seems to be a Metaphor, taken from Navigation, Ships are said μελεωρίζεσθαι, or in μελεώσῃ εἶναι, when they are lifted up, or carried on high by Wind and Waves. Here it means Pride, or the resembling those that are so lifted up. It is so used *Luke* xii. 29. μὴ μελεωρίζεσθε, which the *Vulg.* well renders, *Nolite in sublime tolli.* Γυμνάσῃς ψυχὴν means a conceited Boldness, an affected Self-sufficiency, whereby Men dare to brave and defy even Heaven itself, such as was that of the old Giants, who were swept away for their Insolence and Presumption. It is quite necessary to translate here with the Margin, *Giant-like Mind*, instead of *haughty*, for the better understanding what follows; for what the wise Man prays against in these Verses, was the very Temper of the *Cyclops*, *Polyphemus*. See *Hom. Odyss.* L. ix.

Οὐ γὰρ Κύνλαπες Διὸς αἰγίοχου ἀλέγξουσιν,  
Οὐδὲ θεῶν μακάρων ἐπεὶ πολὺ φέρεται εἶμεν.

But his Picture, as *Euripides* has drawn it, is much closer to the Passage before us, for he paints him priding in his brutal Appetites, proclaiming his Belly to be the only, or the greatest God, to whom, by way of Sacrifice, the Fruits and Increase of the Earth were due by a Title so sovereign, that neither Heaven nor Earth could withdraw, or dare detain them: An over-grown Monster compounded of Lust and Gluttony, those Sister Sins, and Twins of Hell. *In Cyclop.*

Ver. 8. *The Sinner shall be left in his Foolishness, both the evil Speaker, and the Proud shall fall thereby.*] i. e. The Sinner, whether he indulges himself in a criminal Liberty of speaking proud and profane Things against God, or evil and malicious ones against his Neighbour, shall be taken by the Foolishness of his Lips, and punished for transgressing by them. Καταλεφθήσεται is not rightly rendered in our Version; the *Vulg.* is preferable, *In vanitate sua apprehendetur peccator.* And thus *Calmet*, *Le pecheur sera pris*; and so the *Syriac*. Some Copies prefix παιδεία σώματος to the seventh Verse, as a Title to what follows.

Ver. 9. *Accustom not thy Mouth to swearing, neither use thyself to the naming of the Holy One.*] God is called the Holy One, καὶ ἑξοχήν, in several Places of Scripture. See *Isai.* xxx. 12, 15. *Ezek.* xxxix. 7. The Prohibition here is not to swear lightly upon frivolous or no Occasions, without any Necessity, Reason, or Authority requiring it. We cannot have the Name of God too often in our Mouths, provided it be with Respect and Reverence; but such as accustom themselves to swearing, must have a little regard to, or fall off from, that Reverence which is due to that adorable Name, which makes Angels and Devils tremble. The rendering of the *Vulg.* here is very particular, *Nominatio Dei non sit assidua in ore tuo, & nomini-*

*bus Sanctorum non admiscearis.* Referring probably to the Superstition of swearing by Angels. The joining them in the same Verse with God, without any Authority, and the Tendernefs therein directed to be shewn to their Names, seems artful, and was probably inserted to procure Reverence to the Saints or Angels, and to favour some latent Design. The wise Man well illustrates the Mischiefs arising from this Vice, and the Stains it leaves upon the Soul from the frequent Commission of it, by the Instance of the Marks upon a Slave's Body, who is often beaten, ἐξέταζόμενος, or examined by Torture, and scourging for some Crime which he obstinately persists in. And we may from the Comparison without Violence, infer, that he that thus acts against his Master's Will, and makes light of his sacred Name, shall be beaten with many Stripes. *St. Austin's* Observation, if rightly taken, is very just, *Falsa juratio exitiosa est, vera juratio periculosa est, nulla juratio segura est*, i. e. no Swearing is secure and safe, a false Oath is mischievous and destructive, and even a true one is attended with Danger, i. e. when it is used frequently and inconsiderately, without being called, or compelled to it. Such a rash Forwardness many of the wiser Heathens thought was not unpunished by the Gods. It has been observed by the Learned, that Swearing is by the *Hebrews* expressed passively, *to be sworn*, as if no Swearing was allowable, but what is in a judicial Way, and when Authority requires it.

Ver. 11. *A Man that useth much Swearing shall be filled with Iniquity, and the Plague shall never depart from his House: if he shall offend, his Sin shall be upon him, and if he acknowledge not his Sin, he maketh a double Offence, and if he swear in vain, he shall not be innocent, but his House shall be full of Calamities.*] This is direct Tautology, if nothing more is meant, than what the Words seem to carry in them in our Version, but by considering and examining well the *Greek*, we shall be furnished with a proper Distinction. For what our Translators render in general and indeterminately, *offend*, is ἐὰν πλημμελήσῃ, if he swear any rash Oath, and sin inadvertently, not rightly understanding or considering the Thing about which he swears, whether it was in his Power, for instance to do it, or whether he could lawfully do it, he shall then be guilty; and thus the *Syriac*, *Si per errorem dejerat, peccatum ejus in ipsum recidet, His Sin shall be upon him.* This Phrase often occurs in the Book of *Leviticus*, See ch. v. 1. x. 17. xvii. 16. xix. 8. xx. 17, &c. and means, that he shall be punished either by the Judges, if he is convicted, or by God, if he escapes the Hands of Justice. It follows, ἐὰν ὁμολογήσῃ, if he acknowledge not his Sin, which would be better rendered, if through Forgetfulness he omits to do what



he might have done, and swore he would actually do, he is guilty of a double Fault: *Et διακινῶς ὀμοσεν*, means, if he swears *ἐπὶ ματαίῳ*, ἐπὶ φάτῳ, to Vanity, a Lie, or Falshood, and be guilty of the heinous Sin of Perjury. And thus the Oriental Version, *Qui mentiens jurat, culpis non vacabit*. This Explication is confirmed in Part by the Reading of St. Cyprian, *Vir multum jurans replebitur iniquitate; Et si vane juraverit, non justificabitur; Et si frustra juraverit, dupliciter punietur*. Test. L. 3. cont. Jud. Bossuet makes the three Species to be, 1. Swearing to a Thing, and not doing it afterwards. 2. Swearing originally with an evil Intention of not fulfilling it. 3. Light and common Swearing. Grotius makes them to be, 1. Swearing, and not remembering it; the Hebrew Word being capable of being rendered by both ἀγνοεῖν and πλημμελεῖν. 2. Remembering the Oath, and yet being careless and unconcerned about fulfilling it. 3. Swearing in Jest, without any serious Intention of making it good, or thinking to escape by some mental Equivocation, like *Juravi lingua, mentem injuratum teneo*. That God is the Avenger of all such as have no Regard to the Solemnity and Sacredness of an Oath, See Deut. xxviii. 59. Zach. ch. v. 4. Herod. L. iii.

Ver. 12. *There is a Word that is clothed about with Death: God grant that it be not found in the Heritage of Jacob, for all such Things shall be far from the Godly, and they shall not wallow in their Sins.* The Crime which the wise Man does not mention here, and which he wishes may not be found in the Heritage of Jacob, I presume is Blasphemy, which was so odious that it shocked him even to mention it, but he has distinguished it sufficiently by saying, that it was clothed about with Death, i. e. that this Sin was punished with Death among the Jews. For according to the Law of Moses, the Blasphemer was ordered to be stoned, Lev. xxiv. 16. John x. 31. instantly by those that heard the Blasphemy, without any formal Process of Law. Others understand here by the Words, *clothed with Death*, such Discourses, as tended to seduce the People to Apostasy and Idolatry: for this Crime was likewise punished with Death. The Vulg. renders, *Est et alia loquela contraria morti*, from a Copy probably which had ἀντιπαρεβέλημένη, and not ἀντιπεβελημένη, which is the better Reading, and followed in our Version. There is this material Difference between Blasphemy, and common Swearing, and the one is so far contrary to the other, that in swearing the Name of God, as being the most Holy Name, is made Use of to give some Weight to the Words, by the Authority which it carries with it; but Blasphemy attacks the dreadful Majesty of God, and the impious Wretch only makes Use of his adorable Name, to revile and abuse it. This Crime

was anciently had in such Detestation, that as Mess. of Port Royal observe, even Job's Wife said to him, according to the Original, בָּרַךְ אֱלֹהִים, bless God; though she meant to persuade him to curse him, she durst not mention the Thing, even though it was what she intended.

Ver. 13. *Use not thy Mouth to intemperate Swearing, for therein is the Word of Sin.* Our Version seems to have followed a Copy which had ἀκολασία ὄντος, but the Reading in all others is ἀπαίδευσις ὄντος. As the one or other Reading is followed, this Verse will either end or begin a Subject. Bossuet understands this Place as distinct from what went before, viz. Swearing and Blasphemy, and explains it of Calumny and opprobrious Words, which seems confirmed by the Vulg. and from Lev. xix. where, after the Prohibition against Swearing, v. 12. it follows, *Thou shalt not go about as a Talebearer among thy People*; and some other Instances of Calumny are mentioned, so that the rendering here probably should be, *Use not thy Mouth to intemperate Reproach or Rudeness*, ἀπαίδευσις ὄντος, for so it should be read. See v. 15. where the same Verb is with a Dative Case, *Indisciplinate loquela*, Vulg. and so the Port Royal Comment takes it. Grotius understands the Passage of obscene Talk; that as ἀπαίδευσις is a general Term for every Thing that offends against Decorum, so the Addition of ὄντος, which is equivalent βδελυρός, or ἀνάθραλος confines it to Indecency in Talk. However this be understood, whether of Lying, Swearing, Filthy Communication, or Slander, in all which is λόγος ἀμαρτίας, which is a Hebraism, and signifies the Sin itself, it is certain that a Person so accustomed, is with great Difficulty reformed, according to the Observation v. 15. for by Custom Men become so wedded to their favourite Vices, that they will not be persuaded that they tend to their Destruction.

Ver. 14. *Remember thy Father and thy Mother, when thou sittest among great Men.* ἀνάμνησιν γὰρ μεγάλων συνεδρεύεις; for thou sittest amongst great People. And thus the Vulg. *In medio enim magnatorum consistis*; intimating perhaps, that Father and Mother are to be revered as such, whose Instructions are to be remembered Prov. i. 8. vi. 20. of which the Government of the Tongue may well be supposed one. Ὡς signifies either *for*, or *when*; our Version follows the latter, and so does Castellio. According to Bossuet the Sense is, Remember thy Father and Mother, and speak no Evil of them, for thou wilt be in Danger of the Judgment; following the Vulg. Latin too closely and securely, he seems to have understood *Consistis*, of a Consistory Court, which is not at all necessary. Some suppose the Persons here counselled to be of low Degree, and that the Advice is, Remember thine own Original, when thou art with great Men,



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Men, affect not to be their Equal, nor put thyself upon the Level with them. Or if with some Copies we read συνεδρεύσεις, the Sense may then be, Remember who thou art, and whence thou sprangest, and know what belongeth to thee, and how to behave thyself always, for thou wilt, or mayest at one Time or other have Occasion to be among great Persons. According to Grotius the Sense of the whole Verse is, Remember thy Father and Mother with Respect and Reverence; though thou be admitted to, and intimate with great Persons, and be thyself also in a high Station; do not thou, in thy Dignity and Elevation, forget them, or speak of them, as though thou wert ashamed of them, and wish that thou wert born of other Parents, and curse the Place of thy Nativity, and by such a Behaviour or Usage τῷ ἔθισμῳ σε be reckoned a Fool, or a Madman. καὶ θελήσεις εἰ μὴ ἐγενήθης· εἰ is often used for ὅτι, and so it is to be taken here, it is the same as θελήσεις με γεννηθῆναι, which way of expressing it by the infinitive, is more usual and clear. The Vulgate so renders, *Maluisse non nasci*: The Syriac understands εἰ in the Sense of *Utinam*, *Et dicas, utinam creatus non fuisset*. And so indeed it is sometimes taken, as in *Homer*,

Εἰ γὰρ ἐμὸι τόσῃν δὲ θεοὶ δύναμιν παροῦσιν.  
Odyss. γ.

And that of *Virgil*,

*Si nunc se nobis ille aureus arbore ramus,  
Ostendat nemore in tanto.* Æn. vi.

Ver. 16. *Two Sorts of Men multiply Sin, and a third will bring Wrath.* Many Instances of the like manner of Expression are to be found in this Book, See ch. xxv. 1, 2, 7. 'Tis a Way of speaking common even to Scripture to use a definite common Number for an indefinite one. See *Prov.* xxx. 15, 18, 21, 24, 29. *Isai.* xix. 15. The *Hebrews* use it in comparing different Things together. But it may be more material to enquire what particular Persons are here referred to, and which are the three? *Bossuet* makes them to be the Swearer, Calumniator, and lustful Person. *Calmet* and *Mess.* of *Port Royal*, to be the hot or passionate Person, the Fornicator, and the Adulterer. But some by ψυχὴ θερμὴ understand the Ambitious or Covetous, as *Vatablus* in particular, but the Context seems rather to determine it to the lustful Person. As what went before regarded the Vices of the Tongue, so what follows respects those of the Flesh.

Ibid. *A Fornicator in the Body of his Flesh, will never cease till he hath kindled a Fire.* The *Vulg.* renders, *Homo nequam in ore carnis sue*, following a corrupt Copy, which had, πονηρὸς instead of πόρνος, and σῶμα instead of σάρκα. I am inclined to suspect the Words ἐν σάρκι σαρκὸς αὐτοῦ, to be transposed; and if I might attempt an Alteration without the Authority of MSS.

would place the Words thus, ἀνθρώπος πόρνος· εἰ μὴ παύσεται, ἕως ἂν ἐν σάρκι σαρκὸς αὐτοῦ ἐκκαύσῃ πῦρ, i. e. a Fornicator will not cease from Sinning, till he has kindled a Fire in the Body of his Flesh; which seems confirmed from *Prov.* v. 11. *Remove thy Way far from her, [the strange Woman] and come not nigh the Door of her House, lest thou mourn at the last, when thy Flesh and thy Body, σάρκα· σῶμά σου, the Flesh of thy Body, is consumed.* *Calmet* too countenances this Conjecture, *Celui qui se livre à cette passion brutale, ne s'en tirera pas, qu'il n'ait allumé dans son corps un feu qui le consumera.* In loc. And by this bodily Punishment they receive in themselves, ἐν ἑαυτοῖς, that Recompence of their Error which was meet. (see *Job* xxxi. 12.) as *St. Paul* speaks of another Species of Defilers of the Flesh. And indeed some of the Fathers understand here by the Fornicator in the Body of his Flesh, an Abuser of himself with Mankind, ἀρσενοκοίτης, who dishonours his Body by unnatural Lusts.

Ver. 17. *All Bread is Sweet to a Whoremaster, he will not leave off till he die.* i. e. He will not only go on sinning in the like libidinous Manner till he die, for Enjoyment rather provokes than extinguishes his Fire, adding fresh combustible Matter as it were to his Passions, but Lust shall be the Occasion of his Death, and hasten it. *Solomon* has the same Comparison upon the Occasion, *Stolen Waters are sweet, and Bread eaten in Secret is pleasant, but he knoweth not that the Dead are there, and that her Guests are in the Depths of Hell.* The Greek is much stronger, and concludes with a fine Piece of Instruction, ὁ δὲ ἐκ οἶδεν ὅτι γήενεις παρ' αὐτῇ ὀλλυῖται, καὶ ἐπὶ πέταυρον ἄδρα συναῖται· ἀλλὰ ἀποπήδησεν, μὴ χρονίσῃς ἐν τῷ τόπῳ, μηδὲ ἐπισήσῃς τὸ σὸν ὄμμα πρὸς αὐτήν, ὅπως γὰρ διαθήσῃ ὕδωρ ἀλλότρου· ἀπὸ ὕδατος ἀλλοτρίου ἀπόχρη, καὶ ἀπὸ πηγῆς ἀλλοτρίας μὴ πίης, ἵνα πολὺν χρόνον ζήσῃς χρόνον, προσεθῇ δὲ σοὶ ἔτη ζωῆς, *Prov.* ix. 18.

Ver. 18. *A Man that breaketh Wedlock, saying, Who seeth me? I am compassed about with Darkness, the Walls cover me, what need I to fear! the Most High will not remember my Sins.* ἀνθρώπος παραβαίνων ἀπὸ τῆς κλῆνης αὐτοῦ, i. e. Literally, the Man that violates the Faith of the Marriage-bed, and passes from his own to that of another's. The *Vulg.* adds, *Contemnens animam suam*, which may mean that by such a loose Behaviour he exposes himself to all the Consequences of Adultery, to Disgrace, and the Loss of his own Honour, to the Resentment of the injured Party, and to Death itself, which among the *Hebrews* was the Punishment of this Crime, *Lev.* xx. 10. What the wise Man here observes of the Adulterer, that he comforts, or rather deceives himself with groundless Reasons, and fruitless Pretences, to lull his Conscience, is very just and true of Sinners in general, See ch.



ch. xvi. 17. After a Course of Wickedness they take up, and entertain a Set of new Principles, apply their Minds, and often force them to believe a Lie, and begin to argue with themselves in the following, or some such like Manner, Opportunity invites, the Object is alluring, no Eye seeth me, I shall go undiscovered, or however unpunished,—the Men of Taste, and my Betters, scruple not to commit it, what need I be so severe and mortify'd in my Life, as to deny myself the Gratification of my Passions,—this Sin is necessary, and constitutional to me, and I cannot avoid it;—it is questionable whether it be a Sin,—or one of so deep a Dye as is pretended,—and Flesh and Blood is always present with me, and I cannot shake it off.—There have been good Men, as they have been reckoned, who have justified the Practice by their Example;—the Bulk of Mankind allow such Actions, and declare them easily pardonable, and reconcileable with the Hopes of Heaven;—the Scriptures are not rightly understood in their pretended Condemnations.—When I am old, this Sin will leave me, 'tis my Infirmary, and God is very pitiful to the Infirmities of Mankind. Thus Sinners please themselves with such false Reasoning; they resolve to act the Crime, and seek Excuses for it afterwards, and if happily they can find out a Fig Leaf, or some Cover for their Eyes that they may not see their own Nakedness and Deformity, they fortify themselves in their Error, and hug the pleasing Delusion.

Ver. 19. *Such a Man only feareth the Eyes of Men, and knoweth not that the Eyes of the Lord are ten thousand Times brighter than the Sun, beholding all the Ways of Men.*] It is an Instance of great Blindness and Folly to be afraid of the Eyes of Men, to dread their Sentence, to avoid their Presence and Sight, and to flee to Obscurity and Darkness, and at the same Time not to fear or regard the Eyes of God, before whom all Things are naked and open, and Darkness is of no Significancy; according to that fine Sentiment of the Psalmist, *If I say, Peradventure the Darkness shall cover me, then shall my Night be turned into Day: for the Darkness is no Darkness with thee, but the Night is as clear as the Day; the Darkness and Light to thee are both alike*, Psal. cxxxix. 10, 11. Solomon argues in the like Manner upon a parallel Occasion. *And why wilt thou, my Son, be ravished with a strange Woman, and embrace the Bosom of a Stranger? for the Ways of Man are before the Eyes of the Lord, and he pondereth all his Goings*, Prov. v. 20, 21. Some of the ancient Poets have complimented the Sun so far as to say, *ἥλιος ὅς πάντ' ἐφορᾷ, καὶ πάντ' ἐπαιθεῖ*, but how far is this exceeded by the Grandeur and Majesty of our Author's Expression; and how is the Idea of the Omniscience of God enlarged, when he says of him, that his Eye

is ten thousand Times brighter than the Sun, which is only a feint Resemblance of his Perfections. St. Austin exceeds himself in Description of this Attribute, or rather God's Immensity, *Qui ubique præsens es, & inveniri vix potes; qui tenes omnia, imple omnia, circumplecteris omnia, superexcellis omnia, sustines omnia*. In Spec. c. iv.

Ver. 20. *He knew all Things, e'er ever they were created, so also after they were perfected, he looked upon them all.*] i. e. Before they were made or existed, all Things were known to him, and so are they in like manner known and remembered by him now they are finished, and are in their Perfection and Glory, *μέλα τὸ συνέλεσθαι*. This seems an Answer to the false Reasoning of the Adulterer, § 18. Dr. Grabe with great Judgment puts this Verse in a Parenthesis, which makes the Connection clearer.

Ver. 21. *This Man shall be punished in the Streets of the City.*] The Adulterer thinks to escape God's all-seeing Eye; he skulks in, and loves the Darkness, because his Deeds are evil; but God's Justice will drag him forth into open Day-light, and not suffer his Crime to go undiscovered, or unpunished. And because he thought so meanly of his infinite Knowledge, as to entertain Hopes to deceive him, and of the Perfection of his Nature, that he could wink at such a Crime, his Punishment shall be in the most exemplary Manner, he shall be stoned in the publick Streets, as the Nature of his Offence required, Lev. xx. 10. And thus the Arab. *In iisdem rebus propter quas homo non putet se puniendum neque condemnandum, pro his in quibus deprehensus fuerit, diffamabitur in plateis urbis*. In like Manner the Adulteress, which departs from her conjugal Faith, shall be either stoned Jobn viii. 5. or burnt, as Judah determined in the Case of Tamar, Gen. xxxviii. 24. In the following Verses the wife Man enlarges upon the Crime of the Woman, and shews how the Guilt of it is inflamed by the Consequence attending it, especially the bringing in a spurious Issue to inherit, which however shall not prosper, nor continue long; *for the Children of Adulterers shall not come to their Perfection, and the Seed of an unrighteous Bed shall be rooted out*, Wisd. ch. iii. 16. instead of being brought out into the Congregation, § 24. The Oriental Versions have, *hujusmodi ejiciatur ab ecclesia*. And the Law determines in like Manner with respect to Bastard Children, Deut. xxiii. 2.

Ver. 27. *And they that remain shall know that there is nothing better than the Fear of the Lord.*] Her Posterity, or those that come after seeing God's Judgments, or the exemplary Punishments exercised upon Sinners, shall confess the Evil and Mischief of Sin, and shall take Warning by their Fate and Example: they shall confess, that the Fear of the Lord is the most honourable Service, and the keeping of his Commandments the

Source



Source of true Happiness. And thus the Psalmist, *Because he hath set his Love upon me, therefore will I deliver him, I will set him up because he hath known my Name: with long Life will I satisfy him, and shew him my Salvation*, Psal. xci. 14, 16. Or if, with the Oriental Versions, we take it in a more general Sense, that all Mankind, and especially such as have happily escaped from some common and wasting Calamity, must confess, that the Fear of the Lord is the best Safeguard and Security, the Reflexion is equally beautiful; what follows in the next Verse is omitted in some Greek Copies, and in the Arab. and Syr.

CHAP. XXIV.

Ver. 1. **M**OST of the Commentators agree in interpreting this Chapter of the *Logos* personally, though it will be difficult, if we pursue this Application quite through, to make all the Particulars in the Description suit with the *Logos*, in all its Characters and Relations, though here and there a Verse may seem to favour and countenance it. Some few understand it of Wisdom derivatively, as displayed in God's Works at the Creation. Calmet says, that the wise Man here opposes the Wisdom of the *Hebrews*, or the Study, Knowledge, and Practice of the *Jewish* Law to the *Pagan* Learning, and gives the Preference to the former, as more ancient, exalted, and noble than the *Greek* Philosophy, or any Branch of profane Science: that God communicated Wisdom, or the Knowledge of his Law more particularly to *Moses* their great Lawgiver, and afterwards to *David*, *Solomon*, the Prophets, &c. that this Favour was not vouchsafed to all People indifferently, but he chose *Jacob* for his Heritage, and *Jerusalem* for her Habitation; that its Temples was her Palace, its Ark her Throne, from whence were issued out her Laws, Ordinances, and Statutes. And no wonder that this Writer, who has on many Occasions shewn a Tincture of *Jewish* Prejudice, should be strongly attached to the Law of *Moses*, and say very excellent Things in Commendation of it, by representing the Law like a true Schoolmaster (as *St. Paul* calls it on another Occasion) preferring his own Learning and Wisdom to that of all others. However *Christians* may now look upon the Law, as beggarly Elements, in comparison of the Light of the Gospel, yet every zealous Disciple of *Moses* was big with the Praises of it, and gloried in the Pentateuch, as the chief *Book of Wisdom* in the World. If this Chapter is an Imitation of *Prov. viii.* or *Wisd. vii.* or of both, as some would have it, and its Intent to shew the Eternity, Excellence, Power, Use, and Desirableness of Wisdom, it is so far in a new Dress, as to differ in Circumstances, and is

not applicable altogether in the same Way that those other Descriptions are. Upon the whole, tho' I do not exclude any Application that can be fairly made of this Chapter to the *Logos* under any Characters and Relations, in which he stood to the *Jews* in the Time of this Writer, and which the *Jews* at that Time may be supposed to have understood, or to have had any probable Notions of, yet I must own, though it be a quite novel Exposition, that there is a strong Appearance that the principal thing represented in this Chapter, under the Personage and Character of Wisdom, is *God's Covenant* with the *Israelites*, or the *Law of Moses*. And though some Things in the Progress of the Description are justly enough applicable to the *Son*, as *Angel* of the Covenant, and to the *Spirit*, as Dictator of it, yet the fixed Object of the Author seems to be the *Law*, or *Covenant* itself.

The Reasons inducing me to think so are these:

1. The Wisdom here extolled is confin'd to the *Jewish* Nation, as its proper Inheritance; as taking up its Rest with them; and with them alone, as distinguished from the rest of Mankind, *ŷ 1, 2, 8, 10, 11, 12.*

2. The Author seems to say as much himself, at the End of *Wisdom's Encomium*, at *ŷ 23.* which is a Key to the whole, in my Judgment. *All these Things*, says he, *are the Book of the Covenant, even the Law which Moses commanded, &c.* And when he adds immediately, *Faint not to be strong in the Lord, &c.* *ŷ 24.* he seems only to paraphrase on the Words *חזק*, or sometimes *חזק ונתחזק* which were commonly put at the End or Foot of the Copies of the Law by the *Jewish* Transcribers of it, and likewise are in all the printed Editions.

3. All the other Versions concur to this Interpretation, *Hæc omnia liber vitæ, &c.* Vulg. *Res istæ omnes scriptæ sunt in libro Testamenti Dei, Lege scilicet, quam præcepit nobis Moses hæreditariam, &c.* Arab. *Hæc omnia in libro Fæderis Domini scripta sunt. Lex quam præcepit Moses— plena quasi flumen Phison sapientiæ, &c.* Syr. Now how are these Passages to be understood otherwise than that the Books of *Moses*, the *ספר תורה*, or the Pentateuch, is, or contains the whole of the Wisdom extolled in the foregoing Description? This 23<sup>d</sup> Verse, therefore, seems to me just such another Explication of the foregoing *Prosopopæia*, as that of *St. Paul*, in *Gal. iv. 24.* who, after representing the different States of *Hagar* and *Sarah*, resolves the Allegory thus, *Αὗται γὰρ εἰσιν αἱ δύο διαθήκαι*; or that, *Rom. vii. 9.* which is a Key likewise to the Difficulties of that Chapter.

So that as *vii. Sap. Sol.* Wisdom is described as essential in God, and derivative in Mankind in general, she is here described, as essential indeed in him; but derivative in



a peculiar Manner by the Law of *Moses* to the *Israelites*, as their proper Inheritance, or Possession.

Thus much being premised, it will be easier to point out how the whole Description lies in this View of its principal Drift. But I would first observe that I prefer the Title *Σοφίας Αἰνεσις*, to the other, *Αἰνεσις Σοφίας*, because he introduces her as her own Encomiast.

Ver. 1. *Wisdom shall praise herself.*] This she properly doth in a written Law, by which the Spirit of God reveals his Will, or his Knowledge to Man.

*Herself*, *ἑαυτὴ αὐτῆς*. May not this be understood of the Spirit of the Law, as distinguished from the Letter, or Body of it? Much hath been said of its *spiritual Sense*, in which indeed its true Wisdom lay.

*And shall glory in the Midst of her People.*] What People could a *Jewish* Writer suppose the *Peculium* of Wisdom, but those of his own Nation? The Law indeed could glory no where else but among them: But Wisdom, in any other Construction of it, might glory elsewhere, as well as among them.

Ver. 2. *In the Congregation of the most High shall she open her Mouth.*] By *Moses* being read in the Synagogues every Sabbath Day; or, if we understand *Ecclesia*, or *Concilium*, of larger and more solemn Assemblies at *Jerusalem*, the Place may still be well interpreted of the *Law* read, and expounded in them. See *Deut.* xxxi. 10, 11. *And triumph before his Power*, *ἐναντὶ δυνάμεως αὐτοῦ*, *Syr.* *In medio exercituum ejus*, his Hosts, i. e. Congregation of *Israelites*, *Ab omnibus amicis ejus*, Arab.

The *Vulgate* indeed hath it, *in conspectu virtutis ejus*. But then this is immediately explained into the same Sense the other Versions give, viz. *In medio Populi exaltabitur*. *In plenitudine sanctā admirabitur*, & *in multitudine electorum habebit laudem*, &c.

It is worth noting however, that *רִבְּרִיב* *Robur*, *δύναμις*, doth also signify (taken without Points) *congregari*, *coire*; and after all why may not *רִבְּרִיב* signify the Ark of the Covenant, called otherwise the Ark of his *Strength*? *Psal.* cxxxii. 8. and 2 *Chron.* vi. 41. Without doubt the Law never triumphed so conspicuously, as in the Presence of the Ark at the Passage over *Jordan*, the Siege of *Jericho*, and on other Occasions, whence it might be called *רִבְּרִיב* the Ark of his *Strength*; or on more ordinary Occasions, at the great Assemblies at the Tabernacle and Temple, when all the Congregations appeared before the Lord.

Ver. 3. *I came out of the Mouth of the most High.*] This, though generally understood of the Almighty *Fiat*, (See *Bishop Bull's Defens. Fid. Nic.* c. 9.) yet is also true of the *Logos*, or Angel of the Covenant, who as the *Vulg.* adds, was *primogenitus ante omnem Creaturam*. True of the Holy Spirit, and

with great Propriety from his being *Πνεῦμα*, but most literally true of the Law given at *Mount Sinai*, God spake these Words and said. And indeed all the Law was delivered to *Moses* orally, God spake to him Face to Face, as a Man speaketh to his Friend, *Exod.* xxxiii. 9, 10, 11. and elsewhere.

*Ibid.* *And covered the Earth with a Cloud.*] viz. When God uttered the Law, either at *Mount Sinai*, which was covered with thick Clouds and Darkness for Forty Days together, while the Law was delivering to *Moses*, or afterwards to *Moses* from the Pillar of the Cloud, from whence God always spake to him.

Ver. 4. *I dwelt in high Places, and my Throne (was, may as well be supplied as is) in the cloudy Pillar.*] True of the Angel of the Covenant, but true of the Covenant itself too. The Law was *ἐκτείνετο*, minister'd by Angels in the Hands of a Mediator. Not only the Morality of its eternal and immutable, but even the external Apparatus of it had its Pattern in the Mount, which being the Example and Shadow, as *St. Paul* says of heavenly Things, the whole Law of the Tabernacle was exhibited in the Mount.

And possibly *ἐν ὑψηλοῖς καὶ ἀσυνώματοι*, may relate principally to the divine Model, and be taken in this Sense, *I pitched my Tabernacle in the Mount*.

*My Throne was in the cloudy Pillar*; or with the cloudy Pillar, viz. the Ark of the Testimony, wherein first the two Tables of Stone, then the whole written Law, were deposited, over which, so deposited, the Cloud rested or fate. It is expressly called *Θρόνον* by *Josephus*, agreeably to the Scripture Expression of God's sitting between the Cherubims. He also calls it *ἀρμα*, the Chariot, from his riding upon the Cherubims. And it is called in Scripture *כְּבוֹד* the Glory, from the *Schecinah* residing over it.

It is true, it hath been much doubted whether the whole Law, as well as the Tables of the Covenant, were included in the Ark. But it is enough for the Interpretation of this Writer that the Jews held it was, viz. an entire Copy of the Pentateuch, and an Autograph of their Lawgiver *Moses* himself.

Ver. 5. *I alone compassed the Circuit of Heaven.*] *Ἦρον ἑαυτὴ ἐνέκλωσα μόνη*. It is said of *Solomon*, *Wisd.* vii. that God granted him the certain Knowledge of the Alterations of the turning [of the Sun] the Change of Seasons, the Circuit of the Years, and the Positions of the Stars: So here it is said of the Writings of *Moses*, with greater Truth, that the true Knowledge of the Creation, Course, or Revolution of the Heavenly Bodies, for Days and for Nights, for Months, and Seasons and Years, was first delivered and explained in them; and in them only with any Authority and Certainty.

The Circuit here, *Ἦρον*, and the turning in



in *Wisd.* vii. 18. was most probably in the Original of both Places *שׁוּ* an Arabick Root for *circuivit*, *gyravit*, which though rendred in *Job* ix. 9. and xxxviii. 32. *Arc-turus*, probably means no more than the Re-volutions of the Heavens for the Distinctions of Times and Seasons, according to *Moses's* Account.

Ibid. *And walked in the Bottom of the Deep.*] I alone discovered the Nature and Uses of the great Abyfs, viz. when it was covered with Darknefs, *Gen.* i. 2. when its Waters were separated, *6.* when the Foun-tains of it were broken up, *Gen.* vii. 11.

Ver. 6. *In the Waves of the Sea, and in all the Earth, and in every People and Na-tion I got a Possession.*] I gained the first Knowledge, and gave the only authentick Account by Revelation, of the Formation of Seas and dry Land, of the prolifick Qualities of both; of the overwhelming the Earth by the Waters at the general Deluge; of all the Nations and Generations of Men in Suc-cession from the Creation to the Dispersion of them throughout the Earth. Whatever Knowledge is extant of these Things, is col-lected together, and is only to be found o-riginally in the *ספר תורה*, the only true Source and Foundation both of natural Phi-losophy and History of the Knowledge of Things and Men.

This perhaps may look forced: but what Interpretation can be given that will not e-qually look so? To say, for instance of the *Logos*, the Creator himself, that *he got a Possession* in his Works, (*λόγος* is the Word) that he did *acquirere, vel comparare*, in all these Things, which were originally and natural-ly *his own*, seems as harsh. The Author of the *Book of Wisdom* allows to *Solomon's* bor-row'd Character, *all* which is here contend-ed for, the Law in the borrow'd Character of *Wisdom*. Nor is it improper to interpret all that the Writer ascribes there to the Perfo-nage of *Solomon*, of sacred History, or the *Law*, or *Pentateuch* in particular. See *Comm.* on *Wisd.* p. 36. It may therefore be as just-ly applied to, and predicated of the one as the other.

Ver. 7. *With all these Things I sought Rest.*] Rich with all this Treasure of recon-dite Knowledge I saw where to deposite, pre-serve, and improve my Gains, and in whose Inheritance I should abide, viz. I sought in whose, &c. without an Interrogation Point. *Κληρονομία τίνος* is an *Hebraism*, where the *Cu-jus* expressed by *ו* is the Suffix; as *וְגֵר לִמִּי* *ו* *in sorte cujus*, viz. *in cujus sorte*.

Ver. 8. *So the Creator of all Things* (*Κτίστης* in the proper Sense of *Creation*, or *Dominus* as the *Syr.* and *Arab.* have it) gave me Commandment, and he that made me (or who instituted me, *κτίσας με*; so *κτίζεν τέχνην*, *artem instituere*, so *jura condere*) caused my *Tabernacle* to rest, and said, *Let thy Dwel-ling be in Jacob, and thine Inheritance in Is-rael.* Can this be said properly of *Wisdom*

in any other Sense, than in that above given?

Ver. 9. *He created me from the Beginning before the World.*] The Decalogue, and all the purely moral Precepts of the Law, are everlasting Commandments. God ordain'd them from the Beginning, and established them as the immutable eternal Rules of Righteousness. And this seems to me to be that Branch of true *Wisdom*, of which the Root hath never been revealed, ch. i. *6.* not further at least than that it is *in* and *from* God. And that this is so, appears from *Mens* disputing about the true Foundation of Morality, even to this very Day.

*ἔκτισε* is not well rendered here by *cre-ated*, which can in no proper Sense be ap-plied either to *Wisdom*, the *Logos*, or *Holy Spirit*, or any thing uncreate. The same Greek Word is found in *Prov.* viii. 22. to be the rendring of *כִּנְנִי* *he possessed me*. By which Discovery *St. Jerom* rescued the strongest Weapon the *Arians* fought with out of their Hands. And therefore if we interpret this present Text of the *Logos*, we must either presume that the same Word was the Original here, that is in the *Heb. Proverbs*, or at least some other Word not properly signifying, or not only signifying *Creation*.

In the first Chapter of this Book *κτίσω* is twice used in speaking of *Wisdom*, yet in neither Place, to my Apprehension, in the Sense of *creating*, as our Translators have render'd it.

The first Place is this, *Προέχει πάντων ἐπισαί σοφία*, which probably means no more than *Προέχει ἐν πᾶσι*, she is preferable to all Things in point of Excellence.—Primacy is ordained to her, she is appointed, or consti-tuted first of Things. 'Tis true the *Arab.* gives it, *Plus omnibus rebus multiplicata est Sapientiā*. The *Syr.* *Omnibus his abun-dantior est Sapientiā*. Hence I conjecture the Original Word might be *רָר* which signifies both *excellentem effecit* (as in *Gen.* xlix. 4.) and *abundantem effecit* (as in *Exod.* xxxvi. 7.) by which means all the Versions may be accounted for.

Again, ch. i. 9. *He created her*, *Αὐτὸς ἐκ-τίσεν αὐτήν*, *Syr. patefecit. Arab. retexit eam*. Probably the *Heb.* gave it *עָרָה*, which sig-nifies both *nudari*, to answer the two last named Versions, and *effundi* for the Greek *ἐκτίσεν*, viz. he produced, brought forth, ex-hibited her, as a Law to his Creatures. And in this Sense I take *ἔκτισε* in the Text in hand, viz. he exhibited the Laws of Mora-lity, which were eternally in his own Mind, as the publick Rule of his own, and all his Creatures Actions.

Ibid. *And I shall never fail.*] Though this was not true of the ceremonial Law, as it was of the moral Precepts, yet the *Jews* thought both eternal, and to abide for ever.

Ver. 10. *In his holy Tabernacle I served before him.*] As having appointed all the Service



Service to be performed in it, and being fulfilled in the punctual Observance of the same. *Λατρεία*, or *the acceptable Service*, Rom. ix. 4. as well as *νομοθεσία*, was only among the *Jews*. And the publick Service in the Place where God should chuse, containing the Laws of Sacrifice, Expiation, &c. was the principal Branch of the ritual Law, (and in reality fuller of Wisdom than the *Jews* imagined) and in this Text, by a common Mode of Speech, the Law is said to do, what he who duly executes it, doth.

Ibid. *And so was I established in Sion.*] Fixed there at last, as being the appointed Seat of Worship. If the Interpretation of *λειουργεῖν* here appears something strain'd, what Construction is there that will suit this Place that is not so?

The Reference in the Margin to *Exodus xxxi. 3.* sends us to the divinely gifted Operators that made the Tabernacle. And the same Gift may be said, or supposed to be restored and exercised more conspicuously at the building of the Temple of Solomon, and so to be established in Sion. But though I readily admit this kind of Wisdom to be a Part of the Description vii. *Sap. Sol.* yet how such a Talent in Workmanship can be said to serve *λειουργεῖν*, before him, I cannot readily see. As I take it, the Spirit of Wisdom given to the Workers of the Tabernacle served only the Tabernacle itself, to make it the perfect Copy of the Pattern in the Mount, and therefore was necessarily inspired for that End, and has no just Relation to the Subject that we are now upon.

Neither do I see how we can suppose the *Logos λειουργεῖν*; for he is rather the Person to whom the Service was made, as being supposed the Object of Worship in the *Shecinab*. I greatly mistake, if the Tabernacle and first Temple Service, was not all supposed addressed to the divine Glory resident there; and therefore the Service itself could not be perform'd, but only in that Place where the *visible Presence* dwelt, which likewise made the *Jews* pray towards the Temple from all Quarters of the World. I say if the *Logos* was in the Pillar of Cloud and Glory, the Service of the Tabernacle cannot be ascribed to him as Agent, but as Recipient.

Ver. 11. *Likewise in the beloved City he gave me Rest.*] When Solomon dedicated his Temple, he said, *Arise, O God, into thy resting Place, thou and the Ark of thy Strength.* The written Law, after many Peregrinations and Removes, rested at *Jerusalem*; there also the Service was established without Removal to any other Place, *And in Jerusalem was my Power, Imperium meum, Syr. and Arab.* There the Law reigned, and there only, as in its proper Capital; with regard to God it served, it minister'd; with regard to Men, it reign'd.

Ver. 12. *And I took Root in an honourable People.*] *δεδοξασμένῳ*, a People honoured

with God's visible Residence among them, by the *Shecinab*, *ὡν ἡ δόξα*, Rom. ix.

Ibid. *Even in the Portion of the Lord's Inheritance.*] True of the People, and true of their Land, *Canaan*, in that and in them, the Law took Root, and no where else; being the national Religion of no Country or People but their own. I shall only add, that from this Figure of taking Root in the above Verse, the Author proceeds poetically in Wisdom's Personage, to compare her to the most stately Trees, bearing choicest Fruits; which still bear a better Construction from the Law and Books of *Moses*, than from any thing else, that occurs to me at present. Ver. 20. doth particularly accord with what the *Psalmist* writes of the *תורה*. *Psal. xix. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11.*

Ver. 15. *Like Aspalathus.*] The *Vulgate* translates it, *Balsamum aromatizans*, i. e. *Balm*, but it is not in the *Greek Text*, which reads in many Copies, *ὡς πάλαθος ἀρωμάτων*, i. e. as a Collection of Spices; one cannot well determine what *ἀσπάλαθος* is, or what Spicy Shrub it means. The Author seems to allude to the different Sorts of Perfumes mention'd *Exod. xxx. 34.* when he says, *I gave a sweet Smell like Cinnamon, and Aspalathus, and I yielded a pleasant Odour like the best Myrrh.* This probably respects the Composition of the first Perfume mention'd there, which was made of Myrrh, Cinnamon, the Aromatick Cane, and Cassia mixed with Oil. The *Vulg.* speaks here of Balm and of Storax only, but the *Greek* has neither of these, but mentions in general a Collection of Spices. The Words which follow, *I have perfumed my House like Galbanum, Onyx, and Stacte, and as the Drop of Frankincense which fell of itself*, according to the *Vulg.* Rendering, respects the Composition of the second Perfume. The *Greek* has it, As the Fume of the Frankincense which is burnt in the Tabernacle. It is certain the Incense, or second Sort, was compounded of all these Spices, and this Perfume was to be used by burning it upon the Altar, which the *Gr. Version* and *Vulg.* often call the Altar of Perfumes, or of *Thumiamia*. The *Vulg.* here calls that *Ungula*, which is called *Onyx* in *Exodus*, and what is there called *Stacte*, is here called *Gutta*. For *Stacte* are those Drops of Myrrh, which come naturally from the Tree without cutting it; so that both these Words signify the same Thing. See *Lamy's Appar. Bibl. Vol. II. p. 283.*

Ver. 18. *I am the Mother of fair Love, and Fear, and Knowledge, and holy Hope: I therefore being eternal am given to all my Children which are named of him.*] This is not in the *Alex. MS.* or *Vat.* nor in the *Orient. Versions.* Such Copies as have it vary greatly, and in the most correct it is much perplexed. From whence the latter Part, as it stands in the *Vulg.* came, does not appear, as it is uncertain what Copy they followed, and of what Authority that Copy was;



was; but it is remarkable that St. Cyprian is said by *Fl. Nob.* to have one half of it. The Sense of the former Part of the Verse seems to be, Those that possess me are loved of God, they shall be filled with his Love and Fear, and with the Knowledge of his Truths and Mysteries, and have the pleasing Hope of being happy with him, and enjoying him perfectly. As to the latter Part, which indeed seems corrupt, *Hæschelius* and *Grabe* agree with our Translators. *Grotius* conjectures the true Reading to be, *δίδωμι δὲ σύμπασιν τοῖς τέκνοις μου αἰεὶ γενέσθαι, ἐκλεγμένοις ὑπ' αὐτοῦ*, I give to all my Children, who are his Elect, Immortality. *Calmet* reads with a slight Alteration, *δίδωμι δὲ σύμπασιν τοῖς τέκνοις μου αἰεὶ γενέσθαι, τοῖς λεγομένοις ἀπ' αὐτοῦ*, sc. *καρπῶ*, *ψ* 17. connecting it with the foregoing Verse to the following Sense, I am as the Vine, whose Flowers produce rich and precious Fruit, and give Immortality to all my Children, who gather of this Fruit; alluding to the Tree of Life planted in Paradise. And then it follows very naturally *ψ* 19. *Come unto me all ye that be desirous of me, and fill yourselves with my Fruit.*

Ver. 20. *For my Memorial is sweeter than Honey, and mine Inheritance than the Honey-Comb.* *ὑπερ μέλιτος κηρῶ.* Other Copies have *κύριον, κλήρον, κληῖν*, and some *κρείν*. *Bochart* conjectures the true Reading to be in one Word, *μελικήρον*, and in this Sense *μελικήρον*, *favus*, occurs in *Theocritus*,

*Ἐκ σομάτων δὲ  
Ἐρρέε μοι Φωνὰ γλυκερωτέρη ἢ μελικήρῳ.*  
Idyll. 20.

And possibly the *Son of Sirach* might borrow the Word from him, for he lived not many Years after him, and both wrote in *Egypt*, *Hieroz.* L. iv. c. 12. The *Syr.* and *Arab.* which have *favum* only, favour this Conjecture. The rendring would be better and clearer, The Remembrance of me is sweeter than Honey, and the Possession of me than the Honey-Comb. And thus *Calmet*, *Il est plus doux de se souvenir de moi, & de me posséder, que de goûter le miel le plus délicieux.* The Pleasures of Wisdom are chaste and innocent, far above the surfeiting and guilty ones which the World offers, which have a Sting accompanying their Sweetness. The Scriptures to recommend the Study of the Law, and the Practice of the Commandments of God, use the same Comparison, *Psal.* xix. 11. cxix. 103.

Ver. 21. *They that eat me shall yet be hungry, and they that drink me shall yet be thirsty.* The Entertainment arising from Wisdom is often set forth under the Notion of a Feast, whereby is expressed the high Satisfaction, Joy, and Pleasure, which the Principles of Wisdom and Virtue fill the Heart with. Its Entertainment is such, that a most plentiful Provision is made for all hungry and thirsty Souls, who shall find Life,

Vigour, Strength, and Joy, communicated to them from her sacred Instructions, as from a perpetual Spring; and the Appetite for her Delicacies shall be continually renewing, growing, and encreasing upon them. The following is a beautiful Contrast, and truly states the Difference, *Hoc distare inter delicias corporis & cordis solet, quod corporales deliciae, cum non habentur, grave in se desiderium accendunt; cum vero avide eduntur, comedentem protinus in fastidium per satietatem vertunt. At contra spirituales deliciae cum non habentur, in fastidio sunt; cum vero habentur in desiderio: tantoque amplius a comedente esuriuntur, quanto & ab esuriente amplius comeduntur. In illis appetitus placet, experientia displicet; in istis appetitus vilis, & experientia magis placet: in illis appetitus saturitatem, saturitas fastidium generat; in istis autem appetitus saturitatem, saturitas appetitum parit. Augent enim spirituales deliciae desiderium in mente, dum satiant.* *Greg. Hom.* xxxvi. in *Evang.* The Metaphor of eating and drinking applied to the Pursuit of Wisdom, is very familiar to the *Eastern Nations*, and frequent in the *Jewish Writings*. Hence *Philo* represents Wisdom, Prudence, Virtue, &c. as the Food of the Soul, or that spiritual Meat and Drink, which nourishes to Life eternal. In Scripture too it often occurs, See *Psal.* xlii. 3. *Prov.* ix. 5. *Isai.* lv. 1, 2. *Matt.* v. 6. *John* vi. 27, 35.

Ver. 22. *He that obeyeth me, shall never be confounded; and they that work by me shall not do amiss.* The *Vulg.* renders, *Qui audit me, non confundetur*, following a faulty Copy which had *ὁ ἐπακούων μου. Οἱ ἐργαζόμενοι ἐν ἐμοὶ* would be better rendred, They that labour for me, or to obtain me, shall not miscarry, and lose their Labour, *ἐκ ἀμαρτήσων*, or shall not sin, i. e. fall into any wilful and deliberate Sins; or shall not err from God's Commandments, through the Light which Wisdom holds forth. The Verses which follow from hence are not part of Wisdom's Speech or Eulogy, but spoken by the Author, as from himself.

Ver. 25. *He filleth all Things with his Wisdom, as Pison.* *Pison* according to the mystical Theology of the *Jews*, is constantly interpreted Wisdom. It is derived from a *Radix*, which signifies to fill, to encrease, to spread, and diffuse itself as from a Centre, for most of the *Hebrew Lexicographers* agree, in deriving it, either from the Verb *פָּדַ*, which signifies to run out, to be full, or encrease; or from *פָּשַׁ*, which signifies to spread itself, because Tides are so violent and so high at the End of the *Persian Gulf*, that Trenches were not a sufficient Defence against their Irruptions into the neighbouring Grounds, so that all that Coast is full of Lakes, marshy Places, and Sands, as *Strabo* observes, L. xvi. Nothing therefore could be more proper than an Allusion to this River *Pison*, *Gen.* ii. 11. which implies overflowing in its very Name. See ch. xxi. 13.

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Ver.







nal Passions, shews, that his past Life has been irregular and mispent, and that he has made an ill Use of his Reason.—The Attempt therefore upon *Susannah* by the two Ancients of the People, was the more scandalous and flagrant, from their Station and Character. But may not this be a false reading; for there is no mention of an old Adulterer in any of the Versions; and why an old Adulterer particularly? Is not an Adulterer at all Times to be abhorred and hated, and a young Man that is so inclined to be more dreaded, as being more dangerous, though the other be more ridiculous. I think the true Reading is, *γέροντα μῶρον*, i. e. a silly old Man, who acts imprudently or lightly, who might have been expected through a long Term of Life to have gained much Prudence and Experience. This Conjecture is confirmed by the *Vulg.* and *Syr.* and *Arab.* Versions which have, *senex fatuus & insensatus*; and by the Context very strongly.

Ver. 3. *If thou hast gathered nothing in thy Youth, how canst thou find any thing in thine Age?*] Some understand this as an Advice to lay up Riches in the Time of Youth, which is the most proper Season, as the Body is then in its greatest Vigour; but it seems better to understand it of seeking after Wisdom, and laying up a Stock of useful Knowledge early in Life, that a Man may not be greatly deficient, or want it in his old Age, when he will have great Occasion for it, and it will be too late to obtain it. And thus the *Orient.* Version, *Si in Juventute tua sapientiam non congeffisti, quomodo reperies eam in Senectute tua?* The like Advice *Bias* the Philosopher gives, *ἰσθόδιον ἀπὸ νεότητος εἰς γῆρας ἀναλαμβάνει σοφίαν... βέλαιότερον γὰρ τὸ τοῦ ἄλλων κλημάτων*, *Ap. Laert.* *Γέροντες* in the following Verses does not signify old Men strictly so called, but is to be taken as *Senatus* among the *Latins*, and *πρεσβύτεροι*, sometimes by the *Greeks*, which are rather Terms of Dignity, than real Marks of Age. This seems necessary to avoid Tautology, and is confirmed by the ancient Versions. The *Syr.* has, *Quam decens est magnatibus sapientia, & honestis sensus atque consilium.* And the *Arab.* *Quam pulchra est sapientia nobilibus, & honoratis ratio ac judicium?* *Junius* likewise understands it of dignified Persons, or such as are in Authority.

Ver. 7. *There be nine Things which I have judged in mine Heart to be happy, and the Tenth I will utter with my Tongue.*] The very learned Bishop *Candler* says, *Vind. of Christianity*, p. 80. that there is a Verse, or a Sentence at least wanting in all the *Greek* Copies, as the Context manifestly shews; for whereas ten Particulars are referred to by the wise Man, neither the *Gr.* *Latin*, nor *English*, seem to contain more than nine: But as the *Lat.* and *Gr.* mention different Particulars, there is a greater Pro-

bability by that means of making out the Number. For if we add with the *Vulg.* *Beatus ille, qui invenit amicum verum*, the whole will be compleat, nor can we pitch upon any Particular as a more necessary ingredient to Happiness, nor is any one more commended by our Author in various Parts of this Book; or we may add from the *Syriac*, *Beatus vir, quem non fregit paupertas*, to supply the Defect. *Badwell* calls the fear of the Lord, the tenth; and *Grotius* says, the Love of the Lord must be the Particular wanting, unless Prudence and a Friend, & 9. be both taken in. But not to insist, that the Fear and Love of God were not so nicely distinguished in the *Old Testament* Times, as by *St. John* in his first Epistle, since *Syr.* and *Arab.* as well as *Complut.* have this Distinction here: It may however be observed, that after saying, & 10. there is none above him that feareth the Lord, it seems strange & 11. to make the Love of the Lord above all Things, meaning somewhat different from his Fear. And it seems yet stranger to do this without some Particle of Connexion. Our Translation indeed adds *But*, which should be put in *Italicks*; the doing this is much neglected in the Apocryphal Books.

*Ibid.* *And he that liveth to see the Fall of his Enemy.*] This is according to the Narrowness of the *Jewish* Notions. The *Jews* thought Hatred and Revenge were permitted, or however tolerated, under that Dispensation, See *Macc.* v. 43. but this was an Abuse and Corruption of the Law. When we read of Saints under it wishing for, or rejoicing over, the Fall of their Enemies, or the Death of the Wicked, or uttering Imprecations against them, this is not to be resolved into any Principle of Revenge, or Rancour against them, but proceeds rather from a commendable Zeal, and a Thirst for God's Glory, which is displayed by such Instances of his Justice.

Ver. 11. *The Love of the Lord passeth all Things for Illumination.*] i. e. He that desires to enter farthest into the Secrets of Wisdom, and to make greater Progress in the School of Knowledge and Virtue, will sooner learn and improve by the Love of God, than by his own Study or Enquiry; God's Blessing will best forward his Endeavours, and his Obedience is the most promising Means of Illumination. To the same Purpose is that Passage, ch. xxi. 11. *He that keepeth the Law of the Lord, getteth the Understanding thereof.* And that of *Solomon*, *They that seek the Lord, understand all Things.* *Prov.* xxviii. 5. See *Wisd.* i. 4. *Psal.* cxix. 100. And our Saviour assures us, that if any Man will do his Will, he shall know of the Doctrine whether it be of God. *John* vii. 17. viii. 31, 32. Some make the Sense to be, that the Love of God excels all the former Instances of Happiness, and is more glorious than any of them; and thus the *Tigurin* Version, *Religio Domini*



*Domini claritate superat omnia.* Without it, the rest lose their Perfection; neither dutiful Children, a prudent Wife, a sincere Friend, nor even Wisdom itself, can make a Man happy, but he that hath it, is rather an Angel than a Man. St. Paul has the like Elogium upon Charity, or the Love of God, 1 Cor. xiii. Drusus, and some others think the Words *εἰς φιλισμόν*, to be an Interpolation, and indeed they are not in some Gr. Copies, nor in the *Vulg.* The following Verse too is wanting in many Editions, the Sense of which seems to be, the Fear of the Lord is *ἀρχή*, the Cause, or Principle of the Love of him, and Faith is the Cause of a holy Trust and Confidence in him.

Ver. 13. *Give me any Plague but the Plague of the Heart; and any Wickedness but the Wickedness of a Woman.*] The Greek is elliptical here, which our Translators have supplied. We may insert *ἁδεναι* from *ψ* 16. or some such Verb; as Calmet, Grotius, and Junius help this Defect. The Sense of the first Part is like that of Solomon, *The Spirit of a Man will sustain in his Infirmary, but a wounded Spirit who can bear?* Prov. xviii. 14. This Author hath been condemned for his Moroseness to Children, and his Reflexions upon the Female Sex; as to the former, I have shewn that his Precepts of Correction are to be taken in a restrained Sense; and with respect to the latter, Jansenius, and other Writers observe, that he is no professed Enemy to the Sex, nor intends any Reflexion upon them in general, as being the most beautiful Part of the Species, and designed in their Formation, as Help-meets and Comforts to Man. He fails not to give Merit its due Praise, and where an Opportunity offers, as in the Beginning of the next Chapter, of extolling a virtuous and deserving Woman, he does it in Terms of the highest Respect. What is said to the Disadvantage of them in this and the next Chapter, is only to expose the Failings of some few degenerate and perverse ones, but with a Design to recommend, by the Contrast, the worthier Part of the Sex the more. And though he may not seem quite complaisant, his Intention is honest and commendable, viz. to instruct Youth what Circumspection and Prudence is necessary in the Choice of a Wife, and the Conduct to be observed to prevent Feuds and Differences in the married State. Phocylides among the Fragments which are preserved, has some very remarkable Verses upon the Sex. What is particular and worth observing is, that he derives their good and ill Qualities from some Animals which partake of them, and whom in that respect they resemble. I shall mention only the two following:

Ἡ δὲ κυνὸς χαλεπή τε καὶ ἀγέλος ἡ δὲ μελί-  
σσις,  
Οἰκονόμος τ' ἀγαθή, καὶ ἐπιστάται ἐλάζεσθαι.

i. e. She that is cross and snarling hath something of the Nature and Temper of the Dog; but the good Housewife, the prudent Economist, the careful Manager, resembles the laborious Bee, with her Collection of Sweets.

Ver. 14. *And any Affliction, but the Affliction from them that hate me, and any Revenge but the Revenge of Enemies.*] The Sense of the whole seems to be, I would have any Affliction or Misfortune rather than that which my Enemy wishes me. Or I will compound for any suffering, so my Enemy knows nothing of it, and has not the ill-natured Pleasure of triumphing over me in it, and rejoicing at what has happened to me; for this Reason it is said of Saul's Death, *Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the Streets of Ascalon, lest the Daughters of the Philistines rejoice, lest the Daughters of the uncircumcised triumph,* 2 Sam. i. 20. A Piece of ill News an Enemy hugs inwardly, and would purchase at any Rate—*Hoc Itacus velit, Et magno mercetur Atridae.* Or the Sense may be that of Holy David, *Deliver me not over unto the Will of mine Enemies,* which often made a Part of his Prayer. In the next Verse it is said, *There is no Wrath above the Wrath of an Enemy.* *ὡπὲρ θυμοῦ ἐχθροῦ*, which differs from the former; for it seems more agreeable to the Context to read, *There is no Wrath above the Wrath of a Woman, or at least above the Wrath of a She-Enemy.* Accordingly the Syriac renders, *Non est inimicitia amarior ea quae mulieris est.* And St. Chrysostom reads in like Manner. And so the *Vulg.* has it, and the Margin of the Geneva Bible. Juvenal confirms the Observation, *Vindicta nemo magis gaudet, quam femina,* Sat. xiii.

Ver. 15. *There is no Head above the Head of a Serpent.*] The Hebrew Word *שׂוֹרֵךְ* principally signifies the head, and is as properly used for Poison, because the Venom of those pernicious Creatures, Asps, Vipers, and Serpents lies chiefly in their Head and Teeth. Thus Hosea x. 4. what our Version renders Hemlock, is *שׂוֹרֵךְ* in the Hebrew. The Interlinear Version has here indeed *Caput*, but Pagnin has explained it well, by inserting *Venenum* in the Margin. For what shall we understand by *Caput* or a Head simply, except something be understood or supplied, as in the Chaldee Paraphrase it is, in which, both in this Place and some others, the Reading is: As the Head of hurtful Serpents, denoting thereby either Poison, or some noxious poisonous Thing. As *שׂוֹרֵךְ* doth primarily signify an Head, so it is no less manifest that it is often used, written in the same Manner, for Poison itself, probably deduced from the first Signification, as the Serpent's Poison is in its Head. There are many Instances, in which it is used in such a Sense, as Deut. xxix. 18. *A Root that beareth Gall and Wormwood,*



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Wormwood, *וְלֵעָנָה*, i. e. according to the Margin, a poisonous Herb. The like occurs *Deut. xxxii. 32.* and *וְלֵעָנָה* \* 33. is expressly translated, *Venom of Serpents*, and so *Jer. viii. 14.* *וְלֵעָנָה* Water of Gall, is in the Margin, Poison, and *Amos vi. 12.* *Ye have turned Judgment,* *וְלֵעָנָה* in *Venenum*, according to the *Interlin. Version.* See *Jer. ix. 15. xxiii. 15. Lam. iii. 5, 19.* in all which Places, it is manifest, that *וְלֵעָנָה* signifies something distinct from Head, though *Ar. Montanus* in some of them, gives no plain Sense, or Meaning. But though, according to the Scope of the Place where it occurs, and as the Words with which it is joined suggest, it has different Significations, yet for the most part they tend to, or are derived from, one Notion, viz. Poison, and the Qualities of Noxiousness, and Bitterness, usually ascribed to it. And thus *Calmet* understands this Place, and *Bochart, Hieroz. lib. i. c. xxviii.* and *Pocock, in Hof. tom. ii.* *Θυμός* too is often taken in the Sense of Poison. See *Not. on Wisd. xvi. 5.*

Ver. 16. *I had rather dwell with a Lion and a Dragon, than to keep House with a wicked Woman.* After what the Scripture has informed us of *Eve*, the first Woman, by whom Sin entered into the World; of *Potiphar's Wife*, who tempted the Chastity of *Joseph*, and, because she could not seduce him, was the Occasion of his being cast into Prison; of *Dalilah*, who was the Cause of *Sampson's* Death; of *Solomon's* Fall, through the Power of Beauty; of *Jezebel*, who took off righteous *Naboth*; of *Ataliab*, who put to Death the whole Royal Race of *Judah*, to place herself upon the Throne; of *Job's* Wife, who was such a Scourge to him, and herself the greatest of his Plagues and Misfortunes, and many others known and infamous in Sacred and Prophane History, for their Resentment and Cruelty, which *Calmet* furnishes us with, one wonders the less at what the Author here says against the Sex, I should rather say, the bad and abandoned Part of it, for it is of these only he is to be understood. Though he seems concerned at the Fall and Misconduct of Part of a Species, lovely in itself, and expresses himself in Terms of Sharpness and Reproach, where a Serpent lies concealed under an Angel's Face, yet let it be remembered for his Vindication, that some of the ancient Poets far exceed him in their Invectives, and have as odious Comparisons, but I shall not retail their Venom, as *Grotius* does.

Ver. 17. *The Wickedness of a Woman changeth her Face.* As a good Conscience gives Life and Vigour to the Body, and has that pleasing Satisfaction going along with it, as to display itself even in the Face of a good Man, as was particularly verified in the Glory of *Moses's* Countenance, and the Angelick Face of *St. Stephen*, so inward Guilt is gloomy and melancholy, and gives a Sort of Horror and Deadness to the Coun-

tenance; and so strong is the Impression, that one may sometimes read Guilt in a Person's Face. *Calmet* understands this of a churlish passionate Woman in particular, whose Anger appears in her Face, and spoils and disfigures her Countenance, and when it comes to any outrageous Excess, gives her a Resemblance of one of the Furies. And indeed our Translators do render *πovneia*, the Word here used, by Churlishness *ch. xlii. 14.*

*Ibid. And darkneth her Countenance like Sackcloth.* *ὡς σάκκον*, the *Syr.* and *Arab.* Versions apply this, and indeed, the whole Verse, to the unhappy Husband of such a Woman, and make the Change and Gloominess to appear in his Countenance, who from the relation that is betwixt them cannot help being greatly concerned for her Misconduct, and betraying Uneasiness in his Looks, at her Behaviour: *Malæ mulieris improbitas pallidam reddit faciem mariti, eamque nigram efficit, quasi nigredinem Cilicii.* Besides this, which seems to suit best with the Husband's mournful Countenance, there is another Simile in the Margin, as a Bear, *ὡς ἀρκῶτα*, which *Bochart* prefers, *Hieroz. L. iii. cap. 9.* and thinks the other to be formed from; and that the Sullenness and Sternness of Look, in one out of Temper, is well expressed by the *παραμυδρῶν πρόσωπον* of a Bear. Both these readings have their Advocates, and are supported by the Authority of good Copies; and it is very observable and particular, that the *Vulg.* and *Jerom's Bible*, have both these Comparisons together, *Obsecabit vultum tanquam ursus, et tanquam saccum ostendet.*

Ver. 18. *Her Husband shall sit among his Neighbours.* *ἀναπεσεῖται.* If we understand this in the Sense of *discumbere*, or sitting at Table, the Sense then is, that her Husband shall be continually uneasy, even in Places, and among Company, where he might expect to have been agreeably entertained, and merry; or perhaps a better Sense may be, Her Husband *ἀναπεσεῖται*, *animo concidet*, shall appear dejected among his Neighbours and Acquaintance: And thus the *Vulg.* *In medio proximorum ejus ingemuit vir ejus.*

*Ibid. And when he heareth it, shall sigh bitterly.* I suppose the Sense of our Translators is, When her Husband heareth what is said of his Wife, and the Complaints made against her, *entendant ce qu'on dit de sa femme*, says *Calmet*, it will be a great Grief and Concern to him, and he will sigh bitterly; which seems much properer, than *suspirabit modicum* in the *Vulg.* which arose from a corrupt Copy, which had *μικρόν*, and probably was inserted from the Beginning of the next Verse. The *Syr.* and *Arab.* render, *invitus longa trahit suspiria*, from a Copy which had *ἀνέναντον*, instead of *ἀνέναντον*, which *Camerarius* also follows. This reading too is capable of a good Sense, viz. though her Husband in Company would gladly conceal his Grief, for fear of being taken notice of, or perhaps laughed at, which is the way



of the World, yet his Sighs break from him unwillingly, when he perceives them not, and steal from him unawares. And thus the Geneva Version, *Because of her he sigheth sore or he beware.*

Ver. 19. *All Wickedness is but little to the Wickedness of a Woman, let the Portion of a Sinner fall upon her.*] See ch. xlii. 13, 14. and particularly *Ecclesiastes*, vii. 28. where Solomon, speaking on this Subject, says: *One (good) Man among a thousand, but a Woman among all these have I not found.* Which a learned Writer well observes, is not to be looked upon as the just Character of Women in general in all Ages and Countries, but of such loose ones as Solomon was once acquainted with, or some of that Stamp in that and the neighbouring Nations. Bishop Patrick in *Loc.* The Sense of the latter Part is, Let a Woman of such bad Qualities fall to the Share of a Sinner, for one cannot wish a greater Plague to any Man, even an Enemy, than a worthless and profligate Woman. And thus Calmet, *Qu'elle tombe en partage au Pecheur*, and Junius, *Sorte peccator accidat illi*; which seems also the Sense of the *Vulg.* Such Wishes were not unusual; there is an Instance of the like in *Virgil*;

*Dii meliora piis, erroremque hostibus illum!*

Georg. Lib. iii.

This Sense seems confirmed from cap. xxvi. 23. *A wicked Woman is given as a Portion to a wicked Man: But a godly Woman is given to him that feareth the Lord.* To which that of Solomon is parallel: *The Woman, whose Heart is Snares and Nets, and her Hands as Bands, I find more bitter than Death; who so please God, shall escape from her, but the Sinner shall be taken by her.* *Ecclesiastes* vii. 26. The Sense, according to some, is: May God deal with her as the greatest of Sinners! And according to others, May God give her such a Husband, as may either tame, or reform her!

Ver. 20. *As the climbing of a Sandy Way is to the Feet of the Aged, so is a Wife full of Words to a quiet Man.*] i. e. She is a constant Clog and Plague to him. Matrimony hath formerly been the Common-Place for Raillery, as well as now. Ovid and Juvenal make very free with it; the latter takes a more than poetical Licence, when he makes all Matches unhappy, and wrangling to be the Entertainment of even the Marriage Bed:

*Semper habet lites, alternaque jurgia lectus  
In quo nupta jacet.* Sat. vi.

This probably is true, where a Person has the Misfortune of a Scold, as the Margin here has it, for his Partner; one, who will fill his House with Rage and Clamour, and his Bed with Cares and Restlessness; and especially if she has a submissive and tame Husband, she will be the more insolent and imperious, she will take Advantage of his

Meekness to make herself absolute, and her Husband ridiculous. But a loving and silent Woman ch. xxvi. 14. i. e. one, who knows how to guide her Words with Discretion, is a Gift that cometh of the Lord, her Character is amiable, and her Person desirable. She will not cross her Husband's Inclinations through Perverseness, nor set up her own through Haughtiness. The more easy and obliging he is, the greater Reason does she give him to continue so. Between such a Pair all Things go on smoothly, without any Rubs or Reproaches, and the Happiness in Paradise seems again revived.

Ver. 21. *Stumble not at the Beauty of a Woman.*] Some understand it thus: Cast not thyself down at the Feet of a beautiful Woman, being captivated with her Charms, and then the Advice will be like that ch. ix. 8. *Turn away thine Eye from a beautiful Woman, for many have been deceived by the Beauty of a Woman, for herewith Love is kindled as a Fire.* Or the Meaning may be like that in *Y* 5. *Gaze not on a Maid, that thou fall not by those Things that are precious in her.* If with the Syr. and Arab. Versions we understand it of an evil and loose Woman, it will then be the same with *Y* 6. *Give not thy Soul unto Harlots, that thou lose not thine Inheritance.*

Ibid. *And desire her not for Pleasure.*] *eis reuφh.* The Geneva Version has, *for thy Pleasure*: But many Copies omit this. The Sense of the whole either is: Admire not the Beauty of a Woman, lest it kindle a Criminal Passion in thee, and thou be tempted to lust after her: Or it may be considered as Matter of Advice to a Lover, not to chuse a Wife merely for her Beauty, or for any sensual Satisfaction proposed, but rather for her good Qualities and Accomplishments. As a wise Man principally aims at Society in a Wife, he ought to chuse one with such good Sense, as to form the agreeable Companion, and with such a Temper, as not only to share his good or evil Fortune with Equanimity, but with Sufficiency and Credit; one, not merely likely to encrease, but capable and willing to govern, his Family, bring up his Children, and to manage in all Things for him to the best Advantage. Euripides has exactly the same Sentiment with our Author:

*Νῦν καὶ διαδ'. ἔδεν τι τῆς διμορφίας  
ὀφελος, ὅταν τις μὴ φρίνας καλὰς ἔχῃ.*

Ver. 22. *A Woman, if she maintain her Husband, is full of Anger, Impudence, and much Reproach.*] The wise Man having given his Sentiments about Beauty, proceeds next to shew, that a Fortune, as such, should not be chosen, because such a one is apt to be assuming, and to reproach her Husband with what she brought him, and that his Subsistence, and the Figure which he makes, is through her. Imperiousness is misbecoming and insupportable, even in a Person of Worth



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Worth and Merit, and much more so, where only a Family or Riches is the Pretence. What *Juvenal* has observed, is, I believe, the Sentiment of most People,

*Malo Venusinam, quam te, Cornelia mater, Gracchorum, si cum magnis virtutibus adfers*

*Grande supercilium.* Sat. vi.

There may also another Sense be given of this Place; if a Woman rule her Husband, *Mulier si primatum habeat, contraria est viro suo.* *Vulg.* which *Calmet* expounds, *Si la femme a la principale autorité, elle s'élève contre son mari.* The rendring of the *Orient.* Versions is remarkable, *Servitus dura, et ignominia pessima est, mulier ferociens in maritum suum.* The poor Man in *Plantus* made but an indifferent Bargain, who says, *Uxorem accepi, dote imperium vendidi.* *Phocylides* strongly dissuades from such a Match, wherein Money is the only Ingredient:

*Μηδὲ γυναῖκα κακὴν οἰκοῖσιν σοῖσιν ἀγεῖδῃ, Λαλῶντος δ' αὐλόχου, πυγρῆς χάριν εἶνεκα φέρωντος.*

Ver. 23. *A Woman that will not comfort her Husband in Distress, maketh weak Hands, and feeble Knees.* *χεῖρες παρεμύεναι, ἡ γυνὴ παραλελυμένα, ἥτις εἰ, κ. τ. λ.* Besides the Sense of our Version, there is another favoured by *Grotius*: That the Woman who contributes not all in her Power to make her Husband happy, who will not be assisting in his Distress, and is indifferent about his Welfare, as that of a Stranger; who will neither take Pains herself, nor strive to gain others, to promote his Interest, is lazy, brutish, and good for nothing. Or rather, says *Calmet*, the Meaning is, That an idle indolent Woman, who, through Sloth or Delicacy, will not stir herself to look into her Family Affairs, nor contribute to the Management of the common Interest, can never make a Husband truly happy, or be a proper Mistress of a Family.

Ver. 24. *Give the Water no Passage, neither a wicked Woman Liberty to gad abroad.* Some Greek Copies have only *ἐξουσίαν*, Power simply, which a wicked Woman is sure to abuse every where, both at home and abroad. It is as necessary to curb and restrain a designing, heady, aspiring Woman, as to confine a swelling Water within its Banks. Power in bad Hands is dangerous, and, if not watched and prevented, will overturn every Thing, like an Inundation; and the more Strength it gains, the wider will be the Desolation and Ruin. Other Copies have *ἐξουσίαν ἐξόδου*, which our Translation follows. See ch. xxvi. 10. This seems to refer to a Custom among the Eastern Nations, of confining their Women, and keeping them closely shut up. The Apostle, among other Directions given to young Women, particularly advises them to be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, and obedient to their own Husbands. *Tit. ii. 5.* *Calmet* says, the Sense of this Place is the same with that of

*Solomon*: *Drink Water out of thine own Cistern, and running Water out of thine own Well.* *Prov. v. 15.* and that the Advice is directed to married Men, not to follow after strange Women, nor to covet the Sweets of stolen Waters. See ch. xxvi. 12. where the like Simile is applied to a loose and wicked Woman.

Ver. 26. *If she go not as thou wouldst have her, cut her off from thy Flesh, and give her a Bill of Divorce, and let her go.* *εἰ μὴ πορεύεται ὡς χεῖρες σου. i. e.* If she does not behave according to thy liking, or rather, if she refuses to obey thy Authority, and to be subject to thy Power; for Power is frequently meant, and expressed, by the Hand. *Xenophon* calls a good Wife, one who is ready and willing to oblige her Husband, *χειροθήνη*. By some a Wife has been considered as a Man's Right Hand; and then the Sense will be, If thy Right Hand offend thee, cut it off; though our Saviour by that Expression intended not to authorize any such Liberty of Divorce. A Wife however has always been esteemed as Part of a Man's own Flesh, for by Matrimony they become *εἰς σάρκα μίαν*, and to this the wise Man seems here to allude. No sooner was Man created, but God divided him into two, and no sooner were there two, but he united them into one, so that Marriage is almost as old as Nature, and its Union the most close and intimate. *Grotius* thinks the last Clause, *δίδε ἡ ἀπόλυσον*, to be only a marginal Explanation of the former Sentence, and at length crept into the Text; and indeed it is omitted in many Copies. By *δίδε* some understand, besides the Sense of giving a Bill of Divorce, the Restoring of her Fortune, or the giving her back what she brought. *Drusus* infers from this Place, that *Ben Sira* and *Sirachides* were not the same Person, as has been the general Notion. For the former's Axiom, *Os quod cecidit in sorte tua rode*, i. e. according to the Scholiast, that a Man must sit down contented with his Wife, whether she prove good or bad, seems inconsistent with the Advice here given, of parting from her if her Behaviour is not according to a Man's Liking. Either, says he, they are different Persons, or our Author changed his Sentiments. *Comm. in Loc.* See *Bartolocci's Biblioth. Rabbin.* Vol. i. p. 349.

### CHAP. XXVI.

Ver. 3. *A Good Wife is a good Portion, which shall be given in the Portion of them that fear the Lord.* By *γύναιον* or *ἀνδρεία* here, and *Prov. xii. 4.* xxxi. 10. is meant, one that is notable, managing, and diligent, whose Character *Solomon* describes, *Prov. xxxi. 10. &c.* In the former Chapter *19.* a wicked Woman is mentioned as the Portion of a Sinner; here it is said, that a good and virtuous Woman shall fall to the Lot of the Righteous, as a Reward



ward of his Goodness; and thus the *Syriac*, *Mulier bona dabitur viro timenti Dominum, propter bona ipsius opera.* See *Y 23. Prov. xix. 14. Tob. vii. 12.* As a prudent Wife is from the Lord, holy Men in Scripture accordingly begged the Direction of God, and his Blessing in the Choice of a Wife: For as God first instituted Marriage, so he still presides over it, and all Marriages ought to be concluded in his Fear, and entered upon with a Petition for his Blessing. *Abraham* comforts himself that the Lord God of Heaven would send his Angel to chuse a Wife for his Son *Isaac.* *Gen. xxiv. 7.* And his Servant prays unto the Lord God, of his Master *Abraham*, to send him good Success in the Undertaking he went about, and to shew Kindness unto his Master *Abraham* in a Particular which so nearly concerned the Welfare of his Family. *Y 12. Drusus*, and some other Expositors, differing herein from our Translators, make the next Verse a Continuation of the same Subject, *viz.* That he that is so highly favoured, as to have the Blessing of a good Wife, whether he be poor or rich, is completely happy, and his Satisfaction will appear in his very Countenance: For where the married Parties are happy in, and pleased with each other, and Love and Harmony are triumphant, as is the Case of every well chosen Match, Joy will of course succeed, and a never failing Spring of Delights. The *Syr.* and *Arab.* connect the Verses in the same Manner.

Ver. 5. *There be three Things that mine Heart feareth, and for the fourth I was sore afraid: The Slander of a City, the Gathering together of an unruly Multitude, and a false Accusation: All these are worse than Death.* *διαβολή πόλεως* is badly rendred here, the Slander of a City; *διαβολή* means rather Enmity, as *Grotius* observes it signifies *ch. xxviii. 9.* and so it occurs often in *6.* And hence *διάβολος* answers to *Satan*, an Adversary in the *Hebrew.* *διαβολή πόλεως* would be better rendred, the Ill-will of ones Country, the incurring the Displeasure of the Publick, or of an extensive Neighbourhood. History furnishes us with many Examples of Persons who have been fined, exiled, and put to Death through popular Discontent, and fell a Sacrifice to the Hatred and Caprice of an inconstant People. *Grotius* seems to take it in the Sense of Treason, and the *Geneva* Version expressly renders so. *Ἐκκλησία* sometimes signifies a promiscuous Assembly of the People; here it is taken in a bad Sense, and properly rendred the gathering together of an unruly Multitude. Such was that which was raised by *Demetrius* against *St. Paul,* *Acts. xix. 32.* *καταψευσμός* not only means a false Accusation, but probably refers to the false Accusation which this Author was in danger of his Life from, mentioned at large, *ch. li. 6.* and on Account of which he says, *Y 9. ὑπὲρ θανάτου ῥύσεως ἐδείκνυν;* which suggests to me,

that *ἐδείκνυν* is the true reading here, and not *ἐφοβήθη*, as most Copies have; and that *καταψευσμός* is the fourth Particular in order, for the Event of which he was so sore afraid, that he even prayed to the Lord for Deliverance from it: And what may seem to confirm this is, that some few Editions read *καταψευσμὸν ὑπὲρ θανάτου.* We shall the less wonder at the Vehemence of this Expression, if we consider what this Author says *ch. xxviii.* of the deadly Venom of the Tongue, and of the false Tongue in particular, *That the Death thereof is an evil Death, and the Grave better than it, Y 21.* nor disapprove the joining these together without the intervening Comma. Thus there are three Particulars very distinct, but how shall we make out all the four? Our Translators seem to have marked out the jealous Woman for the fourth, by inserting the Particle (*but*) in the Beginning of the next Verse, though the *Gr. Lat. Arab. Syr.* all omit this Particle. And this indeed is the general Way of solving this Difficulty. But is there any more Reason to fix upon this for the fourth Evil, than either of the two Plagues, which are mentioned immediately after? Which will as much then exceed the Number, as it now falls short. I suspect the Place to be mutilated, and that some Sentences, or at least Words, are wanting; and the Reasons for my Conjecture are these: 1. There is a Chasm, or Hiatus, here of three whole Verses in the *Oriental* Versions. 2. The Construction of the *Greek* seems to require some Addition. 3. *πάντα*, or *ταῦτα πάντα*, as the Copy, which our Translators follow, read, must refer to more, or larger Particulars than are at present mentioned. 4. *ὑπὲρ θανάτου πάντα μοχθηρὰ* contains the Author's Reflexion upon all the Particulars. And indeed, after mentioning that all the foregoing Instances were worse than Death, what could be found of Weight enough after to insert, or carry with it so much Dread? Jealousy, the Instance most insisted on, may make Life indeed very uneasy, and occasion great Grief and Sorrow of Heart; but the most affecting Description of that Passion will be but faint, after the Enumeration of Evils said to be worse than Death; and we cannot but observe the Climax to sink considerably, instead of rising more vigorously as it ought.

Ver. 6. *A Scourge of the Tongue which communiceth with all.* *πᾶσιν ἐπικοινωνῶσα*, i. e. which by its Clamour and evil Effects makes itself known to all; or rather, according to *Grotius*, which is common to, and generally goes along with the four Evils before mentioned. If we understand this of the jealous Woman in particular, and *μαστιγὴ γλώσσης* is so used, *Job v. 21.* upon the like Occasion, the Sense then is, that she is a Shrew, or a Scold, vexing herself and others, through Distrust, and Impatience of Temper. Jealousy was more frequent among the *Hebrews*; as Polygamy was tolerated among them



them, the Peace of Families was often disturbed by the Resentment and Suspicions of one rival Wife against another, as was the Case of *Hannah* and *Peninnah*, the two Wives of *Elkinah*; *Sarah* and *Agar*, *Rachel* and *Leah*, &c. And as Jealousy is a most raging Passion, it was often cruel and bloody, and would be satisfied with nothing less than Poison, or the Dagger.

Ver. 7. *An evil Wife is a Yoke shaken to and fro.*] Βορρυσίον σαλδόμενον. According to *Bochart* the Sense is, that an evil Wife is as troublesome and wearisome to a Man, as a Yoke that is put upon the Neck of Oxen. *Hieroz.* L. ii. c. 41. but the Generality of Interpreters lay more Stress upon σαλδόμενον, and think it implies, that an unhappy Marriage, or the uneasy State of a Man with a bad Wife, is like the Disagreement of Oxen under the same Yoke, who draw different Ways, and without doing any Good, are a Clog, Hindrance, and Vexation to each other, instead of being assisting like true Yoke Fellows, by concurrent Endeavours, and joint Labour. The comparing such a Wife to a Scorpion, in the Sentence following, is parallel to ch. xxv. 15. and strongly expresses the Danger of such an Union, and that the very Touch of her is deadly, and her Embraces fatal. "Man and Wife, says a very pious Writer, should resemble the two Kine that carried the Ark of the Lord; they should lovingly keep one Path, and turn neither to the Right Hand nor to the Left. 1 Sam. vi. Or they may be considered like the two Eyes of the same Body; if both go together, and look one Way, be it upwards or downwards, to the Right, or to the Left, all is well and comely in the Face, but if they be Cross-Eyed, and one Eye looks one Way, and the other another, there is then a manifest Blemish, and a disagreeable Distortion." *Bishop Babington's Works*, p. 316.

Ver. 8. *A drunken Woman and a Gadder abroad, causeth great Anger, and she will not cover her own Shame.*] A Woman that is addicted to drinking, inflames her Passions thereby, and has little or no Regard to Modesty and Decorum. Ἀγχημοσύνη αὐτῆς ἐσὺ καλύψει. Ἀγχημοσύνη is a modest Way among the *Hebrews* of expressing Nakedness, and what Nature and Decency commands to be concealed. As her Reason is impaired, and for a Time lost, she is frequently off of her Guard, and forgets what is due to her Sex and Character. *Omnis mulier quæ vinolenta & comessatrix est, eadem quoque meretrix est.* Auth. Oper. imperf. in *Matth.* Though this may seem too positive and general, yet thus much may be said, that she that is often so disguised, has great Luck if she escape being debauched. Her Talk, Looks, and Motions encourage an Attempt, and there are Libertines always ready to improve the Opportunity. *Curtius's* Description of the *Babylonish* Women will suit all such (and such, I

hope, are but few) who drown their Reason, and endanger their Virtue by Intemperance and Debauch: *Fæminarum convivium ineuntium principia modestus est habitus, deinde summa quæque amicula exuunt, paulatimque pudorem profanant; ad ultimum (bonos auribus habitus sit) ima corporum velamenta projiciunt.* *Romulus* enacted, that the Woman who was overtaken with Wine should be punished as an Adulteress; and he acquitted a Person who put his Wife to Death upon such an Occasion. *Plin.* L. xiv. *Val. Max.* L. vi. *Faunus*, King of *Latium*, caused his Wife to be whipped to Death, according to *Arnobius*, for her Intemperance. Many Copies have not the Words, *Gadder abroad*, nor do the *Orient.* Versions or *Vulg.* take any notice of them. But it may justly be observed of such as are fond of Company, and go in Quest of Revels and Entertainments, that they are liable to be overtaken both the Ways here mentioned. They run themselves into Temptation and Danger, through an eager Pursuit of Pleasures, and lay themselves open to the Opportunities of Sin and Folly. *Dinah's* Curiosity, and gadding Temper is mentioned as the Cause of the Loss of her Virtue. *Gen.* xxxiv. 1. The Description of the Harlot, *Prov.* vii. 11, 12. is, *Her Feet abide not in her House, now she is without, now in the Streets, and lieth in wait in every Corner.*

Ver. 9. *The Whoredom of a Woman may be known in her haughty Looks, and Eyelids.*] These may be thought rather Signs of Pride than of Unchastity, and to be more likely to keep all impure Advances at a Distance, than any Way encourage them, and yet this Circumstance seems to be made a Part of the Description of an immodest Woman, For thus I understand the Words of *Isaiab*: *Because the Daughters of Sion are haughty, and walk with stretched forth Necks, and wanton Eyes, ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖς ὀφθαλμῶν,* with winking Eyes, mincing as they go, i. e. walking with a lascivious Air, therefore the Lord will smite them. ch. iii. 16. Μετεωρίζεσθαι signifies primarily, to be carried up high in the Air, as Birds or Clouds flying there, which, because they are light, and have no Foundation, are tossed and driven about with great Uncertainty: Hence μετεωρισμός ὀφθαλμῶν by a Metaphor signifies, a wanton Rolling of the Eye, a swimming Motion of it, and an amorous Cast or Leer. See *Hammond* on *Luke.* xii. 29. The meaning probably is the same with that of *Jeremiah*, iii. 3. that a Whore may be known by her Forehead, i. e. by a bold and confident Look. The ὄψις πρόσωπος will sufficiently betray her, and shew her evil Inclination, as much as wandering in suspicious Places, or sitting in the publick Ways for Lovers. Modesty, on the contrary, is discernible by a downcast Look, a modest Air, rising Blushes, reserved Carriage, and prudent Retirement. *Aristotle's* Description seems to agree with that of our Author;



thor: *Inverecundi signa sunt, oculus apertus & splendidus, palpebrae sanguineae & crassae, humeri sursum elevati, &c. Physic. cap. v.* St. Basil's Observation upon this Passage is too pertinent to be omitted, *Quae in animo constituit captare multos, ac venari laqueo suae elegantis formae, collo incedit in sublime porrecto: in nutibus item oculorum probatio redditur mulieris fornicariae & procacis, ad opera ipsa anhelantis, fascino ac noxio aspectu: ipso enim intuitu obscenam demonstrat animae impuritatem. Dum enim suaviter & blandis arridet ocellis, proleat ad explendam libidinem. Factu enim oculorum sagittam plane exitialem emittit.*

Ver. 10. *If thy Daughter be shameless, keep her in straitly, lest she abuse herself through overmuch Liberty.* *Ἡ δὲ θυγατέρα ἀδελφείῳ ἀδελφῶν. Syr. Super inverecunda, multiplica custodes. Vulg. In filia non advertente firma custodiam. i. e. Mistrust and watch over a bold Daughter, who gives Encouragement to Mens rude Advances by her forward Looks and Carriage; there is great Reason to fear such a one has a corrupt Heart, and waits only an Opportunity to do Evil. Other Latin Copies have, In filia non advertente firma custodiam. i. e. Watch over a careless Daughter, one that does not think of the sad Consequences which attend the Breach of Chastity, and a Life led without sober Reflexion, and a modest Restraint. But there is another Reading which I prefer, Ἡ δὲ θυγατέρα ἀδελφείῳ ἀδελφῶν ἐκείνων φυλακὴν. For if a Daughter be so bad as to be shameless, the Caution here given comes almost too late; the Restraint of Liberty would have been more necessary and adviseable, before she became notorious: The Advice therefore is more seasonable, to keep an early and constant Guard over a Daughter, lest too much Liberty and Indulgence prove her Ruin. Or, as the *Vulg.* has it, *Ne, inventa occasione, utatur se, i. e. lest she abuse herself the first Opportunity that offers. Grotius* points the Place thus: *ἵνα μὴ διψῶσα ἀνεῖν ἑαυτῇ, χρῆσται, i. e. lest finding for herself, by some Artifice and Cunning, an Opportunity of escaping and sinning, she should make use of it. See ch. xlii. 11. where there is the same Advice, and in the same Words.**

Ver. 11. *Watch over an impudent Eye, and marvel not, if she trespass against thee.* *ὁπίσω ἀναιδῆς ὀφθαλμοῦ φύλαξαι, ἢ μὴ θανατώσῃ. i. e. Watch close, or at the Heels of such a one as has a wanton Eye, or an immodest Look. The Syr. expresses this very strongly: Post eam quae impudentibus est oculis surre, nec moram interponas, ne te decipiat. Which seems to intimate that such a one is of a subtle intriguing Temper, and that the Danger is imminent of her doing amiss, if not narrowly watched. Grotius says ἢ, here is to be taken in the Sense of *aut*; watch over such a one, or *else* be not surprized, if she be too cunning for you, and*

deceive thee, and by transgressing lose her Honour, and stain the Credit of your Family. And thus the *Tigurin* Version: *Oculum impudicum assero, aut ne miretis, si in te deliquerit.* As this Organ is the greatest Inlet to Love, and by its Motions betrays the inward Disposition, the Eyes being as it were the Windows of the Soul, the wise Man properly directs the Centinel to be placed there.

Ver. 13. *The Grace of a Wife delighteth her Husband, and her Discretion will fat his Bones.* By *χάρις* I would understand Sweetness of Temper, and by *ἐπισήμη*, Discretion and Skill, chiefly in Household Affairs, in doing and ordering the necessary Works for her Family, (See *¶ 16.*) and prudent Management and Oeconomy in providing for it; both which Qualities, must be agreeable to the Person who has the Happiness of such a Partner. Thus Solomon describes a good Wife, *Prov. xxxi. She openeth her Mouth with Wisdom, and in her Tongue is the Law of Kindness; she looketh well to the Ways of her Household, and eateth not the Bread of Idleness. The Heart of her Husband doth safely trust in her, and she will do him good, and not evil, all the Days of his Life. ¶ 11, 12, &c.* Not that I would hereby so far confine Discretion, as to exclude Prudence in other Affairs, which is necessary towards a regular and just Conduct, much less good Sense and an improved Understanding, see *¶ 14.* to form the agreeable Companion for Life, and to divert the Cares incident to the married State. He that hath a Wife so well accomplished and amiable, will be easy both in his Condition and Circumstances, and the Satisfaction arising from his inward Content, will shew itself upon his very Countenance. The *Lxx* Rendering of *Prov. xviii. 22.* somewhat resembles this Place, *Ὁς ὄρε γυναικα ἀγαθὴν, ὄρε χάριτας, ἔλαβε δὲ μετὰ θεῶν ἰλαρότητα.* where the *Hebrew* expresses only a Wife indefinitely, and our Translation follows it here. See Instances of such Omissions, in *Gloss. Philol. Sac. De nomine. can. 11. & Mercer in Loc.*

Ver. 15. *A shamefaced and faithful Woman is a double Grace, and her continent Mind cannot be valued.* Shamefacedness may either mean Bashfulness, or Modesty, and so may regard both Virgins and married Women, both of which should avoid a Forwardness of shewing themselves, and not take a Pride in being followed, and admired, and appearing in Places of the most publick Resort, for, according to *Tertullian*, *ejusdem libidinis est videri et videre*; and in the same Work he says: *Tam sancti viri est suffundi, si virginem viderit, quam sanctae virginis, si a viro visa sit.* De Vel. Virgin. c. 2. By Faithfulness we are not only to understand that Fidelity which she owes to her Husband, but that religious Service and Constancy which she owes to her God. Goodness in both these Respects is *χάρις* *ἡ χάρις*, the Sum of



of Perfection. 'Tis in the Union of these excellent Qualities that true Beauty and Agreeableness consists: for, as the wise Man observes, *Favour is deceitful, and Beauty is vain; but a Woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised*, Prov. xxxi. 30. The like may be observed of Continence in the latter Part of the Verse, which not only respects conjugal Chastity, but also Temperance, Regularity, Moderation of Passions, and a strict Virtue in the whole Conduct of Life.

Ver. 18. *As the golden Pillars are upon the Sockets of Silver, so are the fair Feet with a constant Heart.*] As the wise Man has before given us a frightful Picture of a scandalous and debauched Woman, so he draws as lovely a one in this and the foregoing Verses, of a discreet and virtuous Woman, whom he crowns with the highest Praises and the greatest Blessings, that the Sex, from a Sight of, and Reflexion on, Pieces so different from each other, may conceive as much Horror from the one, as Love and Pleasure from the other. He describes the good and accomplished Woman in Terms and Figures of the greatest Magnificence and Beauty; she is as great an Ornament to her Family, as the Sun is to the Universe: her Beauty, in her middle-age, has as chaste and comely an Appearance, as the Lamps upon the holy Altar; nor do her Feet, or her Heart go astray, but both of them are fixed upon a right and solid Basis. Or the Sense may be, according to some Expositors, that a well made strait tall Woman, is like a well proportioned Pillar, fixed upon its Basis; such as those in the Temple were, which exceeded all others for Beauty and Proportion. Our Translators follow a Copy which had *ἡνι σέρονις ὡσαύτως*, but Grotius says the true Reading is, *ἡνι σέρονις ὡσαύτως*. By *σέρονις* he understands the Soles of the Feet. Dr. Grabe rejects this, as not having the Sense which he gives to it, and prefers *πλέγοντες*, which is countenanced by the *Vulg.* See *Proleg. Tom. iii. c. 4.*

Ver. 20. *When thou hast gotten a fruitful Possession through all the Field, sow it with thine own Seed, trusting in the Goodness of thy Stock.*] *καλὸν παντὸς πεδίου*, i. e. The Possession of any Field; *πᾶς*, is frequently so used by this Writer, See § 15. *πέδιον* is a Metaphor often used for a Wife, especially by the Poets. Euripides has the like, *μη σπέρει τέκνων ἄλοχα*, *Phæn. § 18.* and he calls a Father *κατασπείραντα*, *Φυλαγὸν φυλάσσοντα*. Theognis has the same Comparison, *Γρωμ. § 582.* Virgil, with his usual Modesty, expresses it by *arvum genitale*. This Advice follows very properly after that in the former Verse, of not giving one's Strength to strange Women; 'tis like that of St. Paul, *To avoid Fornication, let every Man have his own Wife*, 1 Cor. vii. 2. For Marriage is the proper, as well as settled Remedy of Incontinence. And as an Encouragement to it, the wise Man mentions one particular Advantage arising from

it, viz. a certain and legitimate Issue, which shall not after be reflected on for Baseness of Birth, but triumphing in an honest and lawful Descent, shall prosper and grow great. Or, as Drusius takes it, Men *μεγαλυνέσι*, shall speak honourably of, and extol thy Family and Posterity for the Goodness of their Stock, and the unblemished Honour of their Descent.

Ver. 22. *An Harlot shall be accounted as Spittle: but a married Woman is a Tower against Death to her Husband.*] The marginal Reading, *as a Swine*, I think preferable, as coming nearer Solomon's Description, *A handsome Woman without Understanding is like an Ornament of Gold in a Swine's Snout*. Prov. xi. 22; where *γυνὴ κακόφρων* in *ὁ*, may be rendered a Woman of an evil Turn of Mind, as well as of a weak one; and in the Sapiential Books they both signify a loose and disorderly Person. There is much greater Difficulty in the latter Part of the Verse, the Gr. of which is, *ὕψους δὲ, πύργος θανάτου τοῖς χειρμένοις λογισθήσεται*. Badwell, Grotius, and our Translators, observing an Opposition in the Parts of some Verses following, have fancied that there must be one here; as to *χειρμένοις*, which all the Copies have, at the first hearing, one would think that the Woman here meant, communicated herself to more than one, and that it should be *χειρμένω*, if the Husband only be meant, as our Translators confine it; but upon farther Examen this will be found allowable, for Prov. xxv. 13. where the Hebrew has *דְּבַר דְּבַר*, *domini sui*; the *ὁ* have *τῶν αὐτῶν χειρμένων*, and Prov. xvii. 8. *דְּבַר דְּבַר*, *patroni sui*, in *ὁ* is rendered *τοῖς χειρμένοις*. As both these therefore, though in the plural Number, signify only one Person, and may properly signify a Husband, so it may do here, and one of these Hebrew Words might possibly be in the Original. But *πύργος θανάτου* is far more uncertain and ambiguous; if a good Wife be meant, the Translation must be, as ours has it, *a Tower against Death, propugnaculum mortis*, Syr. which yet seems a very harsh one, and I am not aware of any Authority for it. If a Concubine, *τρευμένη*, as Clem. Alex. here expounds it, *Pædag. L. ii. 10.* or an Adulteress Wife be meant, which Drusius shews from Prov. vi. 24, 26, 29, *γυνὴ ὑπανδρος* may well signify, *πύργος θανάτου* then must either be a downfall Tower, in the Sense of the Arab. *Maritata cum adulterium committit, similis est turri corruenti super eum qui propius accedit ad ipsam*, or a Prison, in which Persons were kept for Execution, and suffered often to die there. And as Prisons had Pits or Dungeons in them, *Jerem. xxxviii. 6.* so a Whore is called a deep Pit, *Prov. xxii. 14. xxiii. 27.* and an Adulteress is the most dangerous Sort. That Towers are often Prisons is well known, *Neb. iii. 25.* There was a Place near Jerusalem, called *Azmaveth*, *Neb. xii. 29.* which may be translated the Fort of Death, but to what



what Use it was put, does not appear. Now as the Punishment of the Adulterer was Death, *Lev. xx. 10.* the Adulterers who captivated, and kept him in her Chains, might well be called the Tower or Prison of Death, as she is in Scripture represented, under other Figures, as the Cause of Death, see *Prov. vii. 21, 23.* but above all *Prov. vi. 26.* where in it just the same Sort of Distinction is made between a common Whore and an Adulterers, as, according to this Interpretation, is made here, and *γυνή ἀνδρῶν* there comes very near *γυνή ὑπανδρῶν* in this Place. And thus there is still some Opposition between the two Parts of the Verse, though not so great a one as in the Sense which our Translators have chosen. I shall only add, that if Persons are disposed to change the Word *πίετος*, *ὑπεργός* would be no improper Reading, if they understand it of a bad Woman: nor would *ἀπειρος*, or *ἀπειργός*, *ἀποεργός*, or *ἀπυεργός*, be either of them amiss, if applied to a good one.

Ver. 26. *A Woman that honoureth her Husband shall be judged wise of all; but she that dishonoureth him in her Pride, shall be counted ungodly of all.* This seems not rightly translated; the Greek of the latter Part is, *ἀτιμάζουσα δὲ ἀσεβὴς ἐν ὑπερηφανίᾳ πᾶσι γνωσθήσεται*, i. e. she that despiseth or dishonoureth her Husband, shall be accounted wicked and ungodly for her Pride by all. Thus the Geneva Version, *She that despiseth him, shall be blazed for her Pride.* And Calmet renders in like Manner, *Celle qui le deshonore, sera reconnue comme impie dans son orgueil.* To attempt to make a Husband any ways ridiculous, to expose his Person or Understanding, to assume the Management of Affairs which are peculiarly the Man's Province, these are no Arguments of a Wife's Discretion, they are rather Symptoms of a high Spirit, than of deep Wisdom. Such a one generally fails in her Design of being admired, and is sure to be, if not despised, yet rallied, and jested upon by both Sexes. A prudent Woman gains the Ascendant by her Condescension, and engaging Sweetness; she obtains easily what the other commands by Violence. She neither contends for, nor takes upon her the Direction of Affairs foreign to her Sex, but confines herself within that Province wherein she is allowed to preside, and endeavours to please and shine in it: and, in fine, never seems to rule, however she may do it in reality.

Ver. 27. *A loud-crying Woman, and a Scold shall be sought out to drive away the Enemies.* *εἰς πολεμίων τροπὴν θεωρηθήσεται*, i. e. Shall be seen at or amidst the Rout of the Enemy, in Places where the greatest Noise and Confusion is. Or may be considered, says Calmet, as one flying before the Enemy by her Shrieks and Clamour. Grotius conjectures the true Reading to be, *εἰς πολεμίων τροπὴν θεωρηθήσεται*, shall be seen with Pleasure by her Enemies, *spectabitur cum hostium*

*gaudio.* Hasebelius has, *γυνή μεγαλόφωνος ἢ γλωσσώδης ὡς σάλπιγξ πολεμίων*, x. t. l. i. e. a Scold is always sounding to Battle, delights to begin herself a Fray, or to set other People together; and thus the Orient. Versions render, *Rixosa mulier & linguax, ut tuba ad bellum excitans reputatur.* This strong Hyperbole of our Version to express the roaring and excessive Vociferation of a Scold, puts one in Mind of what Homer says of the God of War on another Occasion,

*Mars bellows with the Pain;  
Loud as the Roar encountering Armies yield,  
When shouting Nations shake the thundring  
Field.*

*Both Armies start, and trembling gaze around,  
And Earth and Heaven rebel to the Sound.*

H. L. v.

After this some Greek Copies have an entire Verse, omitted in our Version, the Sense of which; according to the Syr. is, *Animus cujusvis hominis existentis his omnibus dejicitur, in tumultu enim bellico vita misere ducitur*, i. e. Every Person who has the Misfortune to have a Wife of such an outrageous Temper, will be dejected and unhappy, as living in a State of continual Confusion, Tumult, and War.

Ver. 28. *There be two Things that grieve my Heart, and the third maketh me angry: a Man of War that suffereth Poverty, a Man of Understanding that is not set by, and one that returneth from Righteousness to Sin; the Lord prepareth such a one for the Sword.* The three Particulars mentioned here, are well worth Notice. As to the first, nothing is more grievous than to see a Man of Courage and Bravery, who has spent his Time and Strength in the Service of his Country, and whom Years and hard Service has disabled, wanting in his old Age a decent and necessary Subsistence. The Romans had a particular Regard to their *militēs emeriti*, such especially as were Invalids, and had suffered in their Limbs in the publick Service; to reward their past Labours, and to comfort them under their Accidents or Misfortunes, they provided for them, at the publick Expence, Lodgings, and other Conveniences for the Remainder of their Lives: which Instance of Goodness the Charity of modern Times has imitated in many Nations, and raised magnificent Structures for such, who have been rendered incapable of Service by the Toils of War, or the Dangers of the Deep. As to the second, Solomon observes how often Kingdoms have been preserved by Men of great Parts and Understanding, and as often overthrown, when Ambition, Favour, or Corruption, bare Sway, and Merit was no longer regarded. It is a melancholy Consideration, and Solomon mentions it as such, that a poor wise Man should deliver a City by his Wisdom, and yet no Man should remember, or reward such a deserving Man afterwards, *Ecclesiast.*



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*eclesiast.* ix. 14, 15. but the third Instance, instead of exciting Compassion, as the two former do, raises Horror and Astonishment, viz. when such, as have known the Way of Righteousness, and travelled far in it, have not only tasted, but confessed, the Sweets of the good Gift of God, at length fall away, and abandon the right Path to walk in the Ways of Sin. *Jeremiah* hath finely described this, ch. ii. 10, 11, 12, 13. and then he sets down the Punishment which such Apostates might expect, *Thine own Wickedness and thy Back-slidings shall reprove thee; thou shalt know and see that it is an evil and bitter Thing to forsake the Lord thy God, &c.* 19. *Calmet* says, a new Chapter might properly begin here.

Ver. 29. *A Merchant shall hardly keep himself from doing Wrong, and a Huckster shall not be freed from Sin.*] The *Vulg.* has, *Duae species difficiles & periculose mihi apparuerunt*; but there are no Words in any of the Greek Copies to answer them. One Particular is wanting here, except the Merchant and the Huckster shall be thought two distinct Instances. According to *Calmet*, the same Person is meant under different Names, or, as concerned in two different Branches of the same Business. The wise Man's Observation will hold as to Merchants, whose Trade being large and extensive, they have the more Temptations and Opportunities to sin, if they content not themselves with a moderate Profit; but such are most liable to exact, who aim at engrossing any Branch of Business, and by establishing a Monopoly, set an unreasonable Price upon their Goods. *Tully* has made the like Observation upon Hucksters, or Retailers (for *καπηλος* does not signify merely a Publican, as *Grotius* understands it) as exposed by their Sort of Business particularly to lying, *Sordidi etiam putandi qui mercantur a mercatoribus quod statim vendant, nihil enim proficiunt, nisi mentiantur.* De Offic. L. i. The *Vulg.* too confines this more particularly to the Sins of the Tongue, *Non justificabitur Caupo a peccatis labiorum.* Through a Desire of Gain they have not always a strict Regard to Truth, and fair Dealing; but are tempted to use Cunning and Artifice, and sometimes Falshood itself, to dispose of their Commodities, not as Justice directs, but as Avarice prompts them.

## C H A P. XXVII.

Ver. 1. **M**ANY have sinned for a small matter.] *ἐνεκεν ἀδιαφορίας*, for the Sake of something indifferent, as the Margin has it; for Money was one of those Things which the *Stoicks* put into the Number of Things indifferent, of which a Man might make a good or an evil use. *Aristides* preferred a good Conscience to Riches, and was more happy and innocent, than the Ambitious or Covetous, amidst their great

Wealth and Honour. *Abah*, notwithstanding his Royalty and Grandeur, was miserable for the want of *Naboth's* Vineyard, and to obtain so small a Matter was guilty of Murder. According to the learned *Casaubon* the true Reading here is, *χάεν διαφύει*, for the Sake of Gain. *Not. in Theoph. Charact. Eccles.* vii. 18. xlii. 5. And indeed this seems most agreeable to the Context, and to that of *St. Paul*, *They that will be rich fall into a Snare and Temptation, and many hurtful Lusts.* 1 Tim. vi. 9. The *Vulgate* renders, *Propter inopiam multi deliquerunt*, *χάεν ἐνδείας*, as some Copies have it; and so the Geneva Version, *Because of Poverty have many sinned.* And indeed Poverty has forced Men often to steal, to cheat, to lie, to forswear, &c. See *Prov.* xxx. 9. *Tully* takes in both these Motives, and makes Avarice and Poverty the two grand Occasions of committing Wickedness, of Men's turning away their Eyes from God, and neglecting their Duty.

Ver. 2. *As a Nail sticketh fast between the Joinings of the Stones, so doth Sin stick close between buying and selling.*] *πείραλος* signifies here a wooden Pin, or a Piece of Wood. As this when firmly wedged in a Wall, cannot easily be taken out, or separated, so it is equally difficult to prevent Fraud and Iniquity between the Buyer and the Seller: Each endeavours to impose upon the other; the one would sell too dear, the other would buy too cheap; the Seller is apt to exact, and to ask too much, and to cry up his Goods extravagantly; according to that of *Horace*, *Laudat venales qui vult extrudere merces*; and the Buyer is inclined to decry the Commodity, to find Fault with its Price or Goodness, that he may have it the cheaper. According to that of *Solomon*, *It is naught, it is naught, says the Buyer; but when he is gone his way, he boasteth.* *Prov.* xx. 14. *Anacharsis* therefore called the Market, where most Trade is carried on, the Mint of Lies. *Apud Laert.* L. i.

Ver. 3. *Unless a Man hold himself diligently in the Fear of the Lord, his House shall soon be overthrown.*] This Advice is addressed principally to Traders, and Persons of Traffick and Commerce, who being usually tempted more than others to over-reach and defraud, are here cautioned against Acts of Injustice and Oppression, lest they draw upon themselves God's Indignation, and forfeit his Blessing, which alone gives Riches and Prosperity. *Jeremiah* expresses the Disappointment of such by a beautiful Simile, *As the Partridge sitteth upon Eggs and hatcheth them not, so he that getteth Riches and not by Right, shall leave them in the Midst of his Days, and be a Fool,* ch. xvii. 11. 'Tis observable, that in all the printed Editions, there is an Ellipsis of the Person here meant; Instances of such Omissions are to be met with both in the *Heb.* and *Gr. Text.* See *Gloss. Philol. Sac.* L. iii. which *Hæschelius* has



has supplied from an ancient MS. in his Notes upon the Place; according to which the Reading and Pointing is, τὸν μὴ ἐν φόβῳ Κυρίου μεγάλῃς ὁ τιμιωτάτων, καὶ ὁ σπουδῇ ἐν τῷ ἔτι πάλαι σφαιροῦται αὐτῷ ὁ δίκτος, i. e. He that is used to enhance and raise the Price of his Goods beyond what is reasonable, for so the Word is taken *Prov.* xi. 26. unless he confines himself to what is fair and honest, shall very speedily come to Ruin. The Reduplication intimates the Certainty and Speediness of the Vengeance. Instances of which Pleonasm we have, *ch.* xi. 21. xxix. 25.

Ver. 4. *As when one sifteth with a Sieve, the Refuse remaineth, so the Filth of Man in his Talk.*] i. e. The Faults of Men appear, and discover themselves in their Discourse. It is very difficult, even if a Person is cautious, not to let some Foible or other intermix, and appear in his Talk, by which you may discover his Temper and Inclination, what he is most fond of, or hates, whether he is wise, sober, and regular, or loose, corrupt, and impudent. If, when there are so many noble Subjects of Conversation to entertain or improve Company, a Man delights to signalize himself by Scandal, Swearing, Obscenity, Blasphemy, Profaneness, &c. which are the Refuse and Filth of Discourse; such a one betrays a corrupt Heart, and an evil Treasure lodged there, and you may pronounce him worthless, and abandon'd. For a Man's Talk is a kind of Mirror of his Soul, and discovers all its Secrets. When a Youth was presented to *Socrates*, that he might judge of his Genius, the Philosopher ordered him to talk and discourse before him, by which he could form a better Judgment of him, than by his Countenance, or any other Symptom. *Tully* has well observed, *Qualis homo, talis etiam erit ejus oratio, Orationi autem facta simillima, factis vita.* *Tuscul. Qu. L. v. Demonax*, who contrary to most other Philosophers was fond of Company, as *Val. Maximus* relates of him, used to say, *In speculis vultus figuram, in colloquiis autem naturam & mentis imaginem cerni posse: sermonem enim esse quasi figuram hominis, qui animi formam effingat & proferat. Nullo enim in speculo melius expressiusque relucet figura corporis, quam in oratione pectoris imago representatur.*

Ver. 6. *The Fruit declareth if the Tree have been dressed, so is the Utterance of a Conceit in the Heart of Man.*] ὅτως λόγος ἐνθυμήματος καρδίας ἀνθρώπου. The true reading probably is, ὅτως λόγος ἐνθυμήματα καρδίας ἀνθρώπου. And so *Grotius* conjectures likewise, i. e. as the Fruit of a Tree shews what Care and Management has been bestowed upon it, so Talk discovers the Intentions and Dispositions of the Heart of Man. *Mibi quale ingenium haberes, fuit indicio oratio tua.* *Ter. Heauton.* It is a natural, as well as a common Simile to compare the Mind of Man to the Earth, an Instructor to the Husbandman, and Precepts, or Doctrine to the

Seed. *Plutarch* uses it often, — *De Liber. educand.* And *Tully*, *Ut agri non omnes frugiferi sunt qui coluntur, sic animi non omnes culti fructum ferunt.* *Tuscul. Qu. L. ii.* And then it follows, *Cultura animi Philosophia est: hæc præparat animos ad satus accipendos eaque mandat his, &c. ut ita dicam, ferit, quæ adulta fructus uberrimos ferant.* See *Luke* viii. 11. and *Matt.* vii. 17, &c. between which and this Place, there is some Resemblance; and *Prov.* xxiv. 30. where ἀνὴρ ἀφρον is compared to a Field untill'd, and to a Vine unpruned. The Etymologists too intimate the like by deriving *sermo*, à *serendo*. *Dr. Græbe* prefers and retains the common Reading, and to prevent any Ambiguity has καρδίαν ἀνθρώπου. *Prolegom. Tom. iii. c. 4.* it is probable λόγος ἐξ ἐνθυμήματος was what he intended, as the *Vulg.* has, *Verbum ex cogitatu*, otherwise it is a harsh Expression.

Ver. 8. *If thou followest Righteousness. . . thou shalt put her on as a glorious long Robe.*] ὡς ποδήρη δόξης. Intimating that Honour and Glory shall attend him that followeth after, or is clothed with Righteousness. Ποδήρης is a long Tunick which the Priests wore, and is said to be, *Exod.* xxviii. 40. εἰς τιμὴν καὶ δόξαν, for Honour and Glory, i. e. to make them appear great like Princes, for their Garments were truly Royal. Their Bonnets also were in the Form of *Tiara*, which Kings wore, and are joined in Scripture with Crowns, *Job* xxix. 14. which is a Passage parallel to this. *Philo* confirms this when he says, that the Law manifestly dressed up the High-Priest, εἰς σιμωνίαν καὶ τιμὴν βασιλείας. *De Sacerdot. Honor.* It may without Violence be inferred from hence, that as the clothing of Righteousness is compared to the Priest's Garments, the Priests themselves should more especially put this on, and esteem it as their chiefest Grace, and most valuable Ornament.

Ver. 10. *As the Lion lieth in wait for the Prey, so Sin for them that work Iniquity.*] As Truth or Righteousness associates those that are alike virtuously disposed, abides with them, encourages and rewards τὰς ἐργαζομένας αὐτῇ, those that practise her, as it should be rendred in the preceding Verse; so there is likewise a Combination in Wickedness, which proves fatal, for the Prey of Sin is the Sinner. The more wicked any one is, the greater Slave he is to Sin, the faster does he bind his Chains, and lay more and more Obstacles in the Way of his own Conversion. Or rather, the Sense is, that as the Lion is always ready to devour his Prey, so Sin is always followed with Punishment, which continually hangs over the Head of the Sinner. This is strongly confirmed by *ψ* 28. where Vengeance is represented as a Lion, lying in wait for the Proud or the Ungodly. And most probably ἀμαρτία should be rather taken here for the Punishment of Sin, than for Sin itself, as it



is sometimes used. The Comparison of Sin to a Lion, is very common in Scripture, particularly in the Book of *Psalms*; and under this Image, the Devil, the Tempter to, and Author of all Wickedness and Mischief, is described in the *New Testament*.

Ver. 11. *The Discourse of a Godly Man is always with Wisdom, but a Fool changeth as the Moon.*] i. e. A good Man is always uniform and consistent with himself; he is constant in his Resolutions, and prudent in his Choice; as he chuses well, so he sticks to his Opinion, but without Conceit or Opiniatry, without Prejudice or Passion. He winnows not with every Wind, ch. v. 9. like those who seek popular Applause, or have no settled Principle; but is steadfast in his Understanding, and his Way of acting always the same. The *Vulg.* compares the good Man's Steadiness to the constant Light of the Sun; whereas that of the Moon is always unequal and variable, and when it shines the brightest, shines only by Reflexion, and with a borrowed Lustre. As his Meditation is in the Law of the Most High, so his Discourse is upon the Excellency of Religion, and the Beauty of Holiness: The Rule of his Conduct is the revealed Will of that Being, *with whom is no Variableness, neither Shadow of Turning*, and a firm Trust in his Goodness keeps him always steadfast, and unmoveable under all the Events and Accidents of Life. The *Psalmist* well describes him in Terms not unlike those of our Author: *The Mouth of the Righteous is exercised in Wisdom, and his Tongue will be talking of Judgment; the Law of his God is in his Heart, and his Goings shall not slide.* *Pf.* xxxvii. 31, 32. But there is always something absurd or impertinent in the Discourse of a Fool, and offensive in that of a Sinner; the former is disagreeable and tiresome, and the latter shocking and infectious. *Y* 13.

Ver. 12. *If thou be among the Indiscreet, observe the Time.*] If you light into the Company of idle and loose Persons, enter not into Conversation with them, as one of their Associates, but defer speaking to some better Opportunity. And thus *Calmet* expounds it, *Reservez-vous à parler dans un autre tems.* If you think to do some Good among them by your Discourse, in vain will be your Endeavours to reform or instruct them. The Attempt to teach such true Wisdom, or to instil Principles of Virtue into them, will be giving that which is holy to the Dogs, who will probably abuse or injure you. Your Presence will be disagreeable to them, and they will answer in the Language of the Libertines, described *Wisd.* ii. 12. "Let us get rid of this officious Reformer, who takes the Liberty to reprove our Thoughts; he is not for our Turn, he is clean contrary to our Doings: He ubraideth us with our offending the Law, and objecteth, to our Infamy, the Transgressings of our Education." The Word of Exhortation,

to have its desired Effect, must be well timed, applied to fit Objects, and delivered in a proper Season: When there is a reasonable Prospect of the Seed falling into good Ground, which has no Thorns to choak it, then is the proper Opportunity for the Sower to go out to sow.

Ver. 18. *For as a Man hath destroyed his Enemy, so hast thou lost the Love of thy Neighbour.*] i. e. By betraying his Secrets, for the Context manifestly relates to this; and abusing the Confidence reported in thee; thou hast used thy best Friend as an Enemy, and in some sort taken away his Life by thy Treachery, and therefore follow no more after him, thou canst not regain his Friendship, he is fled like a Bird, not to be recovered again. *Semel fugiendi si data est occasio—satis est. Nunquam post illam possis prendere.* *Plaut.* The Violation of the Laws of Friendship, by the Discovery of Secrets, is a Crime, according to the *Vulg.* not unlike that of murdering a Friend. The Secret your Friend entrusted you with was a sacred Depositum; the disclosing it is an Injury, and a Piece of Injustice, and if through your Indiscretion he comes into any Disgrace or Trouble, it is like giving him a secret Stab. The least Unkindness from a Friend is of greater Smart than the hardest Usage from an Enemy. *Ἀδικήματα μᾶλλον ἐργίζονται ἢ βιάζονται.* *Thucyd.* L. i. The very Sight of *Brutus* wounded the Heart of *Cæsar* more than all the rest of the Assassins did with their Daggers. *David* was somewhat troubled, that they who hated him, whisper'd together against him, *Pf.* xli. 7. but it was his greatest Affliction of all, that they who had eaten of his Bread, should ungratefully lift up their Heel against him. For when he says, he could have born it from an Enemy, *Pf.* lv. 12, 13. he significantly implies, he could not bear it from a Friend.

Ver. 21. *After reviling, there may be Reconciliation; but he that bewrayeth Secrets, is without Hope.*] ἀπὴλπις, is without Hope of a Reconciliation with his Friend. A learned Critick observes, that it is much more agreeable to the Dialect of the *Greeks* to render ἀπὴλπις by *desperare facere*, to make desperate, according to the *Hebrew Hiphil*; and accordingly he renders this Place, He that hath revealed Secrets, maketh Men to despair of him, to give him up, as one not fit to be trusted, or made a Friend of. *Knatchbull's Annot. on Luke* vi. 35. Some Copies have ἀπώλεσε πρὸς αὐτόν, but as this occurs *Y* 16. upon the same Occasion, ἀπὴλπις, which is the Reading of the *Rom. edit.* and *Alex. MS.* of *Bos*, and *Drusus*, seems preferable. The *Romans* cut off all Hopes of a Reconciliation, by giving a solemn Form of Renunciation, when thy dissolved Friendship with any that had offended them. *Germanicus*, after receiving many Injuries from *Piso*, took no other Revenge, than formally renouncing his Friendship, *non ultra*



tra progressus quam ut amicitiam et more majorum renunciaret. Suet. in C. Cæs. Cal. ch. iii. Tacit. Annal. L. ii. Lys. Orat. vii.

Ver. 22. *He that winketh with the Eyes worketh Evil.* ταλαίνει κακὰ, i. e. Is meditating or contriving some Evil and Mischief. There is the like Thought, Prov. x. 10. *He that winketh with the Eyes, causeth Sorrow.* But the lxx Rendring is more explicit, ὁ ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖς μὲν δόλῃ, συνάλει ἀνδρείας λύπας which points out the true Intent of his winking with the Eye; that though he would have this familiar Motion of the Eye to be interpreted as a Mark of his Approbation and Good-will, yet he does it deceitfully, and is the more dangerous Enemy, as he has the Appearance and Tokens of a Friend; and in another Place it is observed of the same Person, that he is fulsomly civil, bows and cringes to effect his Purpose, διεστραμμένη δὲ καρδία τεταίνεται κακὰ, (the very Expression of our Author) and is always ready to raise some Disturbance, ch. vi. 13. Instead of the latter Sentence, *he that knoweth him, will depart from him*, ὁ εἰδὼς αὐτὸν ἀποστήσει ἀπ' αὐτοῦ, the Vat. and some other Copies have, καὶ εἰδὼς αὐτὸν ἀποστήσει and Hæschelius, ἀποστήσει αὐτὸν ἀπ' αὐτοῦ. the Vulg. follows this Reading: *nemo eum abjicit*, i. e. He so gains upon People by his insinuating Way, his false Signs, and deceitful Nods, that no body mistrusts him, or discards him, though such a treacherous Friend is worse than a declared Enemy.

Ver. 23. *When thou art present, he will speak sweetly, and will admire thy Words; but at the last he will writhe his Mouth and slander thy Sayings.* ὕστερον δὲ διαστρέψει τὸ στόμα αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἐν τοῖς λόγοις σου δώσει σκάνδαλον, i. e. He will change his Note, or, as the Margin has it, he will alter his Speech, and in thy Absence find Fault with what was spoken. Or, he will lie in wait for thy Words, and by misrepresenting them, endeavour to do thee some Mischief, or bring thee into Disgrace. Such a concealed Enemy, according to Homer, is to be dreaded as much as Death. The Psalmist resembles our Author in the Description of him: *He laid his Hands upon such as be at Peace with him, and he brake his Covenant; the Words of his Mouth were softer than Butter, having War in his Heart; his Words were smoother than Oil, and yet be they very Swords.* Ps. lv. 21, 22.

Ver. 25. *Whoso casteth a Stone on high, casteth it on his own Head; and a deceitful Stroke, shall make Wounds.* The wise Man having enlarged, in the former Verses, upon the Baseness of Treachery and Perfidiousness in Friendship, he now sets down the Punishment of it, viz. that the Mischief which a false Friend is meditating and designing against others, shall fall upon himself, he shall suffer for his Treachery; the Stroke levelled in the Dark shall return upon himself. This seems to be the Sense

of the Vulg. though it is obscurely rendred. But the Syr. is explicit and clear, *Obtreffator qui percutit in occulto, perditioni tradetur.* See Ps. vii. 15, 16. Prov. vi. 15. where it is said of the wicked Person, who pretendeth Friendship, and at the same Time is devising Mischief continually, *therefore shall his Calamity come suddenly; suddenly shall he be broken without Remedy.* See also Ecclesiastes x. 8, 9, 12, 13. and particularly Prov. xxvi. 23, 24, 25. &c. where there is a great Resemblance betwixt the two Writers. This unexpected, but just, Return upon the Underminer's Head is illustrated here by three significant and apt Comparisons; nor is Plutarch's less pertinent and applicable: *Jaculum si in solidum aliquid inciderit, nonnunquam in mittentem retorquetur; ita convitium in fortem & constantem virum tortum recidit in convitium facientem.* In Moral. And indeed St. Austin expressly understands this Place of Calumny and Detraction. *De Amic. ch. xiii.*

Ver. 28. *Mockery and Reproach are from the Proud, but Vengeance as a Lion shall lie in wait for them.* There may be two Senses given of this Place, viz. Mockery, Reproach, and Vengeance shall fall upon the Proud, or Wicked: Thus Calmet, *Les insultes & les outrages sont reservez pour les superbes, & la vengeance fondra sur eux.* Or the Meaning may be, that Mockery and Reproach belong to the Proud, they are Vices which they are particularly guilty of, and therefore Vengeance shall pursue them. The Rejoicing at the Fall of the Righteous, mentioned in the next Verse, is an Instance of their Mockery, and their Insult shall be repaid them by grievous Torments inflicted on them even in this Life. This was verified in Antiochus, and other Persecutors. 2 Maccab. ix.

Ver. 30. *Malice and Wrath, even these are Abominations, and the sinful Man shall have them both.* As the wise Man had before condemned Treachery and Perfidiousness, so does he likewise here Resentment and Wrath, both of which are to be detested: *Utraque execrabilia sunt.* Vulg. The Manner of Expression in our Version seems to soften these Vices; καὶ ταῦτα would be better rendred, *These also are Abominations.* And thus the Syr. *Simultas & ira, ipsa quoque sunt execrabilia.* There may be two Senses likewise given of this Passage; the first is, that the Sinner shall possess, or rather, as Grotius and Junius understand it, shall be possessed by these two tyrannical Passions, which as he harbours in his Breast, shall prove his Tormentors: The other is, that the Sinner shall feel the Resentment of God, and the terrible Effects of his Fury; which Sense seems confirmed by the Context. This Verse is a proper Introduction to what follows about Revenge, and it would not be amiss to begin the next Chapter with it.



## C H A P. XXVIII.

Ver. 1. **H**E that revengeth, shall find Vengeance from the Lord; and he will surely keep his Sins in Remembrance. & 2. Forgive thy Neighbour the Hurt that he hath done unto thee, so shall thy Sins also be forgiven when thou prayest.] He that is forward to execute Vengeance for every Injury done to him, and hath no Bowels of Tenderness and Compassion towards others that offend, deserves, and may expect, nay, may be sure to be strictly dealt with himself by God for his own Offences. Διαλογὴν διαλογῆσαι is a strong Reduplication, and denotes the greater Certainty of Punishment. I must also observe the Propriety of ἀνέσθαι, which is a Metaphor, and implies, that the Debts, for so Sins against God are called in Scripture, *Matth. vi. 12.* of the merciful Person, shall be cancelled and discharged. The Request of Forgiveness from God presupposes and requires that we be ready to forgive others their Offences against us. This is a necessary Condition on our Part, and, if we fail of it, we shall fail also of the Pardon we expect and hope for. See *Chrysost. Tom. vi. Orat. lxxvii.* And indeed what Pretence can a malicious Person have to ask the Forgiveness of his Sins against God, who, though a frail sinful Mortal himself, will not be prevailed upon to pass over the trifling and less Offences of his Brethren against him, which are fewer in Number, smaller in Degree, and committed against a far meaner Person, as is most excellently urged in the three Verses following. This great, and, I might say, infinite, Disproportion between our Offences against God, and those of an injurious Neighbour against us, is strongly intimated by the vast Sum of Ten thousand Talents, and the very inconsiderable Demand of an hundred Pence only, which the Parable instances in to illustrate this Matter, *Matth. xviii. 24, 28.* One cannot help observing in what strong Terms the Doctrine of Forgiveness is pressed, even under the Times of the Old Testament; it may be affirmed of the Law, that, though God tolerated a Retaliation among the Jews in certain Cases, and under certain Restrictions, *Exod. xxi. 24. Levit. xxiv. 20.* to hinder greater Evils, yet its Intention in general was, to encourage mutual Love and Forgiveness, the shewing Kindness occasionally even to Enemies, the not avenging Injuries, but committing to God the Repaying of Vengeance, and, in a word, the Love of a Man's Neighbour as himself. *Levit. xix. 17, 18. Deut. xxxii. 35. Ps. vii. 4. Heb. x. 30.* From these Passages, which are express for brotherly Kindness, one should form a Judgment of the Spirit of the Law, and not from such where Vengeance is barely tolerated in certain Cases, and even then curbed and limited, to prevent Mens

Passions running to excess, and using too great Violence and Outrage.

Ver. 6. Remember thy End, and let Enmity cease.] Remember that thou thyself art mortal, and do not nourish immortal Hatred; carry it not into the other World with you, nor entail Revenge upon your Posterity. Say not, *Exoriare, aliquis nostris ex ossibus ultor, &c.* The Advice here is not unlike that of *St. James. v. 9. Grudge not one against another, or, as the Margin has it, Grieve not one another, Brethren, lest ye be condemned; behold the Judge standeth at the Door.* Thus *Seneca* most appositely, *Ridere solemus inter matutine arenae spectacula tauri et ursi pugnam . . . quos cum alter alterum vexarit, suus confessor expectat: idem & nos facimus, aliquem . . . laceffimus, cum victo victorique finis aequae maturus immineat. L. iii. De Ira, c. xliii.* And in a former Chapter, *Quid ruimus in pugnam, quid imbecillitatis oblitii ingentia odia suscipimus? & ad frangendum fragiles consurgimus? jam par acerrimum media mors dirimet, stat super caput fatum . . . propiusque ac propius accedit. c. xlii.* Or the Meaning may be, Remember that thou art a Man; that Man, as such, is sure to offend, and stand in need of Pardon; that human Life is but of a short Continuance, and an Account to be given of the Conduct of it, and therefore the Sense of his own Imperfection and Frailty should remind every Man of the Tenderness due to others Failings, and the Consideration of Mortality should hasten Reconciliation, that a Man may not die in an unforgiving Temper. That celebrated Maxim, μέμνησο ἀνθρώπου & θύ, is of no less Importance in Life to subdue Resentment, than it was to the *Macedonian King* to humble his Pride. And perhaps that Custom among the *Egyptians* of placing at their most sumptuous Feasts a Skull in some conspicuous Part of the Room, might be as much designed to prevent Quarrels and promote brotherly Kindness, as to restrain Excess and Luxury. The following Sentence, viz. "Remember Corruption and Death, is, says a learned Writer, the shortest Compendium of holy Living that ever was given; it is as if the Author had said, Many are the Precepts and Admonitions left us by wise and good Men, for the moral Conduct of Life; but would you have a short and infallible Directory of living well, remember Corruption and Death. Do but remember this, and forget all other Rules if you will, and your Duty, if you can . . . for the Consideration of Death is the greatest Security of a good Life . . . of so vast Consequence is the constant thinking upon Death above all other Things that fall within the Compass even of useful and practical Meditation, that *Moses*, with great Reason, places the Wisdom of Man in the sole Consideration of his latter End." *Norris on the Conduct of Hum. Life, p. 158-160.*



Ver. 7. Remember the Commandments, and bear no Malice to thy Neighbour: Remember the Covenant of the Higheft, and wink at Ignorance.] Malice may be confidered as a Breach of the Sixth Commandment, which besides actual Murder forbids alfo Revenge, and the very Intention of doing Mifchief. Malice alfo, as it contents not itfelf with thinking or devifing Evil, vents itfelf often in ill-natured Speeches and injurious Reproaches, and offends againft the Ninth Commandment, which forbids falfe Witnefs, Slandering, and Evil fpeaking. By the Covenant of the Higheft, in the latter Part of the Verfe, we may either underftand God's Law, which forbids all Malice and Revenge, and enjoins the Forgiveness of Injuries; or his adopting all Men, efpecially the Faithful, into one Body and Communion, to encourage thereby brotherly Love and Union, and a reciprocal Regard and Tendernefs for each other. Or by the Covenant of the Higheft may be meant God's Promise, or his conditional Covenant that he will forgive Men their Trefpaffes, if they alfo are ready to forgive others their Trefpaffes. By Ignorance here we may underftand not only Sins of Ignorance, as they are called, but Transgreffions of other Kinds, and fo ἀγνοία is often ufed, fee Num. xii. 11. Judith v. 20. Tob. iii. 3. 1 Efd. viii. 75. Eccles. xxiii. 3, 30, and ἀγνοία and ἀμαρτανία are fynonymous in the Helleniftic Writings. See Note on ch. v. 15. Probably the wife Man here may artfully call an Offence, a Slip of Ignorance, to extenuate the Greatnefs or Odiousnefs of it, and thereby induce the Party injured to pafs it over the fooner.

Ver. 10. As the Matter of the Fire is, fo it burneth; and as a Man's Strength is, fo is his Wrath.] ὡς ἡ ἰσχυρὸς τοῦ πυρός οὕτως ἐκκαυθήσεται. A learned Commentator reads the Greek in the following Manner, ὡς τὴν ἰσχυρὸν τοῦ πυρὸς ἐκκαυθήσεται, οὕτως ὡς ἡ ἰσχυρὸς, κ. τ. λ. Hammond on N. T. But there is no Necessity of making any Alteration, it is a Hebraifm, and there are frequent Instances of this Conftitution. See Glaff. Philol. Sac. L. iii. de Pronom. ἰσχυρὸς, translated here Strength, is often ufed for Riches, or Ability in Point of Fortune and Circumftances, fee ch. iii. 13. xiv. 13. xlv. 6. Prov. xv. 6. In the House of the Righteous is much Treasure, ἰσχυρὸς πλοῦτης. and Ezek. xxvii. 12. πλῆθος πλοῦτος ἰσχυρὸς is properly rendred, multitude of all Kinds of Riches. I fhould prefer this Sense here, but for the next Sentence which is to the fame Purpofe, though if ἰσχυρὸς be taken literally for Strength, there will be the fame Tautology with refpect to the laft Sentence of the Verfe.

Ibid. According to his Riches his Anger rifeth, and the stronger they are which contend, the more they will be inflamed.] ὡς ἡ σφοδρότης ἡ μάχη οὕτως αὐξηθήσεται. Literally, according to the Force and Spirit of the Strife, Battle, or Combat, fo it is encreased, and

becomes more fierce and bloody. The Sense is, that a Man's Pride and Haughtinefs, (for fo we are to underftand Anger and Wrath in this Place) arifing from Power or Wealth will increafe proportionably to it. See Pf. x. 4. where there is a Defcription of a Sinner, priding himfelf in his Riches, whole Insolence on that Account is fo great, that he is represented as not caring for God, neither is God in all his Thoughts. Where the LXX. Rendring is observable, and resembles that before us: ὡς ἡ πλῆθος ἡ δυνάμις οὕτως ἐκζηθήσεται, Secundum multitudinem iræ suæ. Vulg. Both of thefe are but indifferent Versions of the Hebr. here: It would be better expreffed by *Elatione*, or *altitudine nasi sui*, i. e. Carrying his Head very high. The Targum is clearer and more explicit, *in arrogantia spiritus sui*. See *De Muis in Loc.* or we may underftand Anger literally here, viz. that a Perfon who thinks himfelf injured or affronted, will refent the Ufage, and his Anger will rife in Proportion to the Opinion which he entertains of his own Worth, or Greatnefs, either with refpect to Rank, Merit, or outward Qualities and Accomplifhments. It is on this Account that the Lenity and Meeknefs of David, with regard to Shimei's curfing him, is fo juftly admired: The Forgiveness of fo mighty a King, of fo mean and abusive a Subject, who had daringly infulted his Honour, was no lefs glorious to him than his Victory over Goliath.

Ver. 11. An hasty Contention kindleth a Fire, and an hasty Fighting fheddeth Blood. 12. If thou blow the Spark, it fhall burn; if thou spit upon it, it fhall be quenched: And both thefe come out of thy Mouth.] After Wrath or Refentment, before fpoken to, the wife Man properly proceeds to mention Quarrels and Difputes, which generally proceed from it, and often occafion great Difurbance and Mifchief. At firft they arife from fome inconfiderable Caufe, or trifling Accident, perhaps only from a hasty or wrong Word, which a Perfon refenting, grows angry, proceeds thence to Reproach and Calumny, Abuse, Injuries, and in fine to Blows, and Blood-fhedding. This dreadful Procefs is properly compared here to a Spark of Fire, which is of little Confequence or Danger in itfelf, and may be extinguifhed eafily in a Moment, by treading or fputting upon it; or by letting it fall to the Ground, and taking no Notice of it, it will go out of itfelf. In like Manner the Heat and Fury of an Adverfary may be afwaged by Patience and Moderation, by Silence or Submiffion. But if you blow the Spark and keep it alive, if you add Fuel to dying Embers, by taking the Part of the quarrellom Perfon or contradicting him: by juftifying the former, or adding frefh Provocations, you will kindle fuch a Fire as you will not be able to extinguifh. Solomon has the fame Comparifon upon the like Occafion:



calion, *Where no Wood is, there the Fire goeth out; so where there is no Tale-bearer, the Strife ceaseth. As Coals are to burning Coals, and Wood to Fire, so is a contentious Man to kindle Strife.* Prov. xxvi. 20, 21. The Moral of which Observation is, to stop Passion and Resentment in its first Beginning, to hinder its Progress, to stem its Torrent, and remove whatever may add to the swelling of it; or, in the Words of the same wise Writer, *to leave off Contention before it be meddled with, for the Beginning of Strife is as when one letteth out Water, one knoweth not where it will stop.* Prov. xvii. 14.

Ver. 13. *Curse the Whisperer and Double-tongued, for such have destroyed many that were at Peace.* *Whisperer*, or the *Whisperer*, is one, who speaks ill of his Neighbour privately, and does him some Mischief by a secret and sly Insinuation to his Prejudice. See Note on ch. vi. 14. *Διγλωσσος*, or the Double-tongued, is one who speaks differently of the same Thing or Person, in Public approving and extolling what he secretly decries and vilifies; one who makes a Shew of harmless Intentions, and professes an outward Respect for the Person whom privately he slanders: And according to St. Bernard's Description, when he intends the most Mischief and Disgrace to any one, he begins first to commend him, to introduce some ill-natured Aspersions the better; which kind of double-dealing and dissembling is, says he, *Tanto plausibilior, quanto creditur ab iis qui audiunt, corde invito, & condolentis affectu proferri.* In Cant. ii. St. Cyprian ingeniously compares such who give good Words with their Lips, but dissemble with their double Heart, Psal. xii. 2. to Wrestlers, *qui antagonistas luctantes altius tollunt, quo vehementius illidunt.* Epist. ii. i. e. who lift their Antagonist the higher to give him the greater Fall. Solomon calls such mischievous under-hand Practices, Stabs, which give the most deadly Wounds. Prov. xxvi. 22. With great Reason therefore the Wise Man here advises to set a Mark upon, and abhor such a detestable Person, which probably is the Meaning of *curse* in this Place. The common Sense of Mankind, even in the Times of Paganism, has had such an Abhorrence of this Vice, that great Punishment has been inflicted upon such Offenders in many Civil Societies. *Lipsius* says, that the *Athenians* imposed a pecuniary Mulct upon them, and that the ancient *Romans* set a literal Mark upon the Forehead of him who was guilty of this Crime, intimating a Calumniator, *De Calumnia*. This was a public Declaration that the *Whisperer* or *Slanderer* deserved to be openly stigmatized, and branded for an infamous Person.

Ver. 14. *A backbiting Tongue hath disquieted many.* *γλωσσα τερη*. *Lingua tertia*, Vulg. i. e. says Mr. Le Clerc, *Media inter auditorem, ac eum de quo sermo habetur.* 'Tis a proverbial Expression, and often to be met

with in the *Chaldee Paraphrase*; it means a busy intermeddling Tongue, which sows Discord among Neighbours, and sets one against another by evil Insinuations, and groundless Reports, perverting and envenoming things the most harmless and innocent, and giving them a wrong Turn, and an evil Meaning. This is also called *lingua trifurca*, as if it spit its Venom like a Serpent, or had, like it, three Stings, or through its Swiftness and Volubility had the Appearance of it. And indeed the Backbiter has so much of the Serpent in him, that, as if he had really three Stings, he does Mischief to three Persons, to the Hearer, the Person slandered, and to his own Soul. The *Apostolical Constitutions* call such Backbiters *πρόγλωσσοι, τερη γλωσσαν έχοντες*, L. ii. c. 21. *Cotelerius* observes, that some Copies have here *γλωσσα τερη, i. e. τερημένη*, perforated, or full of Holes, as if the Backbiters Tongue was like that of the Servant's in the Comedy, who says of himself, *Plenus rimarum sum, hac & illac perfuso.* And indeed he is one who can keep nothing, he has no Secrets properly, he hears only with a malicious Intent to retail again, and what he occasionally picks up, comes instantly forth with Additions.

*Ibid.* *Strong Cities hath it pulled down, and overthrown the Houses of great Men.* The wise Man probably means here speaking Evil of Dignities, the blackening and aspersing Kings, and Persons in Authority, which lessens them in the Opinion and Esteem of the People, and renders them suspected by them, which often begets Tumults, and kindles those Heats which put Things into a ferment and a Flame. *Lipsius*, after he has shewn how Calumny engages one Man against another, divides intimate Friends, and sets Princes and People at Variance, adds, *Doletis barere in Republica visceribus discordiarum tela? Calumnia injectit. Ardere faciem bellorum civilium? Calumnia accendit.* Orat. de Calumnia.

Ver. 15. *A backbiting Tongue hath cast out virtuous Women, and deprived them of their Labours.* *τῶν πόρων αὐτῶν*. An evil Tongue hath raised groundless Suspicions, and made Men jealous even of good and virtuous Wives, and sometimes occasion'd their Divorce, to the manifest Disgrace and Injury of Virtue and Innocence. How far the Poison of an evil and false Tongue can affect the Credit and Safety of a good and chaste Woman, appears from the History of *Sapphira*, who was condemned through the unjust Accusation of the two wanton Elders, and would actually have suffered Death, had not the Lord raised up the Spirit of *Daniel* to detect the Falshood, and rescue oppressed Innocence. The like may be said of the Mother of the *Maccabees*, who was *γυνὴ ἀνδρείᾳ* in all respects, and suffered with her Sons, through the venomous Malice of the Tongue: *γυνὴ ἀνδρείᾳ*, in the *Sapiential Books*,



Books, see *Prov. xxxi. 10.* means, an industrious, careful, laborious, frugal Woman, one who by her Oeconomy and Management, has been the Occasion of bringing much Wealth into the Family, and therefore might promise herself a comfortable Share in the Enjoyment of it, and yet one so deserving, through a slanderous Tongue, shall forfeit her Husband's Love and Opinion, be expelled his House, lose the Fruit of her Labour, and be deprived of her Part of the common Stock, See *ch. xiv. 15.* where both *πλοῦτος*, and *κόπος*, mean Wealth got by Labour, and so it is to be understood, *Eccles. ii. 18, 19.*

Ver. 16. *Who so hearkeneth unto it shall never find rest, and never dwell quietly.] i. e.* Will always hear something to disturb and vex him. Such as have an itching Ear, and a Curiosity to know what is done and said every where, will find officious Persons enough to bring or invent Stories, and often Matter for their own Disquiet and Uneasiness. The *Vulgate* renders, *Nec habebit amicum in quo requiescat*, which is true, whether we understand it of the Slanderer himself, who can never be a fit Person to make a Friend of, or of the Person who listens to him, for if Credit be given to his Suggestions to the Disadvantage of such as we took to be our Friends, one shall not know whom to rely on, but shall be often tempted to break Friendship, with our best and most valuable Acquaintance, through evil, and probably false Aspersions.

Ver. 17. *The Stroke of the Whip maketh Marks in the Flesh, but the Stroke of the Tongue breaketh the Bones.* Ver. 18. *Many have fallen by the Edge of the Sword: but not so many as have fallen by the Tongue.]* It appears from the wise Man's Comparison, that the Stroke of the Tongue wounds the deepest. For whereas Scourges reach only the Skin, the Outside of the Man, Slander affects even the inward Parts, and touches his very Heart, *Prov. xxvi. 22.* where the Words of a Tale-bearer are expressly called Wounds. 'Tis observable, that when *Nazianzen* would persuade some who were addicted to Calumny to desist from their Reproaches, he advises them to lay down their Arms, to throw away their Spears and Stings, expressing in Terms of War and Hostility, the Danger of a censorious Tongue, which, as it is more nimble and ready, so is it no less fatal to do Mischief. There is so much cruelty and real Hurt in Calumny and Reproach, that our Saviour himself calls reviling and evil speaking by the Name of *Persecution*, *Matt. v. 11.* *Στόμα μαχάριος* is a *Hebraism*, and would be quite harsh and unintelligible, if not otherwise expressed, and properly familiarized. *Homer* has *πολέμους στόμα*, *Il. K.* which is a Parallel Expression. And *St. Austin*, *Manus gladii*, which is a bolder Metaphor. This Weapon, though a known Instrument of Cruelty and Bloodshed, has

not made, says our Author, so dreadful a Havock, as that little Member, the Tongue. Amongst the many Instances which might be brought to confirm this Observation, I shall single out that of *Doeg the Edomite*, who insidiously betrayed *Ahimelech* to *Saul*, for succouring *David* in his Distress, and by his officious Discovery and malicious Intelligence occasioned the Destruction of four-score and five Persons that wore the Linen Ephod, *1 Sam. xxii.* The *cxix<sup>th</sup>* Psalm is thought by many to refer to this Calumny; and so it is expressed in the Title.

Ver. 20. *For the Yoke thereof is a Yoke of Iron, and the Bands thereof are Bands of Brass.* Ver. 21. *The Death thereof is an evil Death, the Grave were better than it.]* The Author compares the suffering, by a slanderous Tongue, to the carrying an insupportable Yoke, or being fast bound with Misery and Iron; that it deprives Men of their Reputation and Honour, the most afflicting Loss they can suffer, and by infusing Suspicions, and sowing Discord, separates the most intimate Acquaintance, and robs them of the Comforts and Advantages of Friendship and Society, and thereby makes Life irksome and tedious, and Death desirable. *Mess. of Port Royal* apply the Bondage here spoken of to the slanderous Tongue itself, that is enslaved to this Vice, which is so subtle and disguised that it escapes the Notice of such as practise it, and its Slavery, is not perceived by those that are in Bondage to it. Through a Blindness and Infatuation of Heart, the just Punishment of their Crime, they persuade themselves that what they are acting is allowable, neither contrary to Justice, Charity, nor Religion, and so are under no Concern to break the Yoke, thinking themselves free and at Liberty, under the greatest Slavery; and while they are scattering Firebrands, and Death, please themselves with the Innocency of their Sport. The Loss of Reputation, through the Venom of the Tongue, is here called a Death, and one more grievous than that of Nature. The *Greeks*, in like manner, apply *ἀπόλλυμι* to Chastity or Friendship violated, or to a Character destroyed and gone. And among the *Latins*, a Woman that has lost her Honour, is called *Interfecta pudicitia femina*.

Ver. 22. *It shall not have rule over them that fear God, neither shall they be burnt with the Flame thereof.]* A slanderous Tongue, though it will not fail to attack good Men, and probably for that Reason, because they are such, yet it shall not overwhelm them, nor shall its Rage, however it may blacken, quite eclipse them. God will not permit that Justice, Innocence, and Truth, shall be for any long Time oppressed, *He will make their Righteousness as clear as the Light, and their just Dealing as the Noon-day.* *Psal. xxxvii. 6.* Thus the same pious Writer, after having put up his Prayer, that the lying Lips



Lips might be put to Silence, which cruelly, disdainfully, and despitefully speak against the Righteous, gives this Instance of God's Goodness laid up for them that fear him, and prepared for them that put their Trust in him, that he will hide them privily by his own Presence, from the provoking of all Men, and will keep them secretly in his Tabernacle from the Strife of Tongues. Psal. xxxi. 20, 21, 22. Or the Sense may be, that good Men shall not, like others, indulge themselves in Slander and Censoriousness, it shall not prevail in Israel, neither shall it be found in the Heritage of Jacob, for all such Vices shall be far from the Godly, neither shall they accustom themselves to opprobrious Words, ch. xxiii. 12.—15. The Psalmist's Description of the happy Person who shall dwell in God's Tabernacle, is one that doth the Thing which is right, and speaketh the Truth from his Heart, that hath used no Deceit in his Tongue, nor done Evil to his Neighbour, and hath not slander'd his Neighbour. Psal. xv. 2, 3.

Ver. 23. Such as forsake the Lord, shall fall into it, and it shall burn in them, and not be quenched; it shall be sent upon them as a Lion, and devour them like a Leopard.] As the Providence of God will preserve the Righteous that are calumniated, or falsely accused, so their Enemies and Accusers shall suffer in their stead; as the Fire slew those Men that took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, but over their Bodies the Fire had no Power, neither had the Smell of it passed upon them, Dan. iii. and the Lions slew instantly the Accusers of Daniel, whilst God sent his Angel, and shut their Mouths that they might not hurt him, forasmuch as Innocence was found in him, ch. vi. Corn. a Lapide thinks the Author expressly refers to these Instances. Or the Sense may be, that God will suffer the Wicked to fall into this Vice, to which they are remarkably addicted, and in their Turns shall be evil spoken of, and fall into Shame and Disgrace. Or, may we not understand this Place in some such Sense as that of the Psalmist, What Reward shall be given, or done unto thee, thou false Tongue? Even mighty and sharp Arrows with hot burning Coals. Psal. cxx. 3. St. Cyprian, speaking of the rich Man in his Torments, says, that his Tongue was principally affected with Pain and Misery, as he had offended chiefly with his Mouth, *Inter omnes corporis partes magis os ejus & lingua pœnas dat, quia plus scilicet lingua sua & ore peccaverat.* Epist. lv.

Ver. 24. Look that thou hedge thy Possession about with Thorns, and bind up thy Silver and Gold. Ver. 25. And weigh thy Words in a Balance, and make a Door and Bar for thy Mouth.] See ch. xxxvi. 25. As it is a commendable Piece of Prudence to fence a Field or a Vineyard with a strong Hedge, that the wild Boar out of the Wood may not root it out, nor the wild Beasts of the Field devour it; and as it is usual and safe to put

Money into a Purse or Bag, or in a Place of Security, to prevent losing of it, so no less Care is required to guard the Mouth, and keep the Door of the Lips, that no Word may issue from thence without being well weighed and considered. The binding up of Silver and Gold, here mentioned, is a particular Expression, and answers to the Bundles of Silver, ὁ δεσμός τῆ ἀργυρίας, *Ligata pecunia*, Vulg. Gen. xlii. 35. Prov. vii. 20. Hof. xiii. 12. Calmet thinks this Phrase, besides the usual Way of securing Money in a Linen Cloth, Purse, or Girdle, may denote small Rods, or Spits of Silver, bound up together, as Plutarch describes the *Oboli*, a Handful of which made a *Drachma*. "The ancient Grecian Money, says he, was like so many Spits or Rods of Iron or Brass, and hence it is that our smallest Money is to this Day called *obolus* (ὀβολός signifying in Greek, a Spit) and that the Piece worth six *Oboli* is termed *Drachma*, or a handful, so many of these Rods being required to fill the Hand." Plut. in *Lysand.* Calm. Dissert. on the Hebr. Money. It is certain also, that the Jews carried with them at their Girdle, a Balance to weigh all the Money which they either gave or received, as the Chinese and Armenian Merchants do to this Day; and their carrying different Weights with them in a Bag, Deut. xxv. 13. implies their having the Balance too. The *Canaanites* likewise carried Balances with them, but deceitful ones, as they are described, Hof. xii. 7. instead of hedging the Possession, the Vulg. has, *Sepi aures tuas spinis*, i. e. Fence or stop your Ears, that, since Slander is so dangerous, you may not listen to it, or seem to encourage it, that so the censorious Person may see that such injurious Discourse is disagreeable to you, and may be hindred from proceeding farther; *Ut discat detractor*, says St. Jerom, *dum te videt non libenter audire, non ultra detrabere: nemo enim invito auditori libenter refert.* Epist. ii. ad Rustic.

## CHAP. XXIX.

Ver. 1. HE that is merciful, will lend unto his Neighbour.] ὁ ποιῶν ἔλεος, δανεῖ τῷ πλησίον. See the like Psal. xxxvii. 26. cxii. 5. The Sense, both there and here, is, that a merciful Man will not only lend unto his Neighbour, but he will require no Usury, he will lend freely to one in Necessity without asking or taking any Use of him. *Mutuum* differs from *fœnus*, the former is without Usury, the latter attended with it. Plautus very plainly distinguishes them in the following Verse.—*Si mutuo non potero, certum est sumam fœnore.* Afinar. The Etymologists do not badly explain *fœnus* by *accepti fœtus*, and so properly styled by the Greeks τόκος, as being the Issue or Produce of a Sum lent. They seldom express borrowing upon Usury by δανείζειν, but by δα-



νείζεν ἐπὶ τόκῳ, and δάνειον ὅτοκον is Usury, and not δάνειον singly, see *Exod. xxii.* where ἐν δανείῳ is taken for simple lending. *Plato de Leg. L. v. Arist. Œcon. L. v.* And therefore the *Vulg.* here badly renders δανεί, by *faneratur*. But there is another Sense of δανείζεν, which is, to give, to distribute to the Necessitous. And thus *Hesychius*, δανείζει, i. e. μετὰ δίδωι τοῖς ἐνδεέσι. And in another Place he expounds δανείν by ἀγαθεύειν, *benefacere*. See *Matt. v. 42.* *Calmet* says the Sense may be, He that does Alms, shall be in a Condition to lend to his Neighbour, God will make him rich and flourishing in his Circumstances: Or, that he that does Alms, lendeth (to God) by doing Good to his Neighbour. See *Prov. xix. 17.*

*Ibid.* And he that strengtheneth his Hand, keepeth the Commandments.] The Generality of Interpreters understand this of a liberal and charitable Hand, free and open to give, that such a one by his Acts of Kindness and Beneficence, keeps and fulfills the principal Precept that concerns his Neighbour: ἰσχυρεῖν τῇ χειρὶ, to be strong in hand signifies properly being rich, See *Lev. v. 7, 11. — xiv. 21, 22. — xxv. 49.* *Prov. iii. 27.* as ἀδυνατεῖν ταῖς χερσὶ, to fail, or to be feeble in hand, signifies the contrary State. And to strengthen the poor Man's Hand, means to relieve or succour him. Thus *Lev. xxv. 35.* the Commandment is, *If thy Brother be waxen poor, and fallen into Decay; and as the Heb. has it, his Hand faileth, then shalt thou relieve, Heb. strengthen him.* *Grotius* says, the Words of this Sentence are transposed, and that the Sense is, He that keepeth the Commandments, shall become rich and powerful, *Qui mandata servat, is praevalet manu, i. e. prestabit opibus.* And *Calmet* is of the same Opinion.

Ver. 2. Pay thou thy Neighbour again in due Season. Ver. 3. Keep thy Word, and deal faithfully with him, and thou shalt always find the Thing that is necessary for thee.] Here the Discourse is directed to the Borrower, (whom the Observation in the next Verse likewise concerns) to be punctual in keeping his Promise, and observing the Time of Payment agreed on, which will encourage others, or the same Person to lend to him again with more Readiness: that he will find his Advantage in so doing, and will by that means at all Times have a Prospect of having his Necessities supplied. For 'tis not so much Hardness of Heart, as the fear of meeting with one who may prove ungrateful, or a Cheat, that discourages Men from lending cheerfully, and assisting others by a free and gratuitous Loan. But the Direction here is, that notwithstanding what we may have heard of others bad Treatment, or fear to meet with ourselves, yet we must not be hard-hearted, but Discretion must be coupled with brotherly Kindness, and worldly Prudence with Charity.

Ver. 4. Many, when a Thing was lent

them, reckoned it to be found, and put them to trouble that helped them.] πολλοὶ ὡς δέσμημα ἐνόμισαν δάνος. This is inaccurately translated; the Sense is, Many esteem what is lent them as their own, as so much Gain to them. For ἐνρῆμα, δέρεσις, ἐξέρρεσις, besides the Sense of finding, signify also *lucrum* and *emolumentum*, Profit or Gain, and δέσμημα should be taken in this latter Sense, both here and *ψ 6.* following. See Note on *ch. xx. 9.* where δέσμημα is taken in the Sense of Gain, and so rendred by our Translators. They have made a Mistake like this, *Baruch iii. 18.* καὶ ἔστιν ἐξέρρεσις τῶν ἔργων αὐτῶν, i. e. they have no Gain or Profit from their Works, which they badly render, *whose Works are not searchable.* The Observation of the wise Man here is, that many Borrowers would willingly appropriate to themselves what they have taken up, instead of being ready and punctual to return the Loan in Time to such as advanced the Money, and so have disappointed the Creditor of what he depended upon and had Occasion for, and obliged him perhaps to recover it by course of Law: Others therefore have refused, or been cautious of lending, on account of such Treachery and evil Dealing, fearing to be defrauded themselves, *ψ 7.* which is what *St. Ambrose* means, when he says, *Cum is tum fraudaveris cui debes, postea in tempore necessitatis non invenies creditorem.* De Tobit, c. xxi.

Ver. 5. Till he hath received he will kiss a Man's Hand, and for his Neighbour's Money he will speak submissly; but when he should repay, he will prolong the Time, and return Words of Grief, and complain of the Time.] To kiss the Hands of another was anciently a Ceremony practised only by Slaves. Thus *Arrian*, ἄλλος τῆς ὀφθαλμοῦ κατεφίλει, ἄλλος τὸν τράχηλον, οἱ δὲ οἱ τὰς χεῖρας. In *Epiet. L. i. c. 19.* And *Macrobius*, *Invenies dominum spe lucri oscula alienorum servorum manibus infigentem.* *Saturn. L. i.* It denotes here that Servility and Baseness, which a Person who wants to borrow Money will use to ingratiate himself, and his cringing and fawning likewise by flattering Language and Expressions to gain his Ends. Some Copies instead of χρημάτων have ῥημάτων, making no mention at all of Money, which the *Vulg.* follows, *in promissionibus humilium vocem suam:* but as all the Copies agree in retaining τὸ πλεονέκτην, it seems necessary to follow the other Reading, as our Translators do. The following Circumstances are very naturally described, and are the common Excuses of bad Paymasters, as to say, the Time of Payment is not yet come, or longer Time was expected, and would be more convenient,—to complain of the badness of the Season, that it has been too dry, or too wet, and the Inclemency of it has occasioned Sicknes, and Loss of Cattle, spoiled their Crop, and hindred them making Money;—or of the Badness of the Times in general, that

Money



Money is scarce, Levies high, Markets falling, &c. And, if these Reasons of Delay are not admitted, to give some careless or surly Answer, for thus I understand λόγον ἀκυβίας, and so the Geneva Version has it, or to set the Creditor at Defiance.

Ver. 6. *If he prevail, he shall hardly receive the half, and he will count it as if he had found it: if not, he hath deprived him of his Money, and he hath gotten him an Enemy without Cause; he payeth him with Cursings and Railings.*]

This may be taken in two different Senses, according as we understand it of the Debtor or Creditor, which the Expositors are greatly divided about: with respect to the former the Sense is, that if he be able to repay, as the Marginal Reading is, and the Vulg. *Si autem potuerit redde*, he will with Difficulty be brought to pay half that is owing; and thus the Geneva Version, *And though he be able, yet giveth he scarce the half again, and reckoneth the other half unpaid, as a Thing found*, i. e. as so much Gain to him, *Alterum dimidium lucrifactum putabit*, says Grotius. Or, according to Calmet, that the Debtor reckons by paying half, that he has given you as it were, a Part or Share in something that he had found, and that you are under an Obligation to him as if he had done you a Favour, by making you a Partner with him in what he claims. If he be not able to pay at all, the Creditor loses his whole Debt, and all he getteth is Ill-will, and abusive Language. But the Confusion of this Verse will be somewhat lessened, if we understand it of the Creditor, that if he be able to get any Thing, he will scarcely receive half, and that which he recovers, he must look upon as so much Gain and good Fortune, as the Debtor did what he received at first, § 4. And if the Creditor does not prevail to get any Part of his Money, he hath deprived himself of it, (αὐτὸν for ἑαυτὸν, as Grabe understands it) he must be content to lose it, and in return the Debtor turns his Enemy without any Reason. What follows must be understood of the Debtor in either Sense, and the Treatment there mentioned for Favours received, shews the great Baseness and Ingratitude of the Borrower. Seneca has a parallel Observation upon the Occasion, *Amico mutuum me roganti pecuniam si dedero, & amicum & pecuniam perdo*.

Ver. 8. *Yet have thou Patience with a Man in poor Estate, and delay not to shew him Mercy.* Ver. 9. *Help the Poor for the Commandments Sake, and turn him not away because of his Poverty.*]

Notwithstanding what is before said of the Treachery and Tricks of Debtors, the wise Man does not intend here to discourage any from lending altogether, and doing good to a Neighbour in that particular. His Advice is, to be quick and ready in lending, and slow in re-demanding; when Necessity obliges him to come to you, put him not off by affected Delays,

nor make him, through often coming, and the Sollicitations he is forced to use, or by exacting a Premium from him, purchase what you only lend him. Advance what he wants as freely as if you never expected to have it again, that if he does repay you, you may count it as so much unlooked-for Gain, *Da quasi non recepturus, ut lucro cedat, si reddita fuerit*. Ambr. de Tobia, L. i. c. 3. And if being poor, he asks for a longer time of Indulgence, wait with Patience, and press him not to pay instantly, if he is not in a Condition to do it, nor oblige him to it by any Severity, or exact any thing for Forbearance. To enforce the Duty of doing good to the Poor by a free and gratuitous Loan, he derives the Obligation from the revealed Will of God, and the Precept referred to is probably, *Deut. xv. 18. If there be among you a poor Man, thou shalt open thine Hand wide unto him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his Need*. St. Ambrose reasons well upon this Head, If you do not assist your Brother but for some Advantage only you propose to yourself, if you do not lend to him but on the Prospect or Promise of Usury and Interest, what Merit is there in the Action, or what do you more than a mere Heathen? Is it any Instance of Humanity to exact and draw from the Poor, when thou wouldst be thought to relieve him? Or does it deserve to be called Charity, when your only View in lending is to raise some Profit to yourself? And complaining of some Usurers in his Time, who took Advantage of the Necessities of the Poor, he adds, *Fœcundus etiam vobis est pauper ad quæstum; talis humanitas, ut spoliatis etiam cum subvenitis*. Ibid.

Ver. 10. *Lose thy Money for thy Brother, and thy Friend, and let it not rust under a Stone to be lost.*]

Though a necessary Caution is to be observed with respect to others, yet where a Friend or Brother is in Necessity, and wants something of thee, give it him freely and generously, without any Prospect or Covenant of a return. *Amicorum omnia communia*, and therefore thy Friend claims a Share with thee. If a Friend or Brother is taken here in a larger Sense, as signifying any one of the Jewish Race, or human Species, it may then be considered as a Piece of Advice, to be charitable in general. Ἀπόλεσον ἀργύρεον is not strictly to be understood, for what is given in this manner, even though there are no hopes of a return, is improperly called losing it; on the contrary, 'tis employing our Money so advantageously, that there is no Gain under Heaven equal to such a Loss. It means rather, parting with what is valuable, and so it is used, *Matt. x. 39*. What follows, *Let it not rust under a Stone to be lost*, the Geneva Version renders, *Let it not rust under a Stone to thy Destruction*, εἰς ἀπώλειαν, for an Account will be demanded of all Treasure hid unprofitably in the Earth, or wrapt up in a Napkin,



Napkin. Several Reasons are here assigned against hiding or hoarding up Money, 1. It contracts Rust. 2. It is liable to be lost, as not being known of perhaps by any other than the Owner, who may chance to die without discovering it. 3. It is of no use, and may as well be lost, and would be of great Help and Service to many necessitous Persons, if given or lent to them. It seems from hence probable, that the Jews sometimes hid their Money in the Earth, See c. xx. 30. and placed upon, or near it a Stone for a Mark; and there are Instances in History of Money being found under such Stones accidentally. See *Paul. Diacon. Hist. Longobar. L. iii. c. 6.*

Ver. 12. *Shut up Alms in thy Storehouses, and it shall deliver thee from all Affliction.*] Mercy or Charity shall befriend a Man when he himself stands most in need of Help; and when there is little hope of Safety elsewhere, the good Deeds which he has done shall rescue him from Troubles, or greatly alleviate them, and in the Time of publick Danger shall be his Shield and Buckler. There is the like Observation, c. xl. 24. *Brethren and Help are against the Time of Trouble, but Alms shall deliver more than both.* This and the foregoing Verse are of the same Import with, and perhaps taken from, *Prov. xi. 4. Riches profit not in the Day of Wrath, but Righteousness delivereth from Death.* *Nunquam memini, says St. Jerom, me legisse malā morte defunctum qui libenter opera charitatis exhibuit, habet enim multos intercessores, & impossibile est multorum preces non exaudiri.* The Psalmist confirms the same from his own Observation, *Psal. xxxvii. 25. The Vulg. renders, Conclude eleemosynam in corde pauperis, & hæc pro te exorabit ab omni malo.* And St. Cyprian has the same Reading, *Test. adv. Jud. L. iii.* And indeed this seems more agreeable to the Context. The Sense of the Passage, according to our Translation is, Let not thy Storehouses or Granaries be for thine own Use only, but let the poor Man have some comfortable Share with thee; nourish, feed, cloath him, succour him in his Necessity, and by that means you will lay up your Treasure in a Place of Safety and Security; or rather you will lodge it in Heaven before thee, to procure an Entrance for thee. *Salvian says, the Good and Charitable provide in this manner for an easier Passage thither, Expeditos se non putant ad sequendum Deum, nisi omnia prius carnalium sarcinarum impedimenta projecerint, simul ut more hominum commigrantium prius ad locum habitaculi sui res suas transferunt quam seipsos: scilicet ut cum universa quæ ad se pertinent transtulerint, tunc ipsi ad plenam ac refertam bonis immortalibus domum, præmissa rerum omnium facultate, commigrent.* L. iv. cont. Avarit.

Ver. 14. *An honest Man is Surety for his Neighbour.*] i. e. He will be bound for him,

if his Credit and Security is wanted or insisted upon, and will be a means to settle Affairs, and make his Neighbour safe and easy. But great Discretion is necessary to be used in such an Office of Kindness; it must be done only to Persons of Honour, and such as are deserving of the Favour, whose Soul is too noble and great to turn such an Act of Kindness to the Damage or Disadvantage of the Sponsor. *Solomon* often condemns Suretiship, *Prov. vi. 1. xi. 15. xvii. 18. xx. 16. xxii. 26.* by reason of the many Inconveniencies and Accidents which attend it on account of the Baseness and Carelessness of many Debtors in satisfying their Creditors, and thereby sacrificing their Friends, and involving them in much Expence and Trouble. Our Author speaks more cautiously himself upon this Head, ch. viii. 13. and reckons it as a Thing certain, that he that engages for another's Debt, will be condemned at last to pay it: so that when he says here, that an honest or good Man, *ἀνὴρ ἀγαθός*, will be Surety for his Neighbour, he must mean that the Principles of Religion, or however of Humanity, are too strong with a tender-hearted charitable Man, to suffer him to see one of his own Species, and perhaps Neighbourhood and Acquaintance, dragged to Prison, to be fast bound there in Misery and Iron, without such a Sympathy and Yearning of his Bowels as will incline him to take Pity on, and be a Sponsor for such an unhappy Object, even at his own Peril, and perhaps against his own Judgment in Point of Prudence.

Ver. 15. *Forget not the Friendship of thy Surety, for he hath given his Life for thee.*] There are Securities or Bails of two Sorts, the one is personal, Body for Body, Life for Life, such as that mentioned, 1 *Kings xx. 39.* and that of *Reuben* answering for *Benjamin*, *Gen. xliii. 9.* And the like may be observed of some Prisoners and condemned Persons, upon whose Escape there is an Obligation, according to the Laws of some States, upon their Keepers, who engaged for their Appearance, to undergo the Punishment in their stead. This Sort of Security the Author probably may mean, from that Expression, *he hath given his Life for thee, τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ ὑπὲρ σου.* The other concerns Money Matters, and is the engaging for another's Debt in a limited Time, and thereby in effect taking it upon ourselves. This sort of Bail may also be intended here, for by Life in this Writer is often meant *Victus*, or that Sustenance which is chiefly necessary to it, See *ψ 21, 22.* And so of the poor Widow in the Gospel it is said, that she flung into the Treasury *ὅλον τὸ βίον αὐτῆς, totum victum suum.* *Vulg. Mark xii. 44.* so that the meaning here may be, that the Sponsor, by engaging in another's Cause, pledges his own Fortunes and Substance, and makes them liable to the Penalty of the Debt. The formula *fidejussionis*, as used by the Ancients, with



with respect to both these Sorts is extant in *Ulpian*: *Quantum pecuniam Titio credidero, fide tua esse jubes?* Do you answer for as much Money as I shall lend *Titius*, and take all the Danger upon yourself? says the Creditor; to which the Surety answered, *Fide mea jubeo*, and was called *Præs*, i. e. *Sponsorem se præstans*. The Form with respect to Life or Liberty was, *In quantum illum condemnari ex bona fide oportebit, tantum fide tua esse jubes?* And the Answer was as before, *Fide mea jubeo*. The Surety in this Case was called, *Vas, quasi pro reo ad Tribunal vadens*. See *Varro de Ling. Lat. L. v. Ausonius* mentions and explains both these in the following Verses:

*Quis subit in pænam capitali judicio? Vas.*  
*Quis, cum lex fuerit nummaria, quis dabitur?*  
*Præs.*

Ver. 19. *A wicked Man transgressing the Commandments of the Lord, shall fall into Suretyship; and he that undertaketh and followeth other Mens Business for Gain shall fall into Suits.*] It is so great a Misfortune and Calamity, to be bound for a thoughtless, ungrateful, and perhaps tricking, Debtor, who, when himself is secured, thinks no more of his Friend, and overlooks all the Kindness shewed him; for so *Grotius* understands *ἀγαθὰ ἔργα* y 16. that the Author may be excused for wishing this may be the Portion of a Sinner, only to chastise him. The Words may be considered either as a Wish, as *Calmet* takes them, or a Denouncing of God's Judgments, as *Grotius* and our Translators understand them. According to the former Acception, the Sense is, May the Plague of an ill-placed Suretyship not fall to the Lot of the Friendly and Well-meaning; but such as are themselves knavishly inclined, have it for their Scourge: May officious Informers, restless Promoters of Law Suits, and busy Intermeddlers in other Affairs, Barreters, and such as encourage and undertake scandalous Causes, and infamous Sorts of Business, for mere filthy Lucre, lose their Ends, and suffer by such dishonest Undertakings: May the Charges, occasioned through their Villainy, fall upon them, and themselves be made publick Examples of Disgrace and Infamy. Let this particularly be the Punishment of such who are Sureties for, and engage to conduct, any Piece of Knavery and Wickedness; but such as are honest in their Intention, and mean only the Good, and Service of their Neighbour, in what they undertake or promise for, may such fall into no Disaster, nor suffer for their generous Acts of Kindness. The next Verse contains the Conclusion of all that is here said about Suretyship, and the Advice at last is briefly this: Help your Neighbour, as far as you can safely, out of any Strait or Difficulty; but beware that you be not ruined yourself by any rash Engagement, or fall into the same Circumstances, by

endeavouring to oblige or rescue him. Neither Pity, nor Friendship demands so much as to exchange Condition with the Person you relieve, and, in order to make another easy, to make one's self and Family miserable. Such Compliments as are inconsistent with Self-preservation, may well be dispensed with, and a Denial in this Case is the Voice of Nature and Reason.

Ver. 21. *The chief thing for Life is Water, and Bread, and Cloathing, and an House to cover Shame.*] The wise Man here shews, that Nature is content with a very little. The whole of what is necessary, if brought within proper Bounds, is Food, Raiment, and a Lodging to cover Shame. These may perhaps seem to be transposed, as Cloathing more properly covers Shame; but if we attend to the Context, the present Reading may be justified, and a House be as well said to cover Shame, as the Want of a certain fixed Dwelling exposes a Man to Disgrace; Lodging too is as necessary to screen and guard, as Cloathing is to cover our Nakedness. *Jansenius* says, that as *Victus* is here described by Water and Bread, so *Vestitus* includes Raiment and Lodging, both of which are necessary Coverings; that as the Simplicity of the former is designed to restrain Luxury, so the bare Mention of House and Cloaths was intended to prevent Pride in Apparel, or in stately and magnificent Buildings. *Grotius* does not consider *ἰμάτιον καὶ οἶκος* as distinct Particulars, but makes the latter exegetical of the former, as if the reading was, *ἰμάτιον ὃ οἶκος καλύπτει ἀσχημοσύνην*, *vestimentum vero est domus (portatilis) obtegens ea quæ nuda dedecet*. This Exposition, it must be confessed, seems somewhat forced; but thus much must be acknowledged, that our Author in the Enumeration of the Necessaries of Life, ch. xxxix. 26. omits this of Lodging, as does *St. Paul*, 1 *Tim. vi. 8*. *Drusus's* Comment is, *Quædam domi honesta sunt, et eadem foris, aut sub dio turpia*; as if he referred to *Deut. xxiii. 13*. where it must be confessed the very Phrase of this Writer, *καλύπτει τὴν ἀσχημοσύνην*, does occur, but the Occasion is scarce of moment enough to be here inserted. *Terence* includes all the three Particulars here mentioned, *Victus, vestitus, quo in tectum te receptes*. *Heauton. V. II.* and *Juvenal* determines a Sufficiency to be *in quantum sitis atque fames & frigora possunt*. *Sat. xiv.* where *frigora* alludes to both Sorts of covering. *Seneca* has a Passage still more pertinent and explicit, *Cibus famem sedet, potus sitim extinguit, vestis arceat frigus, domus munimentum sit adversus corpori infesta*. *Epist. 8.*

Ver. 23. *Be it little or much, hold thee contented that thou bear not the Repraach of thy House.*] *ὀνειδισμὸν οἴκου* σσ. The Sense of which reading seems to be, If a Man be contented with his present Condition, though it be but a mean one, he will not, through



murmuring at it, disoblige his Parents or Relations, as if he was ashamed of them; nor through Ambition or Forwardness, as *Drusus* understands it, be the Occasion that the Meanness of his Family and Circumstances be known and reflected on. The *Vulg.* renders: *Et improprium peregrinationis non audies*, which is more agreeable to the Context. The true Reading therefore probably is, *ὀνειδισμόν παροικίας ἢ μὴ ἀκέρως*, i. e. You will not expose your self to the Reproach and Insult of the Rich and Powerful, by thrusting yourself amongst them, when you can live in Peace and Comfort at home; and being satisfied with your own homely Fare, you will avoid being reckoned a Spurger and an Intruder, nor be forced upon mean and servile Compliances. The Loss of Liberty is too valuable an Exchange for a false Smile, or an accidental Entertainment; and he that is of an unsettled Temper, and dissatisfied with his own Condition, though it be but ordinary and mean, will be a Slave all his Life. *Serviet æternum, qui parvo nesciet uti, Cui non conveniat sua res.* Hor. *Grotius* understands by *ὀνειδισμόν παροικίας*, travelling abroad, and leaving one's own Country, and meeting with such Sneers and Affronts as sometimes happen to Foreigners; but the former Sense seems preferable. *Solomon* gives the like Advice, and for the same Reason, *Withdraw thy Foot from thy Neighbour's House, lest he be weary of thee and so hate thee.* Prov. xxv. 17. *Phocylides* gives the like Caution:

Μηδ' ἄλλω πρὸς δαίτας ἰδοὺς σκυβάλισμα τραπέζης,  
Ἄλλ' ὅπῃ οἰκίῳ βιάτων φαγέοις ἀνύβριτος.

Ver. 24. *It is a miserable Life to go from House to House; for where thou art a Stranger, thou dar'st not open thy Mouth.* i. e. to talk or complain, *De summis injuriis os suum aperire non posse.* Syr. *Calmet* understands this of the Poor and Needy, who being in Want of Necessaries, go from House to House, asking for Alms, and seeking a Lodging, whose manner of Life sufficiently speaks a Variety of Wretchedness. It is observable that the *Psalmist*, among other Imprecations against the Wicked and Ungodly, adds this Instance of Misery and Unhappiness: *Let his Children be Vagabonds, and beg their Bread, let them seek it also out of desolate Places,* Ps. cix. 9. According to this Interpretation the Advice here is not very unlike that Direction given by our Saviour, *Luke* x. 7. *Go not from House to House; it being the Life of Vagrants and Beggars, and a Disgrace to Persons of Character, and therefore particularly improper for his Apostles, who were so highly commissioned.* But I would rather understand this Observation of the wise Man's of Retainers to great Families, Levee-hunters, and such as either have no House of their own, or seldom are at Liberty to come near it, and prefer a splendid

Slavery to Content and Freedom within their own Walls. *Solomon* aptly compares such to a Bird that deserts its Nest: *As a Bird that wandereth from her Nest, so is a Man that wandereth from his Place.* The Gr. is much stronger and closer to our Purpose, *ὡς περὶ ὅταν ὄρνιθον καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦ οἴκου αὐτοῦ ἰδύσῃ, ὅτως ἐνθρονῇ ὁ δούλος ὅταν ἀποστῇ ἀπὸ τοῦ οἴκου καὶ τῶν ἰδίων τόπων.* Prov. xxvii. 8.

Ver. 25. *Thou shalt entertain and feast, and have no Thanks: Moreover thou shalt bear bitter Words.* ξενίῃς καὶ πωλείς τις ἀχαίρῃσα. *Grotius's* Conjecture here is very ingenious, ξενίῃς καὶ πωλείς τις ἀχαίρῃσα, i. e. When you have fed them of the best, and made much of them in all respects, they will affront you. Some Copies have ξενίῃς καὶ πωλείς ἀχαίρῃς, which the *Vulg.* follows, and it affords a good Sense, i. e. after all your Trouble and Expence you will find you have entertained such as will prove ungrateful, and shall hear something unhandsome or disagreeable from them, viz. what follows in the two next Verses, or some such Insult and Rudeness. And thus the *Geneva* Version, *Thou shalt lodge and feed unthankful Men, and after shall have bitter Words for the same, saying, &c.* And so the *Arab.* I think the Confusion will be lessened, if we read with the *Vulg.* in the third Person, and understand this, and the two following Verses, of the imperious Master of the House, that he will entertain you, and give you to eat and drink of the best, and at the same Time will reproach you in some bitter and affronting Manner.

Ver. 26. *Come, thou Stranger, and furnish a Table, and feed me of that thou hast ready.* Probably this is spoken by the lordly Owner of the House, by way of Insult and Sneer, as knowing the Incapacity of the Stranger, called such by way of Reproach, to give an Entertainment: Or it may contain a real Demand, to provide an Entertainment for himself and Friends, which seems probable from Prov. xxiii. 1, 2. In the 6, where the wise Man reminds the Guest at some great Table, to observe what is set before him, and to prepare to make the like in return, *Ἐὰν καθίσῃς δεῖπναι παρὰ τραπεζῆς δυνάστη, νοητῶς νόει τὰ πρὸς ἀντίμω σου. ἰδὼς ὅτι ποιαῦτά σε δεῖ προσκυνᾶσαι.* The *Arab.* indeed takes it otherwise, *Recede a nobis ut mensam apponamus, tu vero inter manus tuas comedere,* intimating, that his Presence was troublesome, that he stood in the Way, should content himself with some Fragments and be gone, as not worthy to make one among such Company. But this comes too near the Sense of the next Verse. The Term *πράξει* in the Beginning of this Verse may be considered as an Expletive, rather as an Ornament of Speech, than of any real Signification. See Instances of this *Job.* xviii. 17. *Luke* xii. 37. xvii. 7.

Ver. 27. *Give Place, thou Stranger, to an honourable Man, my Brother cometh to be*



be lodged, and I have Need of mine House.] *ἔξελθε, πάρεσκε, ἀπὸ προσώπου δόξης, i. e.* Arise and be gone from before a Person of Figure and Station, a *magnificentia convivarum*. Arab. I shall be ashamed to have such a one, of low Birth, and mean Appearance, seen at my Table among Guests of great Distinction, and nice Taste. *Grotius* fancies an Allusion here, and makes the Sense to be, Depart from my House, thou Stranger, and prophane it not by thy Presence; thou shouldst no more be seen there than in the Temple; to which Strangers, according to *Josephus* and the Jewish Writers, had no Admittance. The Opposition in this Light is beautiful. The Sense of the first Part is much the same with that of *St. Luke*, *ὁς ἀπὸν ἐλπίμαίερα σκ.* xiv. 9. and our Translation of this Passage is very like it. The Author shuts up the Chapter with the Reflexion, how very disagreeable and mortifying such contemptuous Treatment must be to a Man of Understanding and real Worth, who is neither fond to intrude himself like other Impertinents, nor ignorant of the Devoirs due to his Superiors, as Persons, void of Education, are; nor thought unworthy by Persons who esteem Merit, though in a plain or unfashionable Garb, to be admitted in to the best Company.

## C H A P. XXX.

Ver. 1. **H**E that loveth his Son, causeth him oft to feel the Rod, that he may have Joy of him in the End.] See ch. xxii. 6. When the wise Man here says, that he that loveth his Son, *ἐνδελεχέσει μάστιγας αὐτῷ*, a due Abatement must be made; for the Meaning cannot be, that a loving Father should be continually beating his Son; our Translators therefore have with great Tenderness, as well as Judgment, rendered it by often chastising, and so the Syr. has it. *Solomon* has many Passages to the same Effect, *Prov.* xiii. 24. xxii. 15. xxiii. 13, 14. Nothing is of more Importance, either for the Interest of particular Families, or the Good of the State in general, than a right Education of Children; upon this depends the Welfare and Happiness of Parents, and even that of the Community. *Plato* L. ii. *De Repub.* *Aristot.* *Polit.* L. vi. *Cic.* *De Offic.* L. ii. But the Education of Children can never be rightly managed, nor happily executed without some Severity towards them, to suppress their Sallies, correct their Faults, and keep them in their Duty; and though the tender Age of Children demands some Indulgence, yet as soon as the Passions begin to appear, and the Inclinations of Nature to discover themselves in a dangerous and faulty Manner, a Parent should betimes subdue the growing Evil, discountenance all ill Habits or loose Talk by Reproof, Threats, or even the Discipline of Stripes. For if Prudence will

not permit a Parent too much to demean himself to Childrens Humours, or to suffer misbecoming Freedoms, lest such a Familiarity should abate of the Reverence and Submission due to them, much less should he be pleased with, or laugh at, their Vices, or reckon that as a Sign of a promising Genius, which indicates only an early Rankness, and Badness of the Soil. The being thus strict, as to their Conduct and Behaviour, is the Way to have Joy of Children in the End. *Ἐν ἡδυνῷ αὐτῷ*. Which the *Vulg. Arab.* and our Version understand of the Father's Comfort in his old Age from a Child so brought up. The *Syr.* applies it to the Child, and takes *ἐν ἡδυνῷ* adverbially. But then the Reading should be, *ἢ αὐτῷ ἐν ἡδυνῷ ἐν αὐτῷ*, as it is expressed in the following Verse.

Ver. 2. He that chastiseth his Son shall have Joy of him.] *Παυδδεν* has two Senses, either to teach, or to correct; the *Vulg.* renders in the former; we may understand it here in both Senses, for Teaching often is forwarded by Correction, and a Parent, who brings up a Child under the Apprehension of it, or the occasional Use of it, shall bring him to more Good, or have greater Good by him, as the Margin has it, than one who is overfond, and indulgent in all respects. The *Vat.* and *Hæschelius* have *ὀνήσει ἐν αὐτῷ*, which seems preferable to the other Reading, *διφραυθήσει ἐν αὐτῷ*, as it prevents Tautology, and the too quick Repetition of the same Phrase, and *ὀνήσει* may be taken too in the Sense of our Version, for thus it is used, *Philem.* § 20. *Ναὶ, ἀδελφε, ἐγὼ σε ὀναίμην ἐν Κυρίῳ, Ἦε, Brother, let me have Joy of thee in the Lord*, which makes it probable, that *ὀνήσει αὐτῷ* is the better Reading. *Solomon* expresses the Sense of this Verse, *Prov.* xxix. 17. *Correct thy Son, and he shall give thee Rest, ἀναπαύσει σε, i. e.* refresh, and comfort thee. See *Ecclus.* iii. 6. *And shall give Delight unto thy Soul.* The *Vulg.* renders, *laudabitur in eo*, probably from a corrupt Copy, which had *αὐνῆσει*, an easy Alteration from *ὀνήσει*; though even in that there is good Sense, that People will compliment a Father upon a hopeful Son, whose acknowledged Learning, prudent Conduct, and happy Disposition shew both the Benefit of a good Education, and the Parents Care and Wisdom in bestowing it.

Ver. 3. He that teacheth his Son, grieveth the Enemy, and before his Friends he shall rejoice of him.] *Παρεζηλάσει ἡ ἐχθρὸν*, Shall be envied by his Enemies, *inimici sui invidiam excitat.* *Syr.* and the *Tigurin* Version is to the same Purpose. *i. e.* They shall be afraid, lest a Son so wisely educated, and so well accomplished, should hereafter appear, to their Disgrace, disappoint their Malice, and scourge their Wickedness y 6. Of such Children, whose Spirit promises to redress their Father's Wrongs, and appear for his Safety



Safety and Glory, we are to understand the *Psalmist*, when he says, *Happy is the Man that hath his Quiver full of them, they shall not be ashamed when they speak with their Enemies in the Gate.* Pl. cxxvii. 6. On the contrary their Relations and Friends triumph in Persons of such Worth, and place their Safety and future Fortune in them. The like is true of Spiritual Attainments: For the Satisfaction and Credit of the Instructor rises in Proportion to the Catechumen's Improvement, and his future Reward will be accordingly. Thus St. Paul says of his Converts, his Children in the Lord, brought up in his holy Nurture and Admonition, and improving under it unto all Pleasing, that they are his Crown, his Glory, and his Joy. 1 *Thess.* ii. 20. The Gift of Education, especially in the Way of Godliness, is above that of Birth, and a natural Father hath less to boast of, than a spiritual Instructor. *Seneca* has some fine Sentiments upon this Subject; the following Speech of a virtuous and deserving Son to his Father, can scarce be parallel'd: *Non est bonum vivere, sed bene vivere. At bene vivo, sed potui & male. hoc tantum est tuum quod vivo. Si vitam imputes mihi per se nudam, egentem consiliis, & id ut magnum bonum jactas, cogita te mihi imputare muscarum ac vermium bonum. Si bene vivo, in ipso beneficium majus quam quod dederas, recepisti: tu enim me mihi rudem & imperitum dedisti; ego tibi filium, qualem genuisse gauderes.* L. iii. *De Benef.* c. 3.

Ver. 4. *Though his Father die, yet he is as though he were not dead, for he hath left one behind that is like himself.* ] *ἔτελεσται ὡς ὁ πατήρ, ὃς ὡς ἐκ ἀπὸ θανάτου.* Literally, his Father died, and is as though he was not dead. And so the *Vulg.* *Mortuus est pater, & quasi non est mortuus.* But the Rending of the *Arab.* is more to be admired for the pretty Turn, *Moritur iste, superstitem relinquit sui similem, imo non moritur, quia sui similem relinquit.* It is a most sensible Pleasure and Comfort to a good Father in his Life time, to see his Children daily copying him, treading in his Steps, and transcribing his Virtues; and when Age reminds him of his Mortality, he meets Death through this pleasing Prospect with Calmness and Composure; nor are his last Moments disturbed and embittered with any ungrateful Reflection, about their future Welfare, as knowing that he leaves behind him such as are Heirs of his Virtues, as well as his Fortunes. He considers them as his Image and Representatives, as his own Bowels, as living Monuments of himself, nor need he be at any Expence to perpetuate his Memory. Such a Father will never be forgotten, while the Children continue to wear his Likeness, nor will his Friends and Acquaintance scarce miss him, when he is gone: He talks with them in their Looks, and instructs them still by their Prudence and Example. On the contrary, nothing is more afflicting than

for a Man to leave behind him degenerate Children, and such as are vicious and ill-disposed; for a Man, whose Labour has been in Wisdom, and in Knowledge, and in Equity, to leave his Portion to one, who hath not, and will not labour therein, through the uncomfortable Prospect of an unworthy and worthless Offspring to succeed him, *his Days are Sorrows, and his Travels Grief.* Ecclesiastes ii. 21. This and the two following Verses are very beautiful, and shew the masterly Pen of a second *Solomon.* See *Prol.*

Ver. 7. *He that maketh too much of his Son, shall bind up his Wounds, and his Bowels will be troubled at every Cry.* ] The *Vulg.* renders *pro animabus filiorum colligabit vulnera sua*, following a (probably corrupt) Copy, which had *ἐλψυχῶν ψῶν*, instead of *ἐλψυχῶν* in one Word, which our Translators follow. But *ἐλψυχῶν* signifying only *refrigero*, or, as *Drusus* would have it, *refocillo*, can scarcely be the true Reading here. *Complut.* and from thence *Grabe*, prefer *ἐλψύχω*. *ψύχω*, besides its primitive Signification, means also *περιώνω*, to court with gentle Usage, which Sense agrees with *Syr. Arab.* and *Tigurin* Versions, as well as our *English*. If this Sense be followed, *shall bind*, &c. must mean, shall have Occasion to bind. *Syr.* has, *His Wounds shall be many, Blande tractantis filium suum multa erunt vulnera*, understanding the Mischiefs as happening to the Father; and so does the *Arab.* *Qui blanditur filio, multa patietur flagella*; both of them adding *many*, I presume, to make the Sense clearer, and stronger, which is, that he that treats his Son with too much Indulgence and Fondness, who gives him too much Liberty, and lets him take his Swing of Pleasures, *qui voluptuarium facit filium suum*, *Syr.* will repent of his ill-judged Tenderness, shall have many Things to grieve him, many inward Wounds, to disturb his Peace and Quiet; his Son's Misconduct will give him fresh Occasion of Fear and Trouble, and when he hears any Noise or Disturbance, he will be in Pain for him, lest he be engaged in any Fray, or have met with some Accident. This paternal Concern is finely worked up in the Character of *Micio*:

*Ego, quia non rediit filius, quae cogito!  
Quibus nunc sollicitor rebus, ne aut alserit,  
Aut uspiam ceciderit, aut perfregerit  
Aliquid!*

Ter.

There is also another Sense favoured by *Camerarius* and *Grotius*, viz. that he that seasonably corrects his Son, and keeps a strict Hand over him, shall heal his Wounds, i. e. prevent his following evil Courses, and the Mischiefs arising from them, and the Concern which his Ill-conduct would occasion him; and such an Effect will the Experience of his former Severity have over him, that, if his Father speaks in a louder Voice than ordinary,



ordinary, or has but the Appearance of a Passion, he is affrighted and trembles, which the *Tigurin* Version expresses very naturally: *Ad omnem vocem expavescit medullitus*, and the *Arab.* yet more strongly, *Palpitatio cordis ejus ceu lima audietur*. But it does not appear, that the Verb denotes Correcting, which, joined to other Reasons, makes the first Sense preferable.

Ver. 9. *Cocker thy Child, and he shall make thee afraid; play with him, and he shall bring thee to Heaviness.*] These Words, though spoken imperatively, are not a Command so to do; but rather a Caution to avoid it, as that Advice in *Ecclesiastes*, *Rejoice thou young Men in thy Youth*, xi. 9. And that of our Saviour, to his Disciples, *Sleep on now, and take your Rest*. Matth. xxvi. 45. See *Ephes.* iv. 26. *Is.* viii. 9, 10. *Nab.* iii. 14. So here the Meaning is, Shew not too much Fondness to thy Child, nor wink at *ἀγνοίας αὐτοῦ*, his Sins and Follies, *ψ* 11. lest thou live to repent it, lest *ἐνδραμεῖσθαι σε*, he quite astonish thee with his bad Conduct, and wicked Actions. Play not with him, lest too much Familiarity lessen thy Authority, and thou make him incorrigible, by making thyself contemptible. Lose not thy Power over him, through too much Easiness, but let thy Sweetness and Good-nature be tempered with Awe and Gravity, that the Fear of thee be kept up and preserved. *Qui praeest*, says a learned Moralist, *debet & aridens timeri, & iratus amari, ut eum nec nimia letitia vilem reddat, nec immoderata severitas odiosum*. Greg. Moral. L. xx. 3. As too much Severity may seem unnatural, so the Neglect of Correction is faulty too, even upon the Score of Fondness. It is a just Reflexion of a modern Writer: "If Children are not to be won to Goodness by Kindness and Indulgence, by Exhortation and Advice, they are to be compelled to it by Severity and Discipline, by Threats and Punishments. For as Naturalists observe of young Trees, that crooked and stubborn Plants are not to be straightened but by Fire, so wrong and perverse Dispositions are often not to be amended but by warm and severe Correction." *Delany's Social Duties*.

Ver. 12. *Bow down his Neck while he is young, and beat him on the Sides while he is a Child, lest he wax stubborn, and be disobedient unto thee, and so bring Sorrow to thine Heart.*] The *Apostolical Constitutions* give the like Advice about Chastisement, *μὴ ἀλαβείδῃ αὐτοῖς ἀπὸ πλῆστον, κ. τ. λ.* *Ne veremini illos objurgare, & castigare cum severitate, non enim interficietis illos castigando, immo vero servabitis*. L. iv. c. 11. It is said of *Adonijah*, the Son of *David*, that his Father had not displeased him at any Time; but a learned Prelate, who has discussed the Subject of Relative Duties in the ablest Manner, well observes, "That this is no Example for other Parents, unless their Children

behave themselves so as not to need Re-proof. *Solomon* was a great deal wiser than his Father, and he advises Parents never to regard the Cries or Pain of their Children, when there was just Occasion for it, or they were in Danger of Mis-carriage. When Parents see their Children in Hazard of falling into evil Courses, they are not to consider whether what is most proper to reclaim them, and prevent their Misery, will grieve or anger them, but to venture that, and do their Duty. They are to have Regard to what they intend should, and what in all likelihood will, follow, and that is, Amendment; and not to consider how it will be taken at their Hands. The Good of their Children is what the Parents ought to regard; and though the Method of procuring that may stir up their wrathful Spirits, yet it is not to be declined on that Account. The reasonable Hopes of its yielding the Fruits of Righteousness, and Amendment to them that are exercised thereby, will justify what they do." *Fleetwood's Rel. Dut. Disc.* iv. The like may be observed of *Elis*'s Children, who, if their Father had seasonably restrained, and severely punished them in Time, would not have made themselves so vile, or brought that severe Judgment upon themselves, and their Father's House. Among the Works of *St. Austin* we have the following dreadful Instance of a Parent's Negligence, and a Son's unheard of Villainy occasioned by it: *Cyrillus filium, ut scitis, habebat, & eum unicum possidebat, & quia unicus erat, eum superflue diligebat, & super Deum. Ideo superfluo amore inebriatus, filium corrigere negligebat, dans etiam potestatem faciendi omnia quae placita essent illi. . . Filius luxuriose vivendo consumpsit partem bonorum suorum: sed ecce ebrietatem perpeffus, matrem pregnantem nequiter oppressit, sororem violare voluit, patrem occidit, & duas sorores vulneravit ad mortem*. *Serm. de Cyril.* I must observe here, as before on *ψ* 1. that Precepts of Correction are not to be extended too far, nor understood too strictly and rigidly; this I thought proper to intimate, chiefly with regard to what our Author has said on that Head, lest Injunctions, seemingly so harsh, should create an Aversion in young Minds to this wise and most valuable Writer, who has delivered so many useful Truths for their Benefit and Improvement.

Ver. 13. *Chastise thy Son, and hold him to Labour, lest his lewd Behaviour be an Offence to thee.*] *παίδευσον ἃ ὅν σε, ἡ ἐργασαι ἐν αὐτῷ*, is the same as *ἐργασαι ἐν παιδείᾳ*, ch. xxxiii. 25. "*Εργασαι ἐν αὐτῷ*" is not well translated, *hold him to Labour*, it rather means, take Pains with him to instruct him, and give him the Advantage of a good Education. The *Tigurin* Version has, *Erudi filium, & elabora in hoc*, as if the Copy it followed had, *ἐργασαι ἐν τῷ*. The true reading



reading of the next Sentence is that of the *Alex. MS.* ἵνα μὴ ἐν τῇ ἀγνημοσύνῃ αὐτοῦ γενοίησθε, lest you suffer through his Disgrace, and be reflected on for your Negligence of him, and his scandalous way of living. And thus *Calmet*, *Instruisez votre fils, de peur qu'il ne vous deshonore par sa vie honteuse.* And the *Arab.* *Ne tu ob insipientiam ejus crucieris.* Among other Questions proposed by *Ptolemy Philadelphus* to the LXX Interpreters for their Determination, according to *Aristeas's* History of them, this was one, *Quæ sit maxima negligentia?* and the Answer was, *Si quis filiorum negligens fuerit, eosque nulla in re erudiat.* Our Author is thought by many to be cotemporary with them, and by some to have been one of them. See *Corn. a Lap. in loc.*

Ver. 14. *Better is the Poor being sound and strong of Constitution, than a rich Man that is afflicted in his Body.* μᾶλλον ὁ σῶμα αὐτοῦ. The wise Man here gives the first Place to Health above all temporal Blessings whatever; and this was the Opinion of the greater Part of the ancient Philosophers. Thus also *St. Ambrose*, *Prima sunt, quæ sunt animæ bona; secunda quæ corporis, salus, virtus, pulchritudo, &c. Tertia sunt quæ accidunt, divitiæ, potestates, patria, amici, gloria.* De Abraham. L. ii. *Philo* has the same Division, *Ἡ δὲ Ἀρετὴ.* The Hellenists call all Distempers *μασίγας*, and there are frequent Instances of this in the *New Testament*, *Mark* iii. 10. v. 29, 34. ὁπασὲ εἰς εἰρήνην, καὶ ἰδοὺ ὕγιος ἀπὸ τῆς μασίγας, where *εἰς* is used for *ἐν*, as in the Passage before us. And *Luke* vii. 21. νόσων καὶ μασιγῶν are coupled together as synonymous. See *Psal.* xxxix. 10. 2 *Macc.* vi. 30. The perjured Wretch in *Juvenal* maintains a contrary Opinion from our Author with regard to the Blessing of Health, when he says, that it is better to be sick with the rich, than poor and in good Health; so he can have but Money, he compounds for Blindness, Lameness, or any bodily Infirmary: *Et prohibet, & vomica putres, & dimidium crus,* are nothing with him, if attended with this, *Sat.* xiii. But neither is the Poet of this Opinion himself, whose Wish and Prayer is, *Mens sana in corpore sano.* *Sat.* x. nor any who have long known the want of Health. Even a Man with the rich Gout would gladly, under a severe Fit of it, change Condition with one of his Vassals, could he at the same Time dispose of his Pain.

Ver. 18. *Delicates poured upon a Mouth shut up, are as Messes of Meat set upon a Grave.* Riches locked up in a sick Man's Coffers are equally as useless to him, as Victuals set upon a dead Man's Tomb for his Repast. For to a Mouth shut up, as those of sick Persons may in some Sense be said to be, what signify the greatest Rarities, or any Niceties in store, either of Wine or Provisions, since a sick Stomach cannot relish them? They are to one grievously afflicted

either in Body or in Mind, as insignificant and useless, as if set before a Mouth actually closed, or like those Messes which the Piety of the Heathens set before their Dead. The wise Man here refers to the parental or sepulchral Entertainments, which were anciently much in Vogue in the Eastern, and other Countries, and particularly amongst Idolaters, whose Notion was, that the Souls of the Departed wandered about their Sepulchres, and wanted a proper Sustenance, and that it was a pious Office to place Bread and Wine over their Graves, for their Support and Refreshment. *Varr. de Ling. Lat.* L. v. The learned *Spencer* thinks that the *Baalim*, or Hero-Gods of the Ancients, were designed to be honoured, and propitiated by Dedications, or Parentations of this kind, particularly *Isis* and *Osiris.* *De Leg. Heb.* Sec *Deut.* xxvi. 14. *Epiphanius* has a Passage which expressly mentions this superstitious Custom: The Eatables, says he, they burn, and the Wine they consume by way of Libation; in this they do the Deceased no good, and injure themselves. What he farther adds is very particular, that when they bring these Accommodations, they call upon the dead Person by Name, for whom the Feast is designed, *ἀνάστα, ὁ δέστω, φάγε, καὶ πόσε, καὶ ἀποδιδόναι.* Arise such a one, eat, drink, and rejoice. In *Ancorat.* They were so extravagantly credulous as to believe the Dead took Pleasure in these Repasts, and that the Phantoms came to eat and drink voluptuously, whilst their Relations feasted on the rest of the Sacrifice, and eat it in common, sitting round the Pit or Hearth, discoursing of the Virtues of the Person they came to lament. Besides the Eatables, and the Ceremony of pouring out the Blood of the Victims, it was customary at these Solemnities to pour out Wine, Oil, Honey, Milk, or some other Liquors in use, which sometimes they contented themselves with offering only, imagining their Condition, as dead Persons, would not so well admit of gross Food. Such was the Superstition among the Heathen on this Head. Among the *Jews* and first *Christians*, these Repasts were only Charity Feasts, designed principally for the Benefit of the Poor. The Faithful were convinced, that the Dead could receive no Advantage from, nor partake of these Feasts, and continued them only for the Service of the living Poor, who came to the Place of Interment to be fed and refreshed. Mention is made of them *ch.* vii. 33. *Tob.* iv. 18. *Bar.* vi. 26. not as any superstitious Custom, but as a laudable Rite for the Help and Maintenance of the Poor. This Custom prevailed among the *Phenicians*, and from them passed to the *Carthaginians*, and other People of *Africa.* One meets with the Remains of it among the *Christians* there in the Time of *St. Austin*; but that *Father* quite abolished this ancient Custom for its Abuse. *Aug. de Mor. Eccl.* c. xxxiv. *Serm.* xv.



Ver. 19. *What Good doth the Offering to an Idol? for neither can it eat, nor smell; so is he that is persecuted of the Lord.*] As an Idol cannot partake of the Burnt-offering (for so *καρπώσις*, and *καρπώμα* are used by this Writer, xlv. 16. Lev. iv. 10, 18. xvi. 24. xxii. 22. equivalent to *ὀλοκαύτωμα*) so he who is encompassed with Infirmities, and afflicted with Sickness, as the *Margin* has it, he whom God visiteth or chastiseth in his Wrath with bodily Evils, (the *Vulg.* adds, *portans mercedes iniquitatis*, as if his Sickness was brought upon him as a Punishment for his Wickedness) cannot relish any good Cheer, or fine Entertainment, nor indeed taste any Pleasure in Life, *γ* 17. He seeth the spread Table, and the Guests elegantly regaling themselves, and laments his Loss of Appetite, and Weakness of Stomach, as the Eunuch does his Impotency upon the Sight of a fair Object. *καὶ στενάζει*, at the End of the Comparison, *γ* 20. I suspect to be an Interpolation, as it occurs just before, and the Sense is more compleat without it.

Ver. 23. *Sorrow hath killed many, and there is no Profit therein.*] This is spoken by the Figure *Litotes*, for Sorrow is not only not profitable, but actually hurtful, and the Effects of it very dangerous, for Sorrow has brought Death upon many Persons by the Illnesses which it has occasioned: it has likewise ruined the Souls of many through the Despair which it has cast them into, and put them upon hurrying themselves by Violence out of the World, through the Disrelish of a bitter Life. Nor will Sorrow be found of any Service with respect to the Evils or Pressures of it, for if they are present, 'tis to no purpose to grieve, since we can neither remove nor remedy them thereby; and if they are future, such as we apprehend are coming, Sadness is still fruitless, since it has no Power to prevent them, or keep them back; and perhaps they are imaginary Evils only which are dreaded, and may never happen; and if real ones, the anticipating Misfortunes, is making them double. *Calmet* well observes, that there is but one Species of Sadness, which Religion authorises, and is of Service, and that is Contrition, and Sorrow for Sin. To be sorry after a godly Manner, or, as the *Margin* has it, according to God, is profitable in the highest Degree, for such a pious Sorrow *worketh Repentance to Salvation, not to be repented of*, 2 Cor. vii. 9, 10. but the Sorrow of the World, arising from Accidents and Misfortunes, past, present, or future, is not only useless, but very injurious; and, according to the same inspired Writer, *worketh Death*. The most sovereign Remedy for Sadness, which imbitters every Man's Cup more or less, is a good Life, a pure Conscience, and a firm and unshaken Confidence in God. Some of the Ancients have remarked, that Sadness (not a religious one) is an Enemy to the Holy Spirit, and that the

Spirit of Prophecy in particular will not abide in a melancholy Temper; and accordingly it is observable of the Prophet *Elisha*, that he could not prophesy till a Minstrel was brought to him, and the Harmony of Musick had calmed his ruffled and disturbed Mind, and had elevated his Soul to a proper and becoming Pitch. 2 Kings iii. 15.

Ver. 25. *A chearful and good Heart will have a Care of his Meat and Diet.*] To Sadness, Carefulness, Envy, Wrath, and other tormenting Passions which destroy the Health, hasten Wrinkles, and occasion a premature old Age, the wise Man opposes a chearful and merry Heart. The *Hebrew* expresses this by a *good Heart*, and so it is generally rendred by the *6*, Deut. xxviii. 47. Judg. xvi. 25. xviii. 20. xix. 6, 9. Ruth iii. 7. The Sense here is, that a gay, open, and merry Heart, instead of being subject to, and indulging perplexing Cares, instead of falling into Indolence, or Carelessness, through Grief or lowness of Spirits, regales itself with good Cheer, and Pleasantry of Discourse, amidst a Circle of Companions and Friends: A Person of such a Temper has a continual Feast, and thereby enjoys a better Share of Health, and consequently a longer Term of Life. According to *Grotius* the Sense is, that one of an easy Temper is satisfied with all before him, at his Meals he minds nothing else: *animus est in patinis*, all other Thoughts and Cares are then thrown aside and forgot. *Bossuet* thinks the wise Man here advises to have a regard to what one eats, to observe a proper Regimen in Diet, which contributes greatly to Health. The *Syr.* renders, *Cor bonum, multi sunt cibi ejus, & omne, quod comedit, ostendit super corpus ejus*. That one of a merry Heart has the keener Appetite, and is the better for his eating, and shews it by his Size and Complexion, like that of *Solomon*, *A merry Heart does Good like a Medicine*. Prov. xvii. 22. There is a strange Transposition of Chapters and Verses in the six following Chapters in the several *Greek* Copies, and the *Vulg.* nor has the latter Part of this escaped the Confusion. At ch. xxxvii. they agree again, and proceed regularly to the End.

## C H A P. XXXI.

Ver. 1. *Watching for Riches consumeth the Flesh, and the Care thereof driveth away Sleep.*] In the former Chapter the Author mentions several Causes which injure Health, such as Sadness, Anger, Envy, Cares, &c. Here he continues the same Subject, and instances in Covetousness, Gluttony, and Drunkenness, which are equal Enemies to Health, and opposes to them Temperance, and a prudent and discreet Use of the good Things of this Life, which are the proper means to preserve it, to procure Content and Satisfaction, and to prolong Life.



Life. The Observation of this Writer upon the Care and Sollicitude which attend the getting and keeping of Riches, is very just. See James v. 3. where the Apostle says, that the Rust of Gold and Silver shall be a Witness against rich Men, and shall eat their Flesh as it were Fire, ἡ δὲ ἰὸς αὐτῶν Φάγεται τὰς σάρκας ὑμῶν, where ἡ ἰὸς, by a Metonymy, signifieth a carking solicitous Care of heaping up Riches, and is described, as here, to consume, and eat the Flesh. And thus *Ærugo* is used by Horace, — *Animos Ærugo, Et cura peculī Cum semel imbuerit.* And so Plutarch, Ὑπολαμβάνει τις ἢ πλεον ἀγαθὸν εἶναι μέγιστον; τὸτο πὲρ ψεύδος ἰὸν ἔχει, νέμεται τὴν ψυχὴν. Περὶ δεισιδαιμόνων. In St. Matthew, the Deceitfulness of Riches is compared to Thorns which tear the Flesh.

Ver. 2. *Watching Care will not let a Man slumber, as a sore Disease breaketh Sleep.* μείριμνα ἀγρυπνίας ἀπαλίσσει νύσταμον, would be literally and more properly rendred, according to Calmet, Junius, and Grotius, Care and Watchfulness will demand or require Sleep; but Grabe does not approve of this reading; the true one he says is, ἀπαθήσει, avertit. Prolegom. Tom. iii. c. 4. According to the Sense of our Version, the reading of the next Sentence probably should be, ἡ ἀρρώστια βαρὺ ἐνήψει ἄνθρωπον. And so Hæschelius says one MS. actually has it. The Orient. Versions likewise confirm this, *Ægritudo gravis somnum adimit.* And the Vulg. favours it. Junius follows the common reading, and has, *Infirmiorem gravem elicit somnus*, which affords a very good Sense, viz. that Sleep driveth away a sore Disease, moderates the Anguish and Danger of it, as being the most simple and natural Remedy for Trouble, Care, Labour, and even Sickness itself, according to that Observation on Lazarus, John xi. 12. *If he sleepeth, he will do well.* Sophocles calls Sleep ἡσυχία νόστος. And Euripides, νόστος θνήσκον. Curtius says of Alexander's Soldiers, when he was very dangerously ill, *Non prius (a regia) recesserunt, quam compertum est somno paulisper requiescere. Hinc certiorē spem salutis ejus in castra retulerunt.*

Ver. 3. *The Rich hath great Labour in gathering Riches together, and when he resteth, he is filled with his Delicates.* ἐν τῇ ἀναπαύσει is inaccurately rendred here *when he resteth*, and by the Geneva Version, *in his Rest*; it meaneth, that, after his great Labour in gathering Riches together, he retireth from Business, and leaves it off, to enjoy them, and ceaseth to labour and toil any more. And so the Orient. Versions understand it, *Demum quiescit ad percipiendas delicias.* And thus ἀναπαύσει is taken, ch. xi. 19. and the rich Man's finding Rest, is explained by his eating from that Time continually of, or enjoying his Goods, see Luke xii. 19. where he who had much Goods laid up for many Years, sings at length this *Requiem* to his Soul, ἀναπαύου, Φάγε, πίε, & φέγγε, and thus Ephraim,

ὄρεται ἀναψυχήν, i. e. ἀναπαύσειν ἑμαυτῷ, Hof. xii. 9. And so the Man in Plautus, — *Hinc certum est otio me dare, satis partum habeo:* and Horace,

*Hac mente laborem, Sese ferre senes, ut in otia tuta recedant, Aiunt, cum sibi sint congesta cibaria.*

Sat. L. i.

Ver. 4. *The Poor laboureth in his poor Estate, and when he leaveth off, he is still needy.* ἐκονίασαι πτωχὸς ἐν ἐλαττώσει βίῃ, i. e. in want of Things necessary for Life; so βίος frequently signifies in his Book. See Prov. xxiii. 3. where deceitful Meat is by the ὁ rendred ζωὴ ψεύδους. The Rich and the Poor both labour, but with different Success; the Rich takes Pains to encrease his Riches, and to put himself in a Condition to enjoy with Comfort, in the Decline of Life, what he has got, and to live on the Fruits of his Labours the Remainder of his Days: The Poor labours for a bare Subsistence, and cannot get forward so as to lay up a Stock, or *Viaticum*, for his future Necessities; and when he is old, instead of tasting the Sweets of Repose, and living upon what he had before-hand provided, he finds himself in the same State of Poverty as he set out with, and is obliged to repeat his daily Fatigue, though his Strength almost faileth him, and he is but a Shadow of his former Self. Vatablus and Drusius understand this and the foregoing Verse thus, There are some so lucky as to have Success in every thing they undertake; and others who are always as unfortunate; the former heaps up Riches, often unexpectedly, and Wealth comes to them without their seeking; the other continue poor, though they take never so great Pains; some Misfortune or other pulls them back, and fixes them to their former Wretchedness, ch. xi. 11, 12. This Inequality in their States is the Appointment of God's Providence; his Blessings upon a Man's Labour, or the want of it, makes the Difference, ch. xi. 14. Prov. x. 22. Psal. cxxvi. 1, 2.

Ver. 5. *He that loveth Gold shall not be justified.* i. e. will not be just. *Non erit justus.* Jun. and the Syr. *Non erit insons.* According to that of Solomon, *He that maketh haste to be rich, shall not be innocent,* Prov. xxviii. 20. His Eagerness to accumulate Wealth will put him upon many Acts of Fraud, Violence, and Injustice. — *Nunquam pudor est properantis avari.*

Ibid. *He that followeth Corruption shall have enough thereof.* ὁ διώκων διαφθοράν, αὐτὸς πληθεύσει. The Copies vary here, some have εἶδος, others αὐτὰ, all of them, as I conceive, wrong; the true reading seems to be, αὐτῆς πληθεύσει, which our Translators follow, and so Dr. Grabe, from Conjecture, restores the Place. Διαφθορά, which is here rendred *Corruption*, by a Figure means corruptible Things, φθαρτά, as Silver and Gold,

1 Pet.



1 Pet. i. 18. And the Sense is, he that is too Intent upon getting Riches, shall be corrupted, seduced, and betrayed by them. *Per easdem seducetur.* Syr. Grotius conjectures the true Reading of the Greek to be, ὁ δὲ δαίμων διάφορον, ἔτος ὀλιγοῦσιν, i. e. He that loveth Money shall fall, or will transgress often; διάφορον is used in this Sense, ch. vii. 18. xxvii. 1. xlii. 5. 2 Macc. i. 35. iii. 6.

Ver. 6. *Gold hath been the Ruin of many, and their Destruction was present.* πολλοὶ ἐδόθησαν εἰς πλῆμα. There are many fine Sentiments in the Heathen Writings upon the immoderate, or unlawful Pursuit of Riches; but that short one of St. Paul's, 1 Tim. vi. 10. is beyond all, ῥίζα πάντων τῶν κακῶν ἐστὶν ἡ φιλαργυρία. Some Copies read here, πολλοὶ ἐδόθησαν χάριν χρυσῷ, which Junius follows, i. e. Covetousness hath put many upon stealing, and other Crimes, which have been the Occasion of their being imprisoned, and laid in Irons. Thus Calmet, *Plusieurs ont été mis dans les liens à cause de l'or.* Many also have suffered Death for the Crimes which they were drawn into by the Charms of Gold, and though their Destruction was plainly before their Face, ἐγένθη ἀπώλεια αὐτῶν κατὰ πρόσωπον αὐτῶν, and they knew their Fate, yet they would run upon it for the Sake of Money.

Ver. 8. *Blessed is the Rich that is found without Blemish, and hath not gone after Gold.* ὁς ἐπίσω χρυσῷ καὶ ἐπορεύθη. This Phrase is often used in Scripture, and generally in a bad Sense, denoting the following some Idol, or using some idolatrous Practice. In y 7. Gold is called a stumbling Block, or an Abomination, and they that are too fond of it, are said there to sacrifice to it, as their Idol. And by St. Paul, Covetousness is expressly called Idolatry, Col. iii. 5. The going after Gold, means, the setting the Heart upon it, and trusting in Riches. And so the Vulg. expounds it, *Beatus (dives) qui post aurum non abiit, nec speravit in pecunia & thesauris.* The Temptations to sin, occasioned and administered by Money, are so many and powerful, that nothing is more rare, or more worthy of Commendation, than a Man that is rich, and at the same Time innocent, just, and humble. He that can possess Abundance without being attached to his Wealth, or puffed up by it, and can part with it without much Regret and Concern, is truly perfect. To be poor in Spirit amidst a Flow of Riches, to be humble in a high Estate, to be in the midst of Fire without burning, in the midst of Flatterers without being exalted with Pride, and in the thickest of Temptations without falling by any of them; to have the Power of doing evil, even with Impunity, and not to make use of it to any bad Purpose,—of such a Behaviour a Man may justly glory, ἐσω εἰς καύχασιν, let him have his due Praise: As such Instances of a just Carriage and superior Vir-

tue are very rarely to be met with, in an over-grown Fortune, well may the wise Man ask in the next Verse, who, or where is the unblemished rich Man? And we will call him blessed, for he is a sort of Miracle, and has performed Wonders.

Ver. 10. *Who hath been tried thereby and found perfect? then let him glory. Who might offend, and hath not offended? and done evil, and hath not done it?* This is not spoken of human Frailty in general, but of Men's Propensity to Sin in Money-matters only, and so St. Austin confines it; he interprets this Passage of concealing or with-holding what is another Man's Right. "If you have, says he, restored to your Neighbour his own, when no body but you two were together at the Delivery of it, and God only was Witness,—if you have restored to the Son after the Death of his Father, what he had deposited with you, and the Son knew nothing of it,—or if you have met with a Purse of Money accidentally upon the Road, and no body saw you take it up, and delivered it to the right Owner, as soon as you could discover, or overtake him, then this Elogium of the honest and perfect Man belongs to you."

*Comm. in Tit.* We find many such Cases put and determined in the Writings of Moralists, and several Instances occur of Heathens, whom no Law bound, but that of natural Conscience, who have acted disinterestedly upon such Occasions, and from a Principle of Honesty, have nobly withstood an Advantage they might have made. When an ignorant or needy Person hath offered Things to sale for less than the Value, they have generously corrected the Mistake, shewed the real worth, and paid the full Price. *Vit. Isid. ap. Phot. Cod.*

Ver. 12. *If thou sit at a bountiful Table, be not greedy upon it, and say not, There is much Meat on it.* Literally the Translation is, Dost thou sit at a great Table? open not thy Throat upon it, i. e. Do not shew thyself greedy or voracious of what is set before thee, by eating too much because thou seest such Plenty. We have the like Advice *Prov. xxiii. 1, 2, 3.* Or the Sense may be, Do not shew thyself an Epicure or Glutton, by talking too much about Victuals, or commending too favourily and lasciviously what is before thee on the Table. For though it may be an Instance of Civility and Politeness to seem pleased with the Entertainment in general, yet to dwell upon the Pleasures of eating, the Charms of a well spread Table, and the regaling the Appetite; to enlarge upon the Excellency of this Dish, and the Delicacy and Rarity of that, and the great Satisfaction arising from tickling the Palate by such a pleasing Variety, betrays rather Gluttony, than any useful Knowledge, or valuable Accomplishment. Or if with Calmet we suppose a *Hebraism* here, and understand πολλὰ γὰρ in the Sense of too much,



as *multum* is used *Numb. xvi. 7. Deut. i. 6. ii. 3.* the Meaning then will be, Do not, when you see the Quantity of Victuals, and Variety of Dishes on the Table, exclaim and find Fault, that too much is provided, which shews either Covetousness, or Jealousy in you; it looks as if you expected or dreaded the like Expence, that you are vexed, as apprehending an equal Obligation upon you to make the like Provision in your Turn; or that you are jealous and envious at the other's superior Fortune, and grander Way of living, and therefore condemn the Entertainment for its Profusion and Prodigality, as not being able to give the like yourself, or unwilling, through want of Spirit. Whether it be Jealousy or Avarice that occasions your Reflexions, nothing can be more disagreeable than such a Temper. In the following Verse it is called a wicked, or an evil Eye, and so the *Hebrews* term it. See *ch. xiv. 8, 9. Prov. xxiii. 6. Matt. xx. 15.* One cannot have a stronger Instance of an evil, or covetous Eye, grudging, and exclaiming against every Appearance of Expence, as so much Waste and Profusion, than in the Traitor Judas, who had Indignation against the pious Disciple, for anointing the Feet of Jesus with costly Ointment, *Why was this Waste of the Ointment made?—why was it not sold for three hundred Pence, and given to the Poor?* not that he cared for the Poor, but was an envious Thief, *John xii. 5, 6.* His Eye was evil, because she was so hospitable and good. *Athenæus* remarks, that the *Egyptians* did not set their Dishes upon the Table, as is the modern Custom, but they were carried round the Company, that the Guests might help themselves, *L. iv. c. 13.* Our Author wrote this Book in *Egypt*; but it is manifest from this Verse, and the Context, that he refers to the manner of sitting at Table, and serving up Dishes on it, according to the Custom of the *Greeks*, who in the Time of this Writer were Masters of *Egypt*, and had introduced their Customs into it.

Ver. 13. Remember that a wicked Eye is an evil Thing, and what is created more wicked than an Eye, therefore it weepeth upon every Occasion.] *δια τὸ αὐτὸ πᾶσι τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς.* This cannot be true spoken of the Eye in general, nothing being more excellent in its kind, it must therefore mean an evil or niggardly Eye. The Sense is, what is more wicked than such an Eye, or rather, as the *Bishop's Bible* has it, *What Thing created is worse than a wicked Eye?* *Syr.* and *Arab.* add, that God hates such an Eye, probably because he hates every Thing that is evil. The next Sentence, *Therefore it weepeth upon every Occasion,* is far more obscure: *weepeth*, it is certain, is applied to Things inanimate: *Grotius* says, *Omne id quod exteriorius spectatur, aut indicium præbet, vocant Hebræi Panim, Græci ὀφθαλμοῦ.* *Com. in loc.* See *Leigh's Crit. Sac. in voc.* Thus

the Shew-Bread, because it was to be set before the Face, or in the Presence of the Lord continually, in *Hebrew* is called the *Bread of Faces*, or of *Presence*. And by the *ὁ, ἄλφος ἐνώπιος, Exod. xxv. 30.* Now if *παρουσία* be taken in this larger Sense, the *Marginal Reading*, *before every Thing that is presented*, will afford a plain and natural Sense, viz. what is more wicked than an Eye which lusteth so to gratify a gluttonous Appetite in eating of every Dainty which is set before it, that it will even weep, if it imagines it shall not be satisfied? This Sense seems confirmed from *Prov. xxiii. 1.* where *παρουσία* σου, i. e. *what is set before thee*, as our Version has it, in the *Heb.* is *אֲשֶׁר לִפְנֵיךָ*, *quod ad facies tuas*, as *Pagnin* renders. *Mess.* of *Port Royal* apply this Passage to the Master of the Feast himself, that being a covetous, jealous, and suspicious Person, he is so affected with the Countenance and Behaviour of the Guests whom he has invited, that he cries, or is ready to cry, whether they eat too much, or too little, are too free, or too sparing, too merry, or too sad. *Grotius* likewise expounds it of a covetous Entertainer, who weeps at every Thought or Appearance of Expence, *ab omni conspectu, sc. impendii.* Or may we not understand this Verse of the Lust of the Eye in the first Transgression, that, as a natural Punishment for its then Wickedness, Tears flow from every Face; or, putting *ἐπὶ* for *ἀπὸ*, that every Eye sheds Tears: *μνήθητι* seems to point to some fatal Time, and what Time have we so much Cause to remember?

Ver. 14. Stretch not thine Hand whither soever it looketh, and thrust it not with him into the Dish.] *ἔτι ἐὰν ἐπιβλέψῃ, μὴ ἐκείνην χεῖρα ἐκ, καὶ μὴ συνθλίβῃ αὐτὴ ἐν τραπέζῳ.* The rendering of the *Bishop's Bible* is more explicit and plain, *Lay not thine Hand upon every Thing that thine Eye seeth*, probably following a Copy which had *ἐὰν ἐπιβλέψῃ*, which may seem to be countenanced by *αὐτῷ* in the next Sentence. *Συνθλίβειν* is not to thrust, as we translate it, and as the *Syriac* also has it, but to be squeezed or pressed; or, taking it in the middle Voice, to squeeze or press. Perhaps the Author means, that Persons should not be so eager as to press their Hands one against another in the Dish. But how are we then to understand *αὐτῷ*? *Vulg.* omits it, and some Copies instead of it, read *ἐν τῇ τραπέζῳ*, which gives an easy Sense. Our Translators render *with him*; but who is the Person intended by *him*? Neighbour is mentioned in the following Verse, but not before. *Arab.* puts *Socios* for it, which has a good meaning; but the best way, as I conceive, of settling the Difficulty will be to join *αὐτῷ* with *τραπέζῳ*, and then the Sense will be, Do not scramble, or croud Hands in the very Dish, which shews not only great Rudeness, but Voraciousness. The Advice, as contained in the whole Verse, seems to be this, Cast not your Eyes on the nicest Dishes,



Dishes, nor long after the best Morfels therein, nor rudely seize on what pleases you most, but with regard to Eating, restrain both your right Hand, and right Eye, for even in this Sense of curbing the Appetite, the learned *Spanhemius* understands that Precept of the Gospel. *Grotius* expounds the Passage of contending, or striving with others for a Place at Table, which too is rude, vulgar, and shews the Want of true Taste and Breeding.

Ver. 15. Judge of thy Neighbour by thyself, and be discreet in every Point.] *Nóis τὰ τῆς πλεονεξίας ἐν σεαυτῷ, καὶ ὅτι παντὶ ῥήματι διανοῦ.* This Maxim, as it is of excellent Use, ἐν παντὶ ῥήματι, in every Thing, or upon all Occasions, and of great Moment in the Conduct of Life, so is it no less serviceable when applied to Eating, of which, from the Context, it must be understood. And in this Light the Sense is, as you would not like to see another greedy and voracious, and seizing at your own Table what is most delicate, or to his Goût, so from hence form your own Conduct, not to offend in the like Particular, nor take the same indecent Liberty; as you do not approve of such Freedoms in others, so imagine they will condemn the like in you. Thus *Junius*, *Ex teipso de aliis judica, qui nollis ab altero patinam exbauriri.* And the *Arab.* *Scias portionem sociorum tuorum parem esse tuæ, idemque eos velle ac te.* If I should take it ill, — *Postum ante mea quia pullum in parte catini sustulit efuriens.* I should not snatch at any Rarity from another's Plate. And if I should be displeased at another's taking before me, or from me, what pleases his Taste most, I ought not to be so selfish as to take what is most nice for my own Palate.

Ver. 16. Eat as it becometh a Man, those Things which are set before thee; and devour not, lest thou be hated.] The *Vulg.* adds very properly, *frugi, utere quasi homo frugi his quæ tibi apponuntur*, i. e. Use with Temperance, or as a temperate Man should, what is set before thee. Though the Sense of the present Rendering may very well be justified, i. e. Eat as a Man should, with Decency and Moderation, and devour not like a Beast of Prey, which seizes on every thing before it. A sober and discreet Person eats to satisfy nature only, an intemperate one to pamper, and inflame. When *Socrates* one Day invited a number of Friends to dine with him, his Wife was concerned how she should entertain them, and provide for them suitably to their Rank: If they are temperate and modest, says the Philosopher, there is enough; if they are not so, they are not worth troubling ourselves about them. *Ap. Laert.* L. ii. This Reply was proper from one whose Maxim it was, that a Man should eat only to live, not live only to eat. *St. Austin* laments the great Power of the sensitive Appetite, even over himself, and his Impotency to subdue it, and says, that the

Victory over it is truly praiseworthy, and the Effect only of God's Grace. *Certo quotidie contra concupiscentiam manducandi et bibendi . . . et quis est, Domine, qui non rapiatur aliquantulum extra metas necessitatis? Quisquis est, magnus est, magnificet nomen tuum.* Confess. L. x. c. xxxi.

Ver. 17. Leave off first for Manners sake, and be not unsatiable lest thou offend.] Either the Master of the Feast, or his Guests through Voraciousness. As it is not expected or required, that you should cease eating as soon almost as you are set down, which may be a Sort of silent Rebuke to the rest of the Company, as if they eat too much, and interpreted, as if you was not pleased with what was provided, so neither shouldst thou make thyself remarkable by eating more, or longer, than others, which is yet more unpolite: Modesty and a Respect for the Company demand this. Thus the *Tigurin* and *Orient.* Versions, *Modestiae causa desiste primus.* To have done last, or help one's self first, equally offends against Decorum and Good-Breeding. True Politeness is always attended with a decent Modesty, and such as betray a Want of this Virtue through Self-indulgence, and a Contempt of others, can never be thought perfectly well bred, or thoroughly accomplished. *Clemens Alex.* spends a whole Chapter in laying down Rules for Temperance and Sobriety, and has intermixed some which regard Decency and Politeness, and particularly instances in Intemperance, as a Breach both of Duty and good Manners. *Pædag.* L. ii. c. ii. *Ovid's* Advice is not very unlike that of this wise Man's,

*Neve diu præsume dapes, sed define citra,  
Et capias paulo, quam cupis esse, minus.*

Ver. 20. Sound Sleep cometh of moderate Eating, he riseth early, and his Wits are with him; but the Pain of Watching, and Choler, and Pangs of the Belly, are with an unsatiable Man.] ὕπνος ὑγίαιας, the Sleep of Health, *Somnus salubris*, as the *Syr.* has it. *Horace's* Description of the temperate Man is, that after his being refreshed by Sleep, — *Vegetus præscripta ad munia surgit.* Sat. L. ii. 2. Where he mentions the very same Inconveniences attending Luxury, as the wise Man here does, and the Contrast is most beautifully drawn. *Pliny* mentions as the Consequence of too much, or too high Feeding, *furiales somni, inquietas nocturna.* *Porphyry's* Comparison is very just, that a full Meal is like *Sisera's* Banquet, at the End of which there is a Nail struck into a Man's Temples. A Philosopher's Treat therefore, says *Plato*, is preferable to that of any other Person, because there is no Remembrance of it after in the Head, whatever there may be in the Memory, and the Guests even enjoy it the next Day, by perceiving no bad Consequences from it. Nothing is more frequent in the Heathen Moralists, than to advise their



their Friends not only to practise Temperance, but to be able and willing to bear even Hunger and Thirst, because such a Habit wonderfully advances a Man in the Study and Practice of Wisdom: For the Mind is then best enlightned, when it is free from the Burden of Meat; and to pamper and regale the Body, is but to make the Prison of the Soul the stronger. "No man, says a pious Prelate, ever repented that he rose from the Table sober, healthful, and with his Wits about him; but many have repented that they sat so long, and continued that bad Custom, till their Health, their Understanding, their Virtue, and their God departed from them." Bishop Taylor's *Serm.* And to finish the Character, the Epicure after his full Meal, ἀσμάειν, pants for Breath, a Prelude of what is coming upon him, and is on a sudden surprized with a Stroke of an Apoplexy, or found dead in his Bed.

Ver. 21. *And if thou hast been forced to eat, arise, go forth, vomit, and thou shalt have rest.* εἰ ἐβιάσθης ἐκ ἰδίῳ μαστίν, ἀνάστα μετεπορεύου. If you have been constrained or overpersuaded to eat, and through the Importunity of others have overcharged your Stomach, and find it out of order, rise from the midst of the Company the very first Opportunity you can with Decency. The wise Man in the foregoing Verses had in the strongest Manner recommended Sobriety and Temperance, but as it may sometimes happen, even to the most regular Persons, to be engaged unawares in some Sort of Excess through Inadvertency, too much Complaisance, or the Influence of Example, here he advises instantly to unload the Stomach upon such an Occasion; but he neither approves of the Excess, nor of the unseemly Way to remove it, but only by way of Physick and Necessity; he thinks it more adviseable to avoid Illness by easing the Stomach privately, than to keep in it what may not only be disagreeable and troublesome, but dangerous and hurtful; not to attempt to cure Indigestion by a free Glass, but to remove the Mischief from Intemperance, by a timely Discharge. Debauches always hurt the Constitution, and therefore it is better to prevent them altogether, by abstaining from that Excess, which cannot be indulged without Danger, nor cured but by a Remedy, which carries something disagreeable or shameful in it. Calmet observes, that ἔμεσον is not in the *Vat.* nor some other Editions, which he thinks the Copyists might drop, as carrying in its Notion something unseemly; but if this was their Reason, they were too nice and delicate; even the Scripture, which is remarkable for its Care in this respect, scruples not occasionally to mention it, *Prov.* xxiii. 8. *Isai.* xxviii. 8. nor is the Mention of the Remedy to be condemned, which upon such an Accident is allowed to be highly proper, but the Occasion, the Eating and Drinking to Excess,

which is so faulty. The Advice, according to the *Orient.* Versions, is, to retire from Company, to go to Bed, and sleep off the Debauch.

Ver. 22. *In all thy Works be quick, so shall there no Sickness come unto thee.* Whenever thou findest thy Stomach disordered through Intemperance, follow instantly the Prescription above advised, so shalt thou escape Sickness, or some bad Consequence, that might have fallen upon thee. The Context necessarily requires this, as the primary Sense. It may indeed mean in general, Be active and diligent in all thy Undertakings. See the like Expression *Prov.* xxii. 29. so shall thy Work succeed better, and thou shalt even improve thy Health thereby; or if, with the Generality of Expositors, we understand this purely of bodily Exercise, the Observation will be just in the following Sense, Be active, athletick, and laborious; let Exercise be your Physick, and you shall escape thereby a Number of Diseases. For in Reality the greatest Part of Mens Illness arises either from Intemperance, spoken of before, or from Indolence, which may be supposed to be condemned here: where both these, viz. Temperance and Exercise, are joined together, we have Reason to expect Health, and there is a comfortable Prospect of a vigorous old Age.

Ver. 23. *Whoso is liberal of his Meat, Men shall speak well of him, and the Report of his good House-keeping shall be believed.* The Psalmist says, *So long as thou dost well unto thyself, Men will speak well of thee*; but it is no less true, what the wise Man here observes, that he that does good unto others, shall have their Praise and Commendation. *Pf.* xlix. 18. As the liberal Man is called λαμπρὸς ἐπ' ἀφελον, so the same Metaphor is continued in καλλονή, which means Beneficence, and by St. Ambrose is rendred *bonitas*. To this is opposed πονηρία in the following Verse, which means Sordidness, and Covetousness, as it does, *ψ.* 13. above. By ἀφελον, here rendred Bread simply, we are to understand Victuals or Provisions in general, and so it is often used, as in that Description of Joseph's Entertainment of his Brethren, it is said, *He ordered to set on Bread.* Gen. xliii. 31. and in that Petition of the Lord's Prayer, *Give us this Day our daily Bread.* Solomon expresses himself in the same Manner, and upon the like Occasion, *He that hath a bountiful Eye shall be blessed, for he giveth of his Bread to the Poor.* *Prov.* xxii. 9. The Sense of the whole Verse is, that the good, beneficent, and charitable Man, who dealeth his Bread to the Hungry, and takes all Opportunities of helping and obliging others, will have many Advocates; Men will always be disposed to believe, and report every thing to his Advantage; there are so many Instances of his Goodness, and so many known Proofs of his Generosity and Kindness, that his Credit is firmly established,



blished, and his Name will be always mentioned with Honour. Whereas Niggardliness will as certainly disgrace a Person; his hard Heart, and mean Actions shall raise him many Enemies; nothing can be said of the Miser so bad, but will be believed and propagated, and many Things shall be aggravated or invented, to make him appear still worse, and more pinching, than he really is.

Ver. 25. *Shew not thy Valiantness in Wine.*] Value not thyself upon a strong Head, much less affect the Character of a hard Drinker, nor pride thyself in being able to bear much Liquor without being disordered or disguised; provoke not others on that Account, *mero certare*, to drink with you, by challenging them to Trials of that Sort; for the Account of Temperance is not to be taken from the Strength of a Man's Head, but from the Measures of Religion; and though Men may not force their Understanding, nor disorder themselves by very plentiful Draughts, and, by a particular Strength, I will not call it Happiness of Constitution, be able to talk still and transact Business, and the Affairs of the World, yet may they be intemperate notwithstanding, as not being fitted for the things of the Spirit, nor the Work and Business of God; and though they offend not in the mere Act, they are devoid of the Spirit of Sobriety. We may properly distinguish between the Drunkard and the hard Drinker; the former drowns his Senses in his Cups, and does it often; he loses all that distinguishes the Man, his Reason, his Speech, his erect Posture, and often his Sense of Duty and Religion. This indeed may sometimes happen through a Head naturally weak, or made so by repeated Debauches, but still it is Drunkenness; for it is not the Quantity of intoxicating Liquor, but the being disordered, and the Habit and Custom of it, that denominates the Drunkard; he is not such merely from an accidental Slip, for even good Men, such as *Noah*, have been so surprized, but from indulging, and continuing in a known Infirmary, and not prudently guarding the weak Part, where he is sensible his Failing lies, and thereby is the oftner exposed to Disgrace and Sin. The hard Drinker, on the contrary, is one, who sits long, and drinks deep; he gives and receives Challenges, and comes off Conqueror; he is fond of a Round of Company, and is the last to break it up: One shall perceive little or no Alteration in him, after a hard Service, no Want of Reason or Memory, no Faultring in his Voice, no doubtful or uncertain Steps; he seems comparatively cool and unconcerned, is scarce warm or elevated, and yet, considering the Quantity consumed, and the Time lost at it, such a one deserves not to be called a temperate Person, as he is immoderate in the Use of those good Things, which God in-

tended only for Refreshments; and though he be so fortunate, through the Advantage of a strong Head, not to appear a Drunkard, yet he will scarce escape Censure and Reflection, nor the Woe, denounced by the Prophet, upon such as *are mighty to drink, and Men of Strength, to mingle strong Drink.* *Is. v. 11—22.*

Ver. 26. *The Furnace proveth the Edge by dipping, so doth Wine the Hearts of the Proud by Drunkenness.*] According to *Jansenius*, the Sense is, that as the Blade is proved by dipping, and contracts more Toughness thereby, so the Hearts of Men, by being drenched in Liquor, *fiunt ad nocendum promptiora*, become more quarrelsome, and inclined to Mischief. But the Meaning, I conceive, rather is, As the Fire proves the Temper of the Blade, and the Smith easily distinguishes upon Trial the Goodness of the Steel, so does Wine, immoderately taken, lay open Mens Hearts, and discover their Temper and Humour, without Disguise. The common Reading of the Gr. in almost all the Copies is, *καμινῶ δοκιμάζει σίμωμα ἐν βαφῇ, ὥτως οἶνῶ καρδίας ἐν μάχῃ παρεφάνων*, but the true Reading seems to be *καμινῶ δοκιμάζει σίμωμα ἐν βαφῇ, ὥτως οἶνῶ καρδίας παρεφάνων ἐν μέθῃ*, for (besides that *Clem. Alex.* quoting this Passage, omits the Words *ἐν μάχῃ*) Quarrelling, that certain Attendant upon Drinking, is mention'd *y 29.* and so is needless here. The *Vulg.* seems to have followed a Copy that read in this Manner, *Vinum corda superbiorum arguet in ebrietate potatum*, which *Junius* and our Translators follow, and thus *Calmet* takes it, *Le Forgeron distingue aisément une bonne Arme, & un bon Trenchant par le feu, & par le trempe; ainsi le Vin decouvre le cœur des superbes dans l'ivresse.* The old Adage says, *In vino veritas*; but Experience shews that Men at that Time do not always speak the Truth, but often exceed it; their Conceit of themselves is much raised, and they are apt then, through Self-sufficiency, to boast of imaginary Accomplishments, and to deliver themselves not only with Freedom and Boldness, but often with Rudeness and Insolence; and therefore the Author, not without good Reason, inserted *καρδίας παρεφάνων*. Of all the Poets *Theognis* comes nearest this Writer on the Subject, who uses the very same Simile to shew, that Wine discovers the Thoughts even of the most cautious and Wise. *Γρωμ. 499.*

Ver. 29. *Wine, drunken with Excess, maketh Bitterness of the Mind, with Brawling, and Quarrelling, &c.*] See *Prov. xx. 1. xxiii. 29. Hor. Carm. L. i. 18.* And thus *Philo*, *ἰδὲν μέντοι καὶ τὰς ἐπαποδυνάμεις πολλοὺς, κ. τ. λ. Videmus istos qui quotidie descendunt in certamen temulentiae, & hoc agunt solum ut vini plurimum in ventrem ingerant, symbolas conferre tanquam in aliquid utile, multari tandem rebus omnibus, opibus, corpore, anima. Hæc enim conferentes, & rem*



*familiarem minuunt, & corporis vires per delicatum victum frangunt, atque molliunt, & animas, biberni torrentis in morem, immodicis epulis inundatas, demergunt in barathrum.* Πεδ. μὲν. St. Chrysostom observes very justly, that Men are afraid of natural Death, and yet they ought to fear that less than a Death, which happens to them by Intemperance: The former strikes by an inevitable Necessity, the latter is hastened by a voluntary Corruption; the one is by the Appointment of God, the other through the Instigation of the Devil; the former is a Separation of Soul and Body, the latter a shameful Destruction both of the one and the other; by the former the Soul being disengaged from the Body, becomes more free, and, if righteous, approaches to the Likeness of Angels; in the latter, the Soul is wholly immersed, sunk, and lost in the Irregularities and Disorder of the Body; its Reason is clouded, its Will enslaved, and the Soul abandons itself to Anger, Pride, Lust, and other criminal Passions. See *Hom. xxix. in Gen. ch. ix.*

Ver. 31. *Rebuke not thy Neighbour at the Wine, and despise him not in his Mirth; give him no despiteful Words, and press not upon him with urging him (to drink.)* The Observation is the same with that of Solomon, that there is a Time for all Things, which Reason can best discover, and Discretion knows how to use and apply; for Example, it is impertinent to propose Business and Matters of Consequence, at a Time when People are met for pure Refreshment, and Relaxation; it is also improper to dispute with, or attempt to rebuke, Persons in Drink, when they are least able and disposed to attend to any Argument or Remonstrance. Advice then is not only useless, but it is often dangerous to give it, and much more is it so to oppose or contradict one in that Condition, especially a passionate, proud, or powerful Person. The Fate of *Clitus* and *Callisthenes*, the Favourites of *Alexander*, who put them to Death for contradicting him in his Cups, should in Prudence discourage such an Attempt. And if bare Opposition will give Offence, much more will opprobrious Words, and ill-timed Reflexions upon a Man's disorderly and loose Way of Living be sure to irritate him. The best Particular is, *Press not upon him with urging him to drink*, i. e. Take not the Advantage of the Condition you find him in, to urge him to drink more, much less force it upon him; think it not any Addition to thy Honour, Wisdom, or Goodness to impose upon one who cannot help, or judge for himself, or to have contrived and completed his Downfall. Thereby thou makest thyself a Partaker of his Sin, and art answerable for all evil Consequences that may happen. The *Vulg.* renders, *Ne premas illum in repetendo*, i. e. Entice him not to drink by any artful Means,

as by proposing, says *Calmet*, some favourite Healths to him, which you know he cannot withstand, and thereby engaging him to pledge you; which, though a common, is an insidious Way of gaining an Advantage over another, and cheating him under the Mask of Friendship. It was a commendable Decree at *Abasuerus's* Royal Feast, and worthy to be introduced into all Company, that none should be compelled to drink, but every Man should do according to his own Pleasure, *Esth. i. 8.* and to prevent Disorders of this Kind, was Part of the Business of the *Architriclinus*, who is mentioned in the Beginning of the next Chapter.

## C H A P. XXXII.

Ver. 1. **I***f thou be made the Master of a Feast, lift not thyself up.*] The literal Rendering of the Greek is, Have they made thee a Ruler or Master? And thus the *Vulg. Rectorem te posuerunt? noli extolli.* The wise Man seems to continue here the Subject of Feasts and Entertainments, and alludes to a very ancient Custom among the Greeks, and Romans, and, as it should seem, among the Persians also, from *Abasuerus's* Banquet, *Esth. i.* which, was to appoint a Ruler of the Feast, ὁ συμπόσιάρχης, *Rex vini*, as *Horace*, or *Dominus convivii*, as *Varro* calls him, who should have the Care of every Thing and Person, and prescribe what each should drink. The Author of this Book, though he wrote in *Egypt*, speaks here according to the Custom of the Greeks, which ruled over it at that Time. The King, Ruler, or Master of these Feasts, for by all these Names he is called, was appointed either by casting Lots, to which *Horace* refers, *nec regna vini sortiere talis*, or by the Choice of those who were met at the Entertainment together. This is not to be understood of such Feasts, where Company came together by a set Invitation, but of such, where each Person contributed his *Symbolum*, or Share towards the common Expence, and had a Vote to appoint the *Architriclinus*, or President. The grave *Cato* seems pleased with their Rules, or *Leges convivales*, and expresses his Satisfaction at the Appointment of such an Overseer. *Me vero & magisteria delectant a majoribus instituta; & is sermo, qui more majorum summo adhibetur magistro in poculis.* De Senect. Orat. v. in Verr. At these Feasts every Thing was conducted with the greatest Decorum, without any Irregularity or Excess; so that Men of Letters, Philosophers, old Men as well as the younger Sort, did not scruple to attend them: And their agreeable Conversation, and improving Discourse were not less entertaining, than the Musick which accompanied them. *Plut. Sympos. L. i. Athen. Deipnos.* The Master, who had the Care and Conduct of the whole, acquainted each Person when it was a proper Time



Time to retire, and thereby prevented any Quarrels or Disturbance. The wise Man, in the latter Part of the Verse, advises the Ruler himself, not to be exalted upon the Honour done him; but to study rather to content, and please his Guests, than to feast or regale himself, and to consider himself rather as their Steward for the Time, than as their Superior. *Plutarch* gives the same Advice upon the like Occasion, nor is it very different from that of our Saviour, *ὁ μείζων ἐν ὑμῖν, γενέσθω ὡς ὁ νεώτερος, καὶ ὁ ἡγούμενος ὡς ὁ διακωνῶν.* *Luke xxii. 26.*

Ver. 2. *And when thou hast done all thy Office, take thy Place, that thou mayst be merry with them, and receive a Crown for thy well ordering of the Feast.* *ἵνα διφραγθῇς δι' αὐτοὺς, καὶ δόξης χάριν, λάβῃς στέφανον.* Literally the Rendering is, that you may rejoice on their Account, *ut lateris propter ipsos.* *Vulg.* when you see them pleased with what you have done and provided, and may receive a Garland or Crown by way of Ornament. Not only the Guests were crowned with Flowers, *Wisd. ch. ii.* but the Master of the Feast likewise, and sometimes he was created by this Ceremony only, which *Plautus* intimates, *Do hanc tibi florentem florenti, tu sic eris Dictatrix nobis.* In *Perf.* The Greek does not necessarily confine this to Feasting, though the *Vulg.* and our Translation does. It is applicable to any Persons in a publick Post, who have the Care of others committed to them, and have discharged their Trust with Sufficiency and Credit. *Bossuet*, and *Mess. of Port Royal* apply this and the former Verse to the Rulers and Governours of the Church; the latter have this fine Reflection, No Man must intrude himself into the Pastoral Office, without being regularly chosen, and lawfully appointed thereto; nor must he be puffed up on account of the Charge he is entrusted with, but be humble, even among those that are under his Care, and live with, and among, them, as one of them. For a Minister of *Jesus Christ* ought to consider, not the Dignity which distinguishes him above others, but his own Condition, as a Man, and as a Sinner, which equals him to others. He ought to consider, that he is appointed, not so much to rule over Men, as over Vice and Sin, and to place his Joy and Satisfaction, not in the Rank which raises him above his Brethren, but in the Welfare of the Souls committed to him; not in the Power, State, or Pomp, which surrounds him, but in acting up to his Character, and discharging the whole of his Duty. And having faithfully dispensed the Word of Truth, and fed his Flock with spiritual Food at the holy Table, he will be praised by *Jesus Christ*, the Founder of that spiritual Repast, and by all the Guests likewise that partake of it, being at present a Father and Physician to such as are under his Direction and Charge, as they will be

hereafter, in the Presence of God, and at his Coming, both his Glory and Joy.

Ver. 4. *Pour not out Words where there is a Musician, and shew not forth Wisdom out of Time.* *Ὅπου ἀκρόαμα, μὴ ἐκχέῃς λαλίαν.* *Ἀκρόαμα* signifies a Concert or Symphony of Musick, not only among the Greeks, but even among the *Latins*, who borrowed it from them, as appears by its Use in *Cicero*, *Macrobius*, and other Writers. The *Vulgate* renders, *Ubi auditus non est, non effundas sermonem*, as if ἀκρόασις had been the Reading; which affords a good Sense likewise, and agrees well with the latter Clause; viz. Do not lavish your Discourse before Persons not disposed to hear, or to attend to it; know first the Taste of the Company, and adapt your Subject accordingly. But that of our Translators seems preferable; that even an Elder, to whom the Compliment was paid to speak first, and whose Observations at all other Times were so welcome and valuable, should defer his Harangue, when the Company is listening to, and intent upon Musick, for that the best Things, the most serious and important Reflexions, lose their Beauty and Grace, when ill-timed; should consider, that Discourse and Musick have both their Times, and often make Part of the same Entertainment; that as Musick itself would be ungrateful and unseasonable in the midst of the former, so neither should the Pleasure and Harmony of the latter be disturbed and interrupted by any morose Cynick, or conceited Philosopher, who should officiously stand up, and expect to be heard, when the Ears of the Company are otherwise engaged.

Ver. 5. *A Consort of Musick in a Banquet of Wine is as a Signet of Carbuncle set in Gold.* By a Banquet of Wine is meant a festival Day, a Day of Rejoicing and Indulgence; for on common Days, and at their ordinary Meals, they drank no Wine. That the Ancients had a great Regard for Musick, and used it at their Feasts, see *Quintil. L. i. Hor. L. iii. 11.* where he says, *Divitum mensis & amica templis, testudo.* It is certain, that, after the Entertainment, a Harp was brought in to, and presented to each of the Company, who played on it in their Turns. Thus *Tully*, *Ille mos fuit, ut in conviviiis post cœnam circumferretur Lyra, quam ex ordine pulsarent convivæ.* *Tuscul. Quæst. L. i.* At first the Company sang together a Hymn, in Honour of *Bacchus*, *Plut. Sympos. L. i.* Afterwards the Guests repeated, and sang Verses in Honour of famous Men, Heroes, and Benefactors. See *ch. xlii. Carmina in epulis a singulis convivis esse cantata de clarorum virorum laudibus, in Originibus scriptum reliquit Cato.* *Cic. in Brut.* According to *Varro*, some modest and ingenious Youths were appointed to chant the Praises of their Ancestors to Musick. This was the Practice among the Heathens. As to the *Jews*, they at their great Feasts sang Hymns in



in Praise of the Lord, *Matt. xxvi. 30.* and they began and ended them with these, as is evident from the Practice of our Saviour, who sang a Hymn with his Apostles, after his last Supper. *Philo*, describing the Customs of the *Therapeutae* on their festival Days, and particularly on the seventh Day of the Week, when they always met together, says, that before they sat down to Table to their Repast, they lifted up their Hands and Eyes to Heaven, to implore the Blessing of God upon what was before them; (See *y* 13.) and afterwards they sat down in Order. The Elders, as it became them, had the chief of the Discourse, and resolved such Doubts and Questions, as were proposed to them, with great Gravity and Discretion; after the Repast they all rose up, and the Person who presided at the Ceremony, began a Hymn, either a new one of his own making, or one composed by some Prophet, or Bard, in Honour of God. For there were a number of such ancient Hymns, which were sung with Musick before the Altar, some as they stood without Motion, and others as they modestly danced, with a different Pitch and Modulation of Voice. As soon as the President began to sing, and had set the Tune, all the rest followed in a lower Voice. At the Conclusion, they all united, and sang together with a loud Voice, Men and Women, without Distinction, forming a melodious Harmony, by the Mixture of deep and shrill Notes. Such was the Order observed by the *Therapeutae* at their publick Repasts, nor did they scruple the Use of Musick, upon such Occasions, composed of Instruments and Voices, though they were reckoned Persons of the most Strictness, Seriousness, and Wisdom among the *Jews*. *De Vit. Contempl.* See *ch. xl. 20. xlix. 2. Is. v. 11, 12. Amos vi. 5, 6.* where, though the ill Uses only, made by the wicked *Israelites* of their Musick in their Banquets of Wine, are mentioned by these Prophets, yet are they nevertheless good Proofs, how much it was in Vogue among them.

Ver. 7. *Speak, young Man, if there be need of thee, and yet, scarcely, when thou art twice asked.*] There are several Senses of this Verse, according as it is pointed. 1. *Λάλησον, νεανίσκε, ἐν χρείᾳ σου, μόλις.* And so the *Vulg.* *Loquere, adolescens, in causa tua vix.* 2. *Λάλησον, νεανίσκε, ἐν χρείᾳ σου, μόλις, δις ἐὰν ἐπερωτηθῇς.* 3. *Λάλησον, νεανίσκε, ἐν χρείᾳ σου, μόλις, δις ἐὰν ἐπερωτηθῇς.* Which is followed in our Version. 4. *Λάλησον, νεανίσκε, ἐν χρείᾳ σου, μόλις, δις ἐὰν ἐπερωτηθῇς, κεφαλαίῳ σου λόγον.* which takes in the first Words of the next Sentence, *Si bis interrogatus fueris, habeat caput responsum tuum*, but renders it very inaccurately, which means only speaking succinctly and briefly. The whole of the Advice here given to young Men, necessary to suppress their known and great Forwardness, is, when in Company with Per-

sons of Age, Merit, and Distinction, to speak little, and only when they are asked or pressed to it, and then to comprize much in a little. For as Silence makes none, so little Talk makes the fewer Slips. I shall hence take Occasion to correct the Rendering in *Pf. lxii. 11.* where our Version is, *God spake once and twice, I have also heard the same: That Power belongeth unto God.* The *Geneva Bible* has, *God spake; once or twice I have heard it;* nor is *Coverdale's* more correct: The true Rendering is, *God spake once, viz. At the Delivery of the Law, and I have learnt two things from thence, viz. His Omnipotence, and Mercy, that Power belongeth unto God, and that he is also merciful.* And thus the *Vulgate*, *Semel locutus est Deus, & duo hæc audiivi, quia potestas Dei est, & tibi, Domine, misericordia;* which *Jansenius* has well paraphrased, *Duo ab eo audiivi, nempe quod solius Dei sit potentia, quæ possit omnia quæ vult; & quod tibi, Domine, sit summa clementia, quâ, quæ potes, etiam velis.* And thus the *ὁ, ἀπαξ ἐλάλησεν ὁ Θεός, δύο ταῦτα ἤκουσα, ὅτι τὸ κρείττον τῷ Θεῷ, καὶ σοῦ, Κύριε, τὸ ἐλεῶ. κ. τ. λ.* And so the *Targum*, *Legem unam locutus est, & hæc duo audiivi, Deo inesse robur, & misericordiam.*

Ver. 9. *If thou be among great Men, make not thyself equal with them; and when ancient Men are in Place, use not many Words.*] Have a Deference to great Men, and a Reverence for ancient ones, if thou comest where they are; the Quality of the former demands the one, and the Wisdom of the latter, the other: Think yourself happy in having an Opportunity of hearing and learning from them some moral or religious Truths. The Son of God himself seems to have followed the Advice in the latter Clause, when, at the Age of twelve Years, he chose to be in the midst of the Doctors: It is not said of him, that he attempted to teach or instruct them, as he might, being the Wisdom of the Father, but, as he had rather appear a Pattern to others, in what he then did, that he heard and listened to them, and asked them Questions, as if he himself would learn of them. The *Vat. Drusus*, and *Hæscholius* follow a different Reading of this Clause, *viz. καὶ ἐτέρῳ λέγοντι, μὴ πολλὰ ἀπολέγῃς, i. e.* When another is speaking, be not thou talkative; which too is a good piece of Advice, and necessary to be inculcated, especially to young Persons, who are not the best Judges of Decorum; but the *Vulg. Orient.* and *Tigurin* Versions follow the Reading, and Sense of our Translators. See Note on *ch. vii. 14.* where there is the like Advice.

Ver. 10. *Before the Thunder goeth Lightning, and before a shameseeked Man shall go Favour.*] *Καὶ ὡς πρὶν αἰσθᾶναι, i. e.* Lightning hasteneth or fleeth before the Thunder, and so *Junius*, *Ante tonitru celer præit fulgur.* Our Version does not reach the Force of the *Greek*. The Sense is, As Lightning



is seen some Time before the Thunder is heard, so Modesty in a Person before he begins to speak recommends him the more to the Favour and good Opinion of others. When the Speaker appears in some Sort of Confusion at first setting out, it shews a Diffidence of himself, and a Regard for the Audience, which generally engages them in his Favour, and will help to excuse some accidental Faults; but when a confident Person begins to open, who seems by his Air and Looks to demand Attention, and to be secure of Applause, his Conceit raises a Prejudice against him, and takes off from his Merit, if real. The like is true of Carriage, a modest, decent, and respectful Behaviour before Persons of Gravity and Figure, recommends young Persons greatly to their Esteem and Notice, it prepossesses them in their Interest, and is often more successful, than a forward Intrusion, or clamorous Importunity.

Ver. 11. *Rise up betimes and be not the last, but get thee home without Delay.* Ver. 12. *There take thy Pastime, and do what thou wilt, but sin not by proud Speech.* *ἐν ᾧ καὶ ἔγειρας* would be better rendred, *Rise up in good Time before the rest of the Company, or before you have drank too much, for Sobriety and Temperance are as great Recommendations of Youth, as Modesty: and when you return home, use some Diversion or moderate Exercise for Health-sake, and to digest a full Meal, and be not disputacious, or quarrellous, angry, or touchy with thy Family, or any about thee, through Conceit of thyself, raised and occasioned by the Fumes of Wine.* As Reserve before Superiors at Table, and elsewhere, is always becoming, so the wise Man advises at certain Seasons, and especially after an Entertainment, some innocent Amusement, by way of Health and Relaxation. Young Minds are neither to be discouraged by too much Application, nor made effeminate by Indolence, or a constant Succession of Pleasures.

Ver. 13. *And for these Things bless him that made thee, and replenished thee with his good Things.* After the Entertainment is over, fail not to return Thanks to God for the Blessings there received. The Custom of praying to God at rising from Table, or in other Words, saying Grace, is a Dictate of natural Religion, and practised by all civilized People, not only among Jews and Christians, but even among the Heathens. St. Paul mentions it, 1 Tim. iii. 4, 5. when he says, *God hath created Meats to be received with Thanksgiving of them which believe, and know the Truth: for every Creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with Thanksgiving, for it is sanctified by the Word of God, and Prayer.* It may also be inferred from Deut. viii. 10. *Philo* mentions it as a Custom among the Therapeutæ. De vit. Contempl. and it is cer-

tain it was practised by the Jews; for in some of their Writings the following Form is preserved: The Master of the House, or some principal Person among the Guests, holding a Cup filled with Wine, says, *Gratias agamus Deo nostro, quia edimus de suo;* to which the Guests replied, *Sit laudatus Deus noster, de cujus bonis comedimus, cujusque benignitate vivimus.* After which they joined in repeating, Psal. xxxiv. 9, 10. *O fear the Lord ye that are his Saints, for they that fear him lack nothing: the Lions do lack, and suffer hunger, but they who seek the Lord shall want no manner of Thing that is good.* And when the Person that began the Thanksgiving has added, *Benedictus sis tu, Domine Deus noster, Rex mundi, qui creas fructum vitis,* he just tastes the Cup, and distributes it to all the Guests to drink of it; which Custom seems followed by our Saviour at his last Supper, Luke xxii. 17. and at the Conclusion of it a Hymn was sung by him and his Apostles, supposed by the Learned to be, according to Jewish Tradition, Psal. cxiii. to the End of Psal. cxviii. St. Chrysostom makes the following useful Reflexion upon Hannah, the Mother of Samuel, returning Thanks after Eating: *Hoc igitur a semina lucri consecuti sumus, ut sciamus Et post convivium orare. Quisquis enim ad hoc preparatus fuerit, nunquam in ebrietatem incidet, nunquam edacitate distendetur: sed quoniam expectationem precationis habet, sereno imposito animo, conveniente mensura attinget ex omnibus quæ fuerint apposita, multaque benedictione tum animam tum corpus implebit. Siquidem convivium quod a precatione captum in precationem desinit, nunquam deficiet, sed quovis fonte uberius nobis omnia offeret bona—proinde oportet tum in initio, tum in fine convivii gratias agere Deo, ob hanc præcipue causam, quod haud facile prolabemur in ebrietatem, si nos ipsos in venerandam adeo consuetudinem constituerimus. Quin si quando surrexeris crapula potuque gravatus, ne sic quidem abjicias consuetudinem.* It was also in Use both in the Greek and Latin Church, as appears from the former's Horologium, and from the Roman Breviary.

Ver. 14. *He that feareth the Lord will receive his Discipline, and they that seek him early shall find Favour.* *ἐν δὲ ᾧ καὶ μαθήσεται.* *Accipiet doctrinam ejus.* Vulg. shall receive Instruction from him, or Wisdom as his Gift, ch. vi. 36, 37. And thus Calmet, *Recevro de lui instruction;* οἱ ἐπεὶ ζῶντες are such as are early at their Prayers. *Grot.* qui mane surgunt ad orandum Deum, these shall obtain his Favour, or be blessed by him, *serant bonis de lui,* as Calmet renders; and so the Geneva Version, *They that rise early to seek him shall find Favour.* The Author expresses himself exactly in the same Manner, ch. xxxix. 1, 5, 6. *He that giveth his Mind to the Law of the most High, and is occupied in the Meditation thereof, will give his Heart, ἐπεὶ ζῶντας πρὸς Κριεον, ad vigilandum diluculo ad Dominum, Vulg. And will pray before the most*



most High, and make Supplication for his Sins, and he shall be filled with the Spirit of Understanding. The Moral of the Israelites being obliged to gather the Manna before the Sun rising, was, according to the excellent Author of the Book of Wisdom, that we should be hence instructed, to prevent the Sun in giving God Thanks, and at the Day Spring pray unto him, ch. xvi. 28. to bless God early each Morning, as for his other Benefits, so particularly for the Safety of the Night past, and the sweet Refreshment of beloved Sleep. See Note in loc.

Ver. 16. *They that fear the Lord shall find Judgment, and shall kindle Justice as a Light.* [Syr. *Reverentes Dominum sapient in judiciis ejus.* They shall not only be filled with the Knowledge of the Law, y<sup>e</sup> 15. but shall do what is right, and their good Deeds shall be as a burning Light, shall shine far and near, or, in the Words of the Psalmist, *They shall bring forth Righteousness as the Light, and Judgment as the Noon-day.* Psal. xxxvii. 6. According to Calmet, the Sense is, they shall be enlightened by God, and shall receive from him Justice and Judgment, which shall shine like a Glory round them. According to that of Solomon, which this Writer probably alludes to, *the Path of the Just is as the shining Light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect Day; but the Way of the Wicked is as Darkness, they know not at what they stumble.* Prov. iv. 18, 19.

Ver. 17. *A sinful Man will not be reprov'd, but findeth an Excuse according to his Will.* [i. e. They hate to be reformed, according to that Description of the Ungodly, Psal. i. 17. and that of our Saviour, *Every one that doth Evil, hateth the Light, neither cometh to the Light, lest his Deeds should be reprov'd.* John iii. 20. But the sincere and well-disposed Person will esteem it as a Favour done him, to be admonished of his Faults; thus David wishes, according to the Old Translation, *Let the Righteous smite me, it shall be a Kindness; and let him reprove me, it shall be an excellent Oil, which shall not break my Head.* Psal. cxli. 5. The wise Man adds, as a farther Instance of the Perverseness of the Wicked, *καὶ τὸ θέλημα ἐξείσεται σύγκλημα, i. e. he will find some Pretext or Excuse, or Example, to authorize and justify what he has done, or some Explanation, Softning, or Evasion of the Law, according to his Mind.* Or, as Calmet expounds it, the Sinner is so wilful and opinionated, that he will listen to no Instruction, he will be directed by none but himself, *Ejus vitæ institutum est propriæ voluntatis confessio.* Arab. And as he chose to pursue Death in the Ways of his own seeking, like the Hypocrite, y<sup>e</sup> 15. he shall be exposed and brought to condign Punishment, and shall receive *σύγκλημα*, Condemnation; *trouvera la condamnation, comme il a voulu.* Bossuet and Junius understand by *σύγκλημα καὶ τὸ θέλημα*, *judicium sibi conveniens*, that

the Sinner, instead of coming near those who will reprove him, and set before him the Things which he has done, seeks out such as agree with him in Opinion, who are of his Mind, and for his Purpose, and will flatter and encourage him in his Wickedness. A Sinner, says St. Austin, hates the Truth because it condemns him, he flies from true Physicians, and useful Remedies, because he loves his Disease, and will not be cured: he is fond to be deceived, and there are enough to do it. He cares not to be told that his Soul is dangerously sick and wounded, and he finds Persons who assure him that it is quite well and safe, though these are like Guides, who lead a Man to a Precipice.

Ver. 19. *Do nothing without Advice, and when thou hast once done, repent not.* [There is no one Precept which this wise Man has delivered so often, and pressed so strongly, as that a Man should not depend upon himself, or trust to his own Understanding; but consult others, who are able to advise him, and give him their Opinion and Assistance: that none but a proud and self-opiniated Person, or one that is a Stranger in the School of Humility, and unacquainted with that Virtue, would venture to act otherwise, *καὶ μὴ ἐὰν ποίῃς ἀνὸς βελῆς*, as it is expressed y<sup>e</sup> 18. But Grotius thinks that Sentence an Interpolation, or Corruption arising from some of the like Words in this Verse. The Advice here given is like that of Salust, *Præquam aliquid facias, consulto; ubi consulueris, maturè factò opus est.* If thou actest in this prudent and cautious manner, Repent not, i. e. thou wilt not repent, like that, *This do and live*, i. e. thou shalt live. And thus the Vulg. *Sine consilio nihil facias; & post factum non penitebis.* Grotius says, the true reading is, *καὶ μὴ ἐὰν ποίῃς ἀνὸς βελῆς, μελαμελῆς*, and if you do any thing inconsiderately and rashly, without Advice, repent of it, or you will have Cause to repent of it.

Ver. 20. *Go not in a Way wherein thou mayst fall, and stumble not among the Stones.*

Ver. 21. *Be not confident in a plain Way.* [i. e. Be not rash, or attempt such Things as are attended with Danger, lest you come to some Harm, or Mischief, as those are most likely to get a Fall or Accident, who chuse to walk in rugged and stony Ways; and on the other hand, be not over confident in Things or Persons which seem to promise most Security, as it is possible even in a seemingly level and smooth way, to meet with a Slip or Hurt, or some unforeseen Mischief from Persons one least suspects; beware and guard against both these Extremes: The Greek is, *μὴ πιστεύῃς ἐν ὁδῷ ἀπροσκόπῳ*, but the Copy which our Translators follow read, *ἀπροσκόπη*. Grotius dislikes both these, and proposes a third, viz. *ἀπροσκόπησῃς, via non bene explorata*, i. e. Trust not thyself in a Way that is unknown to thee, or that thou hast not tried, nor enquired after.

Ver.



Ver. 22. *And beware of thine own Children.*] This is a Consequence of the former Verse, as expounded of not being too confident in Things, or Persons, which seem to promise most Security, for even amongst the nearest Relations there may be unnatural Treachery, and a Man's worst Foes may be those of his own Household, as the *Vulg.* here inserts, from *Matt. x. 36.* *Grotius* understands the Passage of a Father taking a prudent Care that his Children do not ruin him by Extravagance, but this is pardonable where it happens, in Comparison of what others have done, who, though obliged by the Ties of Nature, and those of Duty and Gratitude to please, honour, and preserve their Parents, have notwithstanding been their Betrayers, and, through Ambition, or some Resentment, been the Instruments of their Deaths: As *Sennacherib* was slain at a time, and by those he least suspected, even by his own Sons, when he was worshipping in the House of his false God. *2 Kings xix. 37.* Very remarkable to this Purpose is the Advice, *Mic. vii. 5, 6.* *Trust ye not in a Friend, put not Confidence in a Guide, keep the Doors of thy Mouth from her that lieth in thy Bosom; for the Son dishonoureth the Father, the Daughter riseth up against her Mother, the Daughter-in-law against the Mother-in-law. A Man's Enemies are the Men of his own House.* And much to the same Effect is that of *Jerem. ix. 4.* *Take ye heed every one of his Neighbour, and trust ye not in any Brother, for every Brother will utterly supplant, and every Neighbour will walk with Slanders.* See *Ecclus. ch. xxxiii. 19.* The wise Man's Advice here seems very incoherent and abrupt, without being connected in some such Manner, and illustrated by the Context.

Ver. 23. *In every good Work trust thy own Soul, for this is the keeping of the Commandments.*] *ἐν παντί ἐργῶ ἀγαθῶ πιστεύει τῇ ψυχῇ σου.* *Grotius* says, the true Reading is, *ἐν παντί ἐργῶ Θεῷ πιστεύει τῇ ψυχῇ σου, i. e.* in every Action trust in God with thy whole Heart; he that thus trusts in him, will be careful to keep his Commandments. A very learned Writer thinks it would be agreeable to the Author's Meaning to translate the Passage thus, Believe with thy Soul, for this is the keeping of the Commandments; and has the following useful Reflexion: "What is it that the wise Man would have us believe with the Soul? that the Thing is good which we intend to work? but unless it be such in itself before it be intended by us, it will sooner make our Belief bad, than become any ways the better by our believing it to be good. For to trust our own Soul, or to believe that that is good, which in its Nature is either bad, or not good in such a Degree, as we imagine, is to believe an Untruth; and even to do that which in its own Nature is good, with Doubt or Scruple that it is evil,

is to sin against our Conscience. But there is no need of any Casuistry in this Case, for the Author here presupposes the Works he speaks of, to be good in themselves, and acknowledged for such by all. But then we are to observe, that it is one Thing to do that which is unquestionably right and good, and another to do it rightly and well; for tis not every Performance of what is good, but the performing of it constantly and discreetly, as knowing it to be good, and delighting therefore in the Practice of it, which designates a Man to be good, or a Keeper of the Commandments. The Commandments, according to our Author, are the total Object, or compleat Rule of Righteousness, and to believe with the Soul does not here mean naked Faith, or bare Assent, but such a compleat and practical Knowledge of Good and Evil, as to incline the Faculties of our Souls to avoid the one, and chuse the other. And this is explained in what follows by way of an exegetical Repetition in the last Verse of this Chapter, and the first of the next. . . . The Expression here is not much unlike that of *St. Paul, Rom. x. 10.* *With the Heart Man believeth unto Righteousness.* *St. John,* 'tis observable, takes the Belief in Christ, and keeping God's Commandments, as Terms reciprocal, or actually inferring one another. *1 John iv. 23, 24.* *Jackson's Works, Tom i. p. 729, &c.*

## CH A P. XXXIII.

Ver. 1. *THERE shall no Evil happen to him that feareth the Lord, but in Temptation even again he will deliver him.*] Providence takes a particular Care of good Men to preserve them from Evil, especially to avert the Harm that wicked Men intend them; or, if God permits them to fall into some Misfortune or Disgrace, tis only to prove their Constancy and Fidelity, and to reward them with a far more exceeding Weight of Glory. *St. Paul* says the same, *Rom. viii. 28.* *We know that all Things work together for good to those that love God.* See *Prov. xii. 21.* *Tob. xii. 7.* the Sentiments of the *Roman Orator* are very fine on this Head, and much to be admired, *Nunquam viro bono quicquam mali evenire potest, nec vivo, nec mortuo, nec unquam ejus res a Diis immortalibus negliguntur.* *Badwell* points the *Greek* thus, *τῷ φοβημένῳ καὶ ἐν ἀπαιτήσει κακόν, ἀλλὰ ἐν περιστάσει, i. e.* no Evil shall happen to one that feareth the Lord, except in Temptation, or by way of Proof and Trial, *Syr. Nisi per modum tentationis,* but at length, after having proved their Faith and Patience, he delivers them out of their Troubles, and this he will do often, and as they stand in need of Help, for so καὶ πάλιν should be rendered



rendered. In one Edition the reading is *ἀλλ' ἐν πειρασμοῖς καὶ πάλαι ἐξαγόμενος αὐτὸν*, i. e. he will deliver him under his Trials and Conflicts, *in tentatione & lucula eripiet illum*.

Ver. 2. *A wise Man bateth not the Law, but he that is an Hypocrite therein, is as a Ship in a Storm.* See ch. xxxii. 15. The good Man, if Afflictions or Temptations assault him, is steadfast and unmoveable, not tossed to and fro with Fear and Uncertainty, nor halting with divided Affections betwixt God and Mammon, his Heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord. He is like the House built upon a Rock, against which the Floods and Tempests beat to no Purpose. Whereas the Hypocrite, the Dissembler with God, who serveth him not in Sincerity and Truth, or the wicked Man, as *Syr.* and *Arab.* render, hath no Hope nor Comfort, is under perpetual Anxiety, and in Danger of suffering Shipwreck; for want of an Anchor in his Soul, sure and steadfast, he is like a Wave of the Sea driven with the Wind, and tossed; nothing is more frequent than to express an Uncertainty, or bad State of Mind, by this Comparison. In *ψ* 5. his Thoughts are compared to a rolling Axletree, i. e. they are vague and unsettled, pursuing no proper Object. He has no steady Principle within him to act by, nor any fix'd Rule of Prudence, Justice, and Truth to proceed upon, but is carried about by every new Opinion or Doctrine that offers, changing his own, according to the Inclinations and Sentiments of those he converses with. St. James describes the double-minded Man in like Manner, as unstable in all his Ways. i. 8. Some Copies instead of *ὡς ἐν καταιγίδι πλοῖον*, have *ὡς ἐν καταιγίδι πλοῦλον*, i. e. is as in a Tempest or Hurricane of many Winds and Waves. And thus Junius, *Versatur ut in procella multorum fluctuum*.

Ver. 3. *A Man of Understanding trusteth in the Law, and the Law is faithful unto him as an Oracle.* I conceive it would be better rendered, as *the Oracle*, i. e. of *Urim*, for all Oracles were not to be depended upon. In the *Old Testament* we find, that when People had Occasion and a Desire to know the Mind of God in any difficult or doubtful Case, they went to the High-Priest, who asking Counsel for them after the Judgment of *Urim* before the Lord, *Num.* xxvii. 21. the Lord was pleased to give them such Answers, as clearly discovered his Will in the Case propounded, which were therefore called his Oracles. It is with relation to this Oracle that the *Hebrews* called the Sanctuary, the House of Counsel. Some corrupt Copies read, *ὡς ἐρωτημα δῆλον*, others, *δῆλον*, or *δικαίον*, but the true Reading undoubtedly is, *ὡς ἐρωτημα δῆλον*, for by it the *δ* always render the Oracle of *Urim*. The Marginal Reading accordingly is, *As the asking of Urim*, i. e. to consult the Law, which is a compleat Rule, extending to all needful

Cases, is as certain a Direction, as consulting the Judgment of *Urim*, and the Promises made in the Law are as much to be depended on, as that infallible Answer. And therefore David might well say, *Thy Law is the Truth*, *Psal.* cxix. 142. alluding probably to this Oracle, which was also called *ἀλήθεια*. A late learned Writer has an ingenious Conjecture, that *Thummim* was a Copy of the moral Law put into the Pectoral, a Copy written in some Roll, or engraven in some Stone, (accordingly the Royal Prophet, says *the Law is perfect*, *Psal.* xix. 7.) And that our Author here opposes the Law to the Oracle, the *Thummim* to the *Urim*, saying in Effect, The Law laid up in the Ark is as certain a Rule to go by, in the moral Course of a Man's Life, as the Oracle from above the Ark, where the *Urim* was an Appendage of God's Shechinah, was a Direction in extraordinary Cases. *Tenison of Idol.* p. 364. *Scaliger* takes in both these, and renders this Passage, *Tanquam Urim & Thummim*. *De Emendat. Temp.* p. 654.

Ver. 6. *A Stallion Horse is as a mocking Friend, he neigheth under every one that sitteth upon him.* i. e. He seems pleased with his Rider, whoever he be, but is thinking on his own Gratification. He neighs not to entertain him, but to express his own Satisfaction and Wantonness. In like manner the false Friend who imposes upon all those who put any Confidence in him, is always obliging and complaisant to such as entertain him, or advise with him, not out of respect to them, or to do them any real Service, but the better to serve himself, and to carry on his own selfish Views. He forms his Speech and Answers, according to the Humours and Dispositions of those who consult him, and changes them again, as theirs chance to vary. Like the Parasite in *Terence*, *Negat quis, nego; aiunt, aio*. *Calmet* understands by a mocking Friend, one *Qui captat risus hominum, formamque dicacis*, who has a sting at every one that comes in his Way, and will sacrifice even his Friend to his Joke, as *Horace* truly describes him. *Sat. L. i. Clemens Alex.* uses the same Simile, and calls a noted Adulterer, *ἵππος οὐκ ἀγρίων*, whose unbridled Lust, unwarrantable Freedoms, and wicked Attempts justify the Comparison.

Ver. 7. *Why doth one Day excel another, when as all the Light of every Day in the Year is of the Sun?* This does not respect the Inequality between the Days of Summer and Winter, or the Variety of Weather attending those Seasons; the Question proposed by the wise Man seems principally to be, whence the Difference betwixt Holy Days, and working Days, and whence the Institution of the sabbatical Year, and Year of Jubilee, with respect to common Years? for so the *Vulg.* *Quare dies diem superat, & iterum lux lucem, & annus annum?* has not the same God equally established them all, does not the



the same Sun enlighten all, and every Day in common enjoy the Privilege and Benefit of his Light? Whence then the observable Difference? One can give no other Reason for this Distinction, but the Will, the Decree, for so *Gratius* understands *γνώσις* here, and the Wisdom of God, who has so appointed it. There is none in Nature for the Difference between Days, nor have particular Days originally any peculiar Merit of their own, antecedently to positive Appointment. The Choice and Distinction which God has made, seems purely arbitrary, and to be resolved into his mere Pleasure, who, as he thought proper to diversify Seasons, so may be presumed not without Reason to have established Festivals, and made them different from other Days: for so I chuse to render *ἀλλοιωτέ* in the following Verse, and so it is used by our Translators, *ψ* 11. upon an Occasion not very unlike.

Ver. 9. *Some of them hath he made high Days and hallowed them, and some of them he hath made ordinary Days.* *ἡ δὲ αὐτῶν ἱσχυὴς εἰς ἀριθμὸν ἡμερῶν*, i. e. Some of them he hath put into the Number of common Days, and others he has set apart for his own Use, as peculiar Days, and of greater Solemnity. He appointed religious Seasons and Feasts for the more regular, uniform, and solemn Performance of his Worship, and to affect the Minds of Men with a greater Awe and Reverence for his divine Majesty, by setting peculiar Marks of Distinction upon special and appointed Times for his Service. Hence the Original of the Institution of the Jewish Sabbath, which he appointed to be observed in Memory of his resting from the Works of the Creation: Hence that of the Passover, and other Jewish Festivals. And such in the Christian Church are the Days of our Saviour's Nativity, Passion, Resurrection, Ascension, and the Descent of the Holy Ghost, which have been hallowed from the earliest Times, and carry their own Reason with them for being observed. *Seneca* has assigned a civil Reason also for the Distinction of Days, *Legum conditores Festos dies instituerunt, ut ad hilaritatem homines publice cogerentur, tanquam necessarium laboribus interponentes temperamentum.* De Tranquil. cap. ult. which is also intimated *Deut.* v. 14.

Ver. 10. *And all Men are from the Ground, and Adam was created of Earth.* Ver. 11. *In much Knowledge the Lord hath divided them, and made their Ways divers.* Ver. 12. *Some of them hath he blessed and exalted, and some of them hath he sanctified, and set near himself: but some of them hath he cursed, and brought low, and turned out of their Places.]* There is a fine Chain of Reasoning from *ψ* 7. to *ψ* 15. the Argument proceeds in the following Manner: As amongst Days, though all are enlightened by the same Sun, and are all equal in that respect, some are nevertheless preferred before others, God by his Knowledge and Decree having

separated them, and has himself made the Distinction, by consecrating some Days as Festivals, and continuing others, as ordinary Days only: so all Men by Nature, and the Condition of their Creation, are equal; all were created of Earth, and taken from the same Matter or Clay, from whence *Adam* himself was taken, *Omnes ex terra, unde creatus est Adam*, Vulg. and all are Partakers of, and infected with this Sin and Corruption; and yet what a Difference is to be observed betwixt Men? What a Variety of Conditions, Ranks, Qualities, Employments, Tempers, and of good and evil Fortune among them? God by his Wisdom put this Difference between them, the Condition of each is according to his Appointment, and they are such, because he has so determined it. In the beginning of the World God chose *Seth* and his Posterity; at the Deluge, *Noah* and his Family; from the Descendants of *Seth*, *Abraham* and his Family; among the Children of *Abraham*, *Isaac*; and among those of *Isaac*, *Jacob*; and out of *Jacob's* Family, *Levi* and *Aaron*, and their Posterity: on the contrary he cursed the Race of *Canaan*, and cast them out of the Holy Land, whilst he poured his Favours with great Profusion on the *Israelites*: he took away the Priesthood from the Family of *Eli*, and translated it from *Abiathar* to *Zadoc*, *1 Kings* ii. 27, 35. he rejected the Family of *Saul*, and exalted and glorified the House of *David*. As he drove *Shebna* from his Station and Dignity, and called *Eliakim* in his stead, whom he clothed with his Robe, and strengthened with his Girdle. *Isai.* xxii. 19, 20, 21. Again, God graciously conducts and leads some in the Ways of Godliness, and permits others to wander in Ignorance, and to commit Wickedness with Greediness; the former he blesses and sanctifies, and keeps always steady in his Service, through the mighty Succour of his Grace; the other he leaves to follow their own corrupt Will, and continues them under the Curse. They may each of them be considered as Clay in the Hand of the Potter; he makes the former Vessels unto Honour; and the others, Vessels unto Dishonour, to display his Mercy in the one, and his Justice in the other. And God is equally worthy to be revered, both by Men and Angels, whether his Bounty is pleased to remit, or his Justice to demand, his Due. There is nothing in this, or the following Verse, to countenance the Doctrine of Predestination, or Reprobation, as some Interpreters would represent them. It seems more proper to understand the wise Man, as speaking of God's universal Providence over all Beings, and particularly over Mankind, without descending to Particulars; or of the absolute Power which he exercises over his Creatures, tempered, at the same Time, with infinite Wisdom and Justice.

Ver. 14. *Good is set against Evil, and Life against Death; so is the Godly against the Sinner,*



*Sinner, and the Sinner against the Godly.*

Ver. 15. *So look upon all the Works of the most High, and there are two and two, one against another.]*

It was the general Opinion of the ancient Philosophers, that the World was made up of Contraries. It is wonderful to consider, says St. *Austin*, how that Contrariety and Opposition happens, which is observable in all the Works of God, and which indeed adds to the Beauty and Order of the Universe: There are Orders of good Angels, Friends of God and Men; there are other Orders of evil and proud Spirits, professed Enemies to them both; and these two Kinds are always divided against each other. The like is observable upon Earth; there is an Assembly of Saints, which is the Body of *Jesus Christ*, and an Assembly of the Wicked, which is the Body of Satan, and these two are contrary the one to the other, and are at continual Variance. There is more-

over in every Man, and particularly in every one which serves God, two surprizing Contrarieties: For the true Christian resembles the Angels by the Purity and Goodness of his Life; but he resembles the Brutes in the animal Life, which his Body leads. His Soul, as to its superior Part, is as a Heaven where God dwells; but in its lower Faculties, where Concupiscence and the other Passions lodge, it is as a Hell, actuated and influenced by Suggestions and Impressions from the Devil. Eternity and Time, Light and Darkness, Good and Evil, Strength and Weakness, Joy and Sorrow, Peace and War, Life and Death, are discoverable in Man; all these Contrarieties subsist in the same mortal Subject, and cease only with Life, when the Soul, being disengaged from the Chains of the Body, which kept up this War, and free from Self-love, shall be happily and eternally swallowed up in the Contemplation, and Love, and Enjoyment of God. What is here observed of Man in particular, is true of the Creation in general: Every Thing in Nature has its Contrary, and from this Observation, as before from the Difference between Days, the wise Man means to illustrate the different Proceeding of God with Mankind, either with respect to their natural State, as prospering some, and humbling and abasing others; or their moral State, as blessing some, and cursing others. But in this Variety consists the Beauty of Nature: The Opposition between Contraries helps to illustrate it, as the Obscurity of the Night makes us the more perceive and admire the Beauty of the Day. The Contrarieties observable in the Universe, are like Antitheses in a Discourse; they not only surprize, but please us, and as these add greatly to the Beauty of an Oration, so the infinite Wisdom of the Creator is displayed in the Disposition of the World, though made up of Contraries, and is more to be admired

for a Contrast, so justly mixed, and so happily tempered. *De Civit. Dei. L. ii. c. 18.*

Ver. 16. *I awaked up last of all, as one that gathereth after the Grape-gatherers; by the Blessing of the Lord I profited, and filled my Wine Press, like a Gatherer of Grapes.]*

The wise Man does not say that he was the last of all the Prophets, or that Prophecy was intermitted for a long Time, and revived again in him, as some have weakly and industriously expounded it; but he represents himself as the last of all those of his Nation, that had made Collections of moral Sentences, or Proverbs; or the least of all that had gone before him in this Sort of Undertaking, as St. *Paul* calls himself, with a true Spirit of Humility, the least of all the Apostles, upon another Occasion; that he only gleaned after them, as his Design was not an original, or wholly new, Work, but rather a Collection of scattered and fugitive Pieces, which being too few to fill a Book of themselves, and so liable to be lost, were incorporated with his own, and together composed this larger Work of the same Kind: See the first *Prol.* *Solomon*, we read, spake three thousand Proverbs, *1 Kings* iv. 32. out of which were either collected such as were most useful by the Men of *Hezekiah*, which seems most probable, or they added some of their own, which passed under the Name of *Solomon*, which are comprized from *Prov.* ch. xxv. to the end of ch. xxix. Out of the Works also of *Agur*, who wrote many memorable Sayings, were those weighty Sentences collected which occur *Prov.* xxx. to the end of the Book. In like manner this Writer compiled his Work from some valuable Materials and Collections of others; nor is it at all improbable, that many wise Maxims were added by the last *Jesus*, to his Translation of his Grandfather's Works. See *Pref.*

Ver. 19. *Give not thy Son and Wife, thy Brother and Friend Power over thee, while thou livest; and give not thy Goods to another, lest it repent thee, and thou intreat for the same again.]* The Advice here, and in the four following Verses, may either respect Parents, or Rulers, and Persons in Authority. To the former the Advice is, not to strip themselves of their Substance, in Favour of their Children, lest by leaving themselves too bare, through an Inclination to gratify them, they hereafter be necessitated to ask and entreat for that again, which they parted with too soon, and hastily, or be obliged perhaps to sue to them for Relief. It is putting too great a Confidence in them, which is often abused, and forfeiting their Power and Authority. It is preposterous, as well as shameful, for a Father to be a Suppliant to his Children, or to cringe and crouch in their Presence; and therefore y 23. the Advice is, not to part with so much of their Fortunes and Substance in their Life



Life time, as to reduce themselves, but to dispose of their Effects by Will, and appoint a Distribution at their Death. The like may be observed of the other Relations here mentioned, viz. a Wife, Brother, or Friend, who, though dear, are not to be complimented at the Expence of a Man's Authority, Character, and Fortunes. Nor ought such Grants to be expected, or Engagements insisted on, as to hurt a Man's Circumstances, or endanger his own Freedom, and Liberty. As addressed to Magistrates, and Persons in publick Posts and Employments, the Advice is, to govern freely and independently, not to be swayed by Interest, or Affection, nor to give too much Authority and Influence to Relations, Friends, or Domesticks, that none may be able to reproach them, with betraying their Honour, or abusing their Power, through Partiality, or any servile Compliance; nor themselves be exposed to the Inconveniencies, and Disgrace of being under the Influence and Direction of Favourites. For thereby a Person in Authority is liable to be made the Tool of their Ambition, Avarice, or Resentment; to have all Faults and Grievances charged upon him, whilst others have the Credit of doing all the Service, and the Advantage of gaining themselves Friends or Fortunes. For, as *Calmet* very justly observes, it is generally believed, that more is owing to the Person that procures the Favour to be done through his Power and Interest, than to him who actually confers the Favour; the former does the Business in Reality, the other only lends his Name.

Ver. 25. *If thou set thy Servant to Labour, thou shalt find Rest; but if thou let him go idle, he shall seek Liberty.*] In the remainder of the Chapter the wise Man lays down Rules for the right Management of Slaves, for so *Calmet* understands the Context, rather than of Servants. The Condition of Slaves was, and is, very different from that of Servants; the latter are equally free as their Masters, and serve only because they themselves chuse it; they limit the Time and Nature of their Service, and agree for a certain Proportion of Wages. Slaves, on the contrary, belonged to their Master, were his Property, had no Time or Liberty of their own, nor Power, even over their own Bodies. They were born Slaves, and generally died so; as their Masters bought them, so they could sell them again at Pleasure. The Author advises, that Slaves should not want three things especially, 1. Bread, by which we are to understand Food, a certain and sufficient Allowance for every Day. 2. Correction for any great Fault; if they have been, for Instance, malicious, wicked, unfaithful, rebellious, or Fugitives; but not to be rigorous, or excessive. § 29. for every Transgression. There are numberless Tragical Instances of Mischief done by Slaves, driven to Despair through the Cruelty of their

Masters: Nor has there been any where a *bellum servile*, but the hard Treatment of Slaves was a chief Occasion of it. Punishments, proportionable to their Faults, are both allowable and necessary, as Slaves have no generous Principle, nor any other Motive to act by, than their Fear. 3. Labour; nothing being more dangerous, or of worse Consequence to a Slave, than Idleness. If not employed, and set to work, he will contrive to do some Mischief, or take the Opportunity to run away, and get his Liberty. It is wisely observed, *Nulla major vel nequissimi hominis custodia, quam operis exactio.* Columel. L. i. c. viii. The Ancients, who speak of the Management of Slaves, express themselves upon the Subject like our Author, and give the same Directions. *Aristotle* enjoins the very same Particulars, *ἐργα, κόλασιν, & τροφήν*, and observes, that if they are well fed, without Work, or seasonable Correction, they will grow insolent and unruly: And if hard work'd, and often corrected, and not fed and maintained, it is not only an Instance of Cruelty, and a great Discouragement to them, but that such severe Treatment not only puts them upon making their Escape, but even sets them at Liberty.

Ver. 30. *If thou have a Servant, let him be unto thee as thyself.*] Hitherto the wise Man has spoken of bad Slaves, he comes now to speak of good ones, which may be extended to Servants likewise, and accordingly the *Vulg.* with great Propriety, inserts *fidelis: si est tibi servus fidelis.* When a Person lays out his whole Time and Care in his Master's Service, and makes it the Study and Business of his Life to consult his Good, and promote his Interest, how can such a Servant be too much encouraged, or rather, how can he be rewarded enough? A dutiful and faithful Servant has been by some Writers considered in the next Degree to a Child, and even before a Child that was undutiful? And this probably is *Solomon's* Meaning, *A wise Servant shall have Rule over a Son, that causeth Shame, and shall have Part of the Inheritance among the Brethren.* Prov. xvii. 2. The Romans by a Term of Respect called such, *Familiares.* *Seneca* makes the like Observation, *Ne illud quidem videtis, quam omnem invidiam majores nostri dominis, omnem contumeliam servis detraxerint? Dominum, patrem familiae appellaverunt; servos, familiares.* Epist. xlvii. Nor can any Thing nearer resemble the Advice in the Beginning of § 31. than when he says, *Vive cum servo clementer, in iter quoque & in sermonem admitte, & in consilium, & in convivium.*

*Ibid.* *Because thou hast bought him with a Price.*] *Ἐν αἰματι, Periculo vite tue.* *Grot.* alluding to Captives, or Slaves taken in War, and got with the Hazard of Life. The Sense, according to him, and *Calmet*, is, If among the Prisoners you meet with a Slave, who proves faithful and deserving,



serving, regard such a one as a Treasure. Consider that you might have been his Captive, as he is now yours, for nothing is more precarious than the Chance of War. Behave therefore to him, as you would have wished and expected yourself, upon an Exchange of Conditions. *Castellio* renders, *Quoniam consanguineum eum comparasti*, as if he had read *ivl aīpālī*, in the Sense of *ivl ivōr aīpālōr*, *Acts xvii. 26.* The *Syr.* too, *Ne pugnes in sanguinem tui ipsius*, seems also to favour this Sense. *Drusus's* Conjecture is very ingenious, and probably right, that the *Greek* Translator mistook the Meaning of the Original Word *דָּמָה*, which is commonly *Blood*, but in the *Targumists*, as well as *Rabbins*, it signifies also a Price, as our Version rightly has it; perhaps originally, the Price of Blood, the Price at which Life was redeemed, and thence more generally any Price; and mistaking this, he might as probably translate it *aīpālī*, as *aīpārī*, the true Rendering. For *ivl* translate *דָּמָה* sometimes by a singular, as *1 Chron. xxii. 8.* and elsewhere. *דָּמָה* also signifies *Likeness*. May it not therefore be translated, Thou possessest one in thy Likeness, and as such, he deserves to be used mercifully, though a Slave. *Junius* says, that as the wise Man reasoned before *ab utili*, so he does here from the Rights and Ties of Humanity. *Mess. of Port Royal* conclude this Chapter with the following useful Reflexion, If the Slave, who is faithful and diligent, ought to be as dear to us as our Life, and to be respected as a Brother, how much more ought we to express our Tenderness and Kindness towards those who serve us with Faithfulness and Affection, and whose Condition is so different from that of Slaves? For we ought to consider them, not only as partaking of the same Nature with us; but as redeemed and purchased by the same Blood of God, and called and appointed to the same State of Glory. For which Reason we ought not to treat them with Severity, or Threats, as knowing that we are all Servants of the same common Master, who is in Heaven, and has no Respect of Persons.

## CHAP. XXXIV.

Ver. 1. **DREAMS** lift up Fools.] *Ἀναρτῶν ἀφρονες. i. e.* Dreams elevate, or buoy up with Hopes, as it were with Wings, silly credulous People. The Poets give Wings to Dreams, to denote their uncertain and fleeting Nature; and such as are weak enough to give Attention to them, are properly described in the next Verse, as catching at Shadows, and pursuing after the Wind. They have no Foundation or Reality in Nature, but are the Sport of Imagination, and the Reveries of weak and superstitious People, for none else are capable of building their Hopes, or

fixing a Dependance, upon them. And therefore nothing is more ridiculous than the Art of *Oniro-criticks*, which pretends to interpret Dreams, and predict future Events, and dispose of the precarious Gifts of Fortune from thence. Such Pretenders can have no certain Rules to proceed by, as there are in other Sciences; nor such as go to, and confide in them, any reasonable Grounds for their Faith in them. And how indeed should Dreams have any certain Power or Influence upon Mens Actions, which are arbitrary, and depend often upon the Agency of second Causes, and owe their own Original to a distemper'd Fancy, or the Fumes of Indigestion, or some Indisposition or Humours of the Body, and are always observed to be most frequent, and wild, in sick Persons?

Ver. 3. *The Vision of Dreams is the Resemblance of one thing to another, even as the Likeness of a Face to a Face.*] Dreams are only a fantastical, though lively, Representation of Things real, as the Likeness of a natural Face in a Mirror; there is no more Reality in one than the other. The Visage represented in a Glass is nothing, and what the Imagination paints at random in a Dream, has no more Truth in it. Turn away from the Glass, and there are no Remains or Traces in it of what appeared there before, and when one awakes, often nothing at all is remembered, and generally but imperfect Images, resembling those that appear in a false Glass, which represents Things distorted and confused. We sometimes dream of things which are monstrous, and inconsistent, and have no Originals in Nature, and sometimes we can perceive a distant Relation in them, to something that has before passed. We can discover a Resemblance in them, to Thoughts that we have indulged, or to some Incidents in Company, or Conversation. It is well known by Experience, and confirmed by the wise Man's Observation, *Ecclesiastes v. 3.* That a multitude of Business, which a Man has been doing, or thinking of, shall occasion him to dream about it at Night, and his Dreams will have some Resemblance to his waking Thoughts; and thus *Macrobius*, *Cura oppressi animi, vel corporis, sive fortunæ, qualis vigilantem fatigaverat, talem se ingerit dormienti. L. i. c. iii.* *Scipio* has the same Observation upon the Appearance of *Africanus* to him in a Dream. See *Sonn. Scip.*

Ver. 5. *Divinations, and Soothsayings, and Dreams are vain, and the Heart fancieth, as a Woman's Heart in Travail.*] The Rendering of the *Vulg.* is very observable, and expressed in the strongest Terms of Abhorrence, *Divinatio erroris, & auguria mendacia, & somnia male facientium, vanitas est.* By *vain* we are to understand lying and deceitful; and so the Scripture, which condemns these Arts, calls them. Our Author observes of them, that they are as chimerical and



and absurd, as the vain Imaginations, and unaccountable Longings of a Woman with Child. Persons that listen to them, or fix any Dependence upon them, conceive strange Fancies, are big with Hopes, without Foundation, are restless and travail with Pain, fearing the Event, and at length either miscarry, or bring forth only Wind. The Romans had this vain superstitious Custom in most of their Enterprizes, to conjecture before-hand of the Event, by certain Tokens which they noted in the Flight of Birds, or in the Entrails of Beasts, or by other the like frivolous Divinations: From whence as oft as they could receive any Sign, which they took to be favourable, it gave them such Hopes, as if their Gods had made them more than half a Promise of Success. In which Conceit, though they manifestly erred, yet this Notion, says the learned Hooker, was many times the chief Cause that they did prevail; and being Persons strongly fanciful, and fondly superstitious, it gave them Courage for all Adventures. *L. v. Eccl. Polit.* Tully has exposed these Arts, and the Whims of his credulous Countrymen, with much Strength of Reasoning, and great Humour and Facetiousness. *De Divin. L. ii.*

Ver. 6. *If they be not sent from the most High in thy Visitation, set not thy Heart upon them.]* Though Dreams, generally speaking, were idle and false, and the Reliance upon them a Piece of fond Credulity, yet were there some true ones, that claimed a Regard, as being supernatural Intimations of some great Event to be fulfilled in its Season. Such were all those prophetic ones in Scripture, whose Completion attested their Veracity and Original. The Heathens acknowledged in like manner two Sorts of Dreams, the one true, proceeding from God; the other false and deceitful. Homer accordingly supposes two Gates, from which these issued; the first came from Jupiter, through the *Porta Cornea*; the other through that of Ivory. *Odyss. L. xix.* Lactantius has the same Observation, *De Opif. Dei, c. xviii.* But what Way is there, it may be asked, to distinguish mere natural Dreams, the Effect of Fancy and Imagination, from such as are really supernatural and divine? It may properly and safely be observed, that such Dreams, as were sent by God, had generally distinguishing Marks of their Divine Authority and Truth; as either the Importance of the Subject matter of them, the Time when they happened, or the being sent to Persons of particular Note and Eminence, or their having unusual and preternatural Circumstances attending them. It was an Opinion generally received in the early Ages of the World, that Dreams, so confirmed and attested, were sent purposely from Heaven. See *Gen. xxviii. 12. xxxi. 11. xli. 8. Job iv. 12. xxxiii. 14, 15. Dan. ii. 19.* Homer speaks the general Sense of his

own Age, when he says, *ἡ γὰρ τ' ὄναρ ἐκ Διὸς ἐστίν.* The principal Dreams, which we meet with in Sacred and Prophane History, are such as have happened to Persons of the first Rank and Character, either to Patriarchs, Prophets, Saints, or other holy Persons, as Moses, Jacob, St. Paul, &c. or to Kings, Princes, and Judges, as Pharaoh, Abimelech, Solomon, Cyrus, Joseph, &c. who may be considered as the Deputies, and Vicegerents of Providence. And the Subject of their Dreams has been of the greatest Moment; for either they had respect to the Church, as in that celebrated Dream of Alexander the Great, *Jos. Antiq. L. ii. c. 8.* and that no less famous one of Nebuchadnezzar: Or else they regarded the State, as the Dreams of Pharaoh in particular, admonishing him betimes to provide for his Country, that the Seven Years of Plenty might relieve the Seven succeeding Years of Famine: Or lastly, they had an auspicious Aspect upon both, as in the Case of Gideon, and most of the Jewish Wars before the Coming of Christ. But remarkable more particularly were the Dreams of Joseph, which were so many Presages of his future surprizing Greatness, at that Time not to be expected, and at a great Distance, taking their Rise from the very ill and undeserved Treatment, which he had met with from his Brethren. And it may be further observed of Dreams, that they have been often vouchsafed to the Faithful in their Distress, and struggling under some great Pressure, in the Way of Mystery and Comfort, of which Jacob's Ladder is a pregnant Instance; and the like is discernible in the History of Polyarp. See *Cave's Lives, Vol. i. p. 118.*

Ver. 7. *For Dreams have deceived many, and they have failed that put their Trust in them.]* This is a natural Consequence of the Observation, *ψ. 2.* If such, as regard Dreams, catch at Shadows, and follow after the Wind, no wonder that such as trust in them, find themselves disappointed. But this is not the worst that happens to them, for they who regard, or, as the Marginal Reading is, *have their Minds upon Dreams,* seldom escape Satanical Illusions. The Devil deceives them with an Appearance of Truth, to win their Assent, and to gain their Confidence the more, and then often plunges them into grievous Errors, and great Misfortunes. He abuses their Credulity and Superstition with equivocal Answers, with specious and promising Appearances, and prepares them for some worse and greater Deceit. Such who have the Weakness to believe, or trust in Dreams, will proceed to more Ungodliness, their Temper will incline them to apply to forbidden Arts, to consult Magick, Divination, Sorcery, and all Sorts of lying Vanities, which are the Invention and Artifice of the Spirit of Darkness and Error.



Ver. 8. *The Law shall be found perfect without Lies, and Wisdom is Perfection to a faithful Mouth.*] Ἄνδρες ψάλλοντες συνέλαθετε νόμον, ὡς σοφία σώματι πιστῶν τελείωσις. As the Law threatens those with the heavy Wrath of God, who listen to, and go after, Diviners, and such as practise curious and magical Arts, *Levit. xix. 26. Deut. xiii. 1, 5. xviii. 10.* so we may be assured that those Threats will be executed in their utmost Rigour. The Law shall be fulfilled συνέλαθετε in all its Predictions, and Denuntiations, without any Equivocation or Deceit, which the Heathen Oracles abounded with. And thus the *Geneva* Version, and that of *Coverdale*, *The Law shall be fulfilled without Lies.* If you desire to know the Truth, and the best Rules for your Conduct and Actions, consult not Magicians or Conjurers, but wise and holy Men, who are conversant, and well versed in the Law of God; they will teach you in Sincerity the Word of Truth, and conduct you in the right Paths; and Wisdom in a faithful Mouth, such as theirs (for so from the Authority of the *Vulg.* I would render the *Greek*) is Perfection, or may be depended upon as an Oracle, or as *the Oracle*, properly so called. The Sense is not unlike that *ch. xxxiii. 3.* See Note. Or with *Calmet* we may consider this Verse, as an Answer to an Objection, You will say, if I apply not myself to such as make it their Business to interpret Dreams, and to foretel future Events, how shall I know what I ought to do, or in what Manner to proceed in many Cases, or how distinguish a true from a false Dream, and act with Safety, and to my Content and Satisfaction? God's Law, says this wise Man, is the best Rule for your Conduct, it is alone sufficient to satisfy all proper and reasonable Enquiries; and you will find among the Teachers and Interpreters of it, many Persons of great Knowledge, as well as of known Candour and Sincerity, who will give you better and more certain Instruction, than you can possibly draw from Wizards and Diviners. To the Law and to the Testimony — There is the only infallible Direction, such as speak not according to this Word, are Deceivers; there is no Light in them, nor Illumination, or Comfort to be expected from them.

Ver. 9. *A Man that hath travelled knoweth many Things, and he that hath much Experience will declare Wisdom.*] If with some Copies we read ὁ πεπαυδωμένος, which the *Orient* Versions favour, the Sense then is like that, *Matt. xiii. 52. Every Scribe, which is instructed unto the Kingdom of Heaven, is so well furnished, as to be able to bring forth out of his Treasure Things new and old;* and then this will conclude the whole upon Dreams: If we read πεπλανημένος, which our Translators follow, a new Subject then will begin here, which contains the Advantages of Travelling, and of Ex-

perience and Knowledge in worldly Affairs. The wise Man's Observation here is, That he that has not seen the World, or hath not travelled for that Purpose, and thereby had an Opportunity of knowing Mankind, knows nothing in Comparison. A mere Speculative Knowledge, such as is acquired by Reading, signifies but little alone. To form an accomplished Person, one capable of shining in publick Business, the Knowledge of Men is requisite, as well as of Books, and nothing is of more Service in this respect than Travelling. By this the great Names of Antiquity rendered themselves so famous, and gained their Learning, and Improvement. It was thus *Ulysses* obtained the Character of one of the wisest, and most experienced Princes in the World; and *Pythagoras* and *Plato* arrived to that Pitch of Knowledge, which so justly recommended them. The like may be observed of *Socrates*, who, out of his great Love of Wisdom, and from the Hopes and Prospect of Improvement, submitted to learn of every great Master he could hear of at a Distance. Nor need we after this wonder, that a renowned Queen, who had a Thirst for Knowledge, should herself travel as far as from *Shebab* to *Jerusalem*, to hear the Wisdom of *Solomon*, and be improved by it. *Matt. xii. 42.*

Ver. 12. *I was oft-times in Danger of Death: Yet I was delivered, because of these Things.*] τῶν χάριν, i. e. by means of the Experience and Knowledge, which I had acquired in my Travels. And thus the *Arab.* very expressly, *Propter experientiam evasi.* The *Vulg.* joins τῶν χάριν to the first Sentence, *Aliquoties usque ad mortem periclitatus sum horum causa: & liberatus sum gratia Dei;* as if in his Travels, like *St. Paul*, who was in Journeyings often, he had been in frequent Danger of Death, by *Perils in the Sea, by Perils of Robbers, by Perils in the Wilderness, &c.* *2 Cor. xi. 26.* But none of the *Greek* Copies countenance this Sense. *Junius* carries τῶν χάριν forward, and begins the next Verse with it, but there is no Necessity or Authority for this. To his own happy Experience of God's loving Kindness in his Travels, and the Dangers attending them, the wise Man subjoins a fine Reflexion in the five following Verses, that God will take equal Care of all that fear him, and put their Trust in his Mercy; his Providence will watch over them, and protect them, as it did his favourite *Israelites* in the Wilderness. This holy Assurance, that the Lord will never fail them that seek him, is the Hope and Stay of the Righteous in their Distress, and is indeed a Consequence of the Fear of the Lord. For the Fear of the Lord includes in it a well-grounded Hope, and Confidence in him. *Solomon*, accordingly, represents a holy Trust in God, as naturally flowing from this religious Fear, *Prov. xiv. 26.*

Ver.



Ver. 18. *He that sacrificeth of a Thing wrongfully gotten, his Offering is ridiculous; and the Gifts of unjust Men are not accepted.*

The wise Man expresses here the great Abomination of Gifts or Sacrifices accompanied with Injustice; and the Dislike which God has to them, according to his own Declaration, *I the Lord love Judgment, I hate Robbery for Burnt-offering*, Isa. lxi. 8. i. e. such as are so presumptuous and wicked, as to think that they can propitiate Almighty God, by offering him part of what they have got by Deceit or Violence. Such Offerings are rather *Mockeries*, than any real Tokens of Regard, or Duty, as the *Vulg.* and *Marginal* Reading have it, from a Copy, probably, which had either *monumeta* or *monumenta*, instead of *monumeta* which is followed by our Translators. Liberality and Charity, to be acceptable to God, and have their perfect Work, must be done without the least Violation of Equity and Justice; for a Man cannot in any Sense be said to be good, or perform a good Action, when it is accompanied with some Evil at the same Time. Good Actions, with respect to both God and Man, are at all Times seasonable, and Instances of our Love to both, but they are not to be performed to either at the Expence of what is just and right. This cannot be better explained than by the Instance of *Saul*, who spared the best of the Sheep and of the Oxen of the *Amalekites*, and the Chief of the Things which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice unto the Lord in *Gilgal*, which was Sin unto him, and severely punished as such. When God commands any Act of Justice to be done, or forbids any Act of Injustice, the rejecting the Word of the Lord, or the disobeying him in that Instance, under the Pretence of serving him in another, is styled Stubbornness and Rebellion. *Samuel* hath well determined this Case, when he says, *Hath the Lord as great Delight in Burnt Offerings and Sacrifices, as in obeying the Voice of the Lord? Behold to obey, is better than Sacrifice; and to hearken, than the Fat of Rams.* 1 Sam. xv. 21, 22, 23. If *David* would not offer a Burnt Offering of that which only cost him nothing, until he had made it his own by a valuable and just Price; and if the Prophet condemns the offering the Blind, and the Lame, and the Sick for Sacrifice, because it ought to be perfect, and without Blemish, *Mal.* i. 8. how much more are Goods unjustly gotten, the Wages and Fruit of Iniquity, to be looked upon as Affronts and Desecrations, if offered unto the Lord? It is in the Language of the same Prophet, offering polluted Bread upon the Altar, *y* 7. and cursed is that Deceiver, which hath in his Flock a Male, i. e. something that is right, and against which there lies no Objection, and yet voweth and sacrificeth unto the Lord a corrupt Thing, *y* 14. which is sure to displease him.

Ver. 20. *Whoso bringeth an Offering of the*

*Goods of the Poor, doth as one that killeth the Son before the Father's Eyes.* God is the Father and Protector of the Poor, whose Bread in the next Verse is said to be his Life; to take this away, or by any Act of Violence to diminish his little Substance, is in some Sort to take away his Life. To offer to God, or to his Use and Service, what has been by Oppression, and an unwarrantable Stretch of Power, taken from the Needy, is here, by a most apt and beautiful Metaphor, compared to that shocking Instance of Inhumanity and Cruelty, the spilling the Blood of a Son in the Sight of a fond and tender Father. The best Actions, even though intended for God's Honour, yet if they are founded in Injuries, in Wrong and Robbery, are but such Sacrifices, as were offered in *Tophet*, where Murder was the Oblation. They are a sort of *Thyestean* Feast, according to profane History, or inviting the Father to partake of an unnatural Repast upon his own Son. Or it may not unaptly be illustrated by the *Ewe Lamb* in sacred History, which the poor Man had brought up and nourished with his Children, and had such a Tenderness for, that it lay in his Bosom, and was unto him as a Daughter; and yet, dear as this was to him, the rich Oppressor could spare his own numerous Flocks and Herds, to seize upon this, and offer it to his Guests for their Entertainment, 2 Sam. xii. 3, 4. In the primitive Church neither the unjust Publican, nor the Usurer, nor the Extortioner were thought worthy of the Honour of being admitted to the Offertory, though permitted to enjoy the other Privileges of Religion. *Apost. Constit.* l. iv. c. 5. nor would they accept of an Estate given to pious Uses, which was known to be got by Injustice and Extortion, nor allow any to enrich the *Corban*, or even to endow a Church, with the Spoils of the Poor. This defecrated the good Design; it was, in the Language of the Prophet, *to build up Zion with Blood, and Jerusalem with Iniquity.* Micah iii. 10.

Ver. 21. *The Bread of the Needy is their Life; he that defraudeth him thereof, is a Man of Blood.* This is more clearly expressed in the next Verse, *He that taketh away his Neighbour's Living slayeth him; and he that defraudeth the Labourer of his Hire, is a Bloodshedder.* The *Vulgate* rendering of which is strong and remarkable, *Qui effundit sanguinem, & qui fraudem facit mercenario, Fratres sunt.* As the Wages of the hired Servant are his Bread, and the Support of his Life, to take away or withhold his Subsistence, whereby he should comfort and maintain Life, is *interpretative* to take away the very Life itself, or to shed his Blood. The wise Man's Design is to press the great Duty of Equity and Compassion to the Poor and Needy, and to enforce that Precept, *Deut.* xxiv. 14. *Thou shalt not oppress a hired Servant, that is poor and needy; where the*

*Targum*



*Targum* has, *Thou shalt not oppressingly withhold, nor diminish his Wages.* See also *Jam. v. 4.* And the Reason of this Prohibition is, lest such Oppressions should tempt them to do some desperate and wicked Thing, to expose perhaps, or kill their Children, when not able to maintain them, after the cruel manner of the Heathens, who were frequently guilty of this Inhumanity, and thought it no Crime, when their Poverty lay hard upon them, and as it were constrained them to it. Many melancholy Instances of which are to be met with both in the *Greek* and *Roman History.* Those, therefore, who by Injustice or Oppressions drive the Poor to such Extremities, are not improperly called Men of Blood, which is a *Hebraism*, and denotes Blood-shedders. This Piece of common Justice due to the Hireling, seems implied in that Precept which forbade the muzzling of the Ox, which trod out the Corn. *Deut. xxv. 4.* which does not merely respect the Care and Preservation of that useful and laborious Beast, for, as *St. Paul* argues, *Does God take Care of Oxen?* but its true Design no doubt was, to instruct a dull and carnal People, that they ought not to injure or defraud the Labourer of his Hire. Nay, the Law was so strict in this Particular, as to appoint it to be paid at the very Time it was due; for thus the Command runs, *At his Day thou shalt give him his Hire, neither shall the Sun go down upon it, for he is poor, and setteth his Heart upon it, lest he cry against thee unto the Lord, and it be Sin unto thee.* *Deut. xxiv. 15.* And here especially, that Rule of the Civilians obtains, *Minus solvit, qui tempore minus solvit*, i. e. He pays less than he ought, who pays not in due Time, or when he ought to do it.

Ver. 23. *When one buildeth, and another pulleth down, what Profit have they then but Labour?* Ver. 24. *When one prayeth, and another curseth, whose Voice will the Lord hear?* This may be considered in two Views, either as it stands connected with what goes before, or with what follows. In the former, it may be explained thus, If you offer to God Victims unworthy of him, such as are any ways lame or imperfect, or the Sacrifice of Oppression and Injustice, viz. such as were got by Robbery or Violence, what Advantage will it be to you? it will be like the Labour of him who builds with one Hand, and pulls down with the other. In the latter, it may be understood thus, As doing and undoing in Words or Actions, is lost Labour, and as a Man's purifying himself after some Defilement is fruitless, if he pollutes himself again by a fresh Approach to the unclean Thing; so after expiating one Crime, if a Man commits another, or repeats the same, if out of the same Mouth proceed Blessing and Cursing, what is this but dissembling with God, and repairing the Breach with untempered Mortar? If you would prevail with God, and

expiate your Sins thoroughly, and offer to your Creator a Sacrifice well pleasing to him, it must be seasoned with Justice, and accompanied with a sincere and uniform Piety, which is the Subject of the next Chapter. *Grotius* applies these Texts to the religious Disputes between different Sects, whose Petitions to God are as different as their respective Opinions. The Success or Establishment which one prays for, the other deprecates; the Trophies which one erects, the other is for pulling down; the Rites which one extols, the other abhors and condemns; and what one blesses, as primitive and apostolical, the other curses, as superstitious and profane. Whose Voice of these shall God hear? and amidst such a Variety of jarring Opinions, may we not with *Pilate*, enquire what is Truth? Truth we are sure is but one, tho' Errors be almost infinite. Truth is not such an arbitrary and precarious Thing as Mens Interest and Passions make it: Truth cannot go beyond the Word of the Lord, nor is it in *Balaam's* Power to alter it; *that only which God blesseth, is blessed; and that only which he curseth, is cursed.*

Ver. 25. *He that washeth himself after the touching of a dead Body, if he touch it again, what availeth his Washing?* so is it with a Man that fasteth for his Sins, and goeth again and doth the same. Who will bear his Prayer? or what doth his bumbling profit him? With respect to the Dead we meet with three Sorts of Washings, 1. *Banitiones rāu νεκρῶν*, washing the dead Corpse itself. *Acts ix. 37.* 2. *Banitiones νεκρῶν rāu νεκρῶν*, a Baptization for the Dead. *1 Cor. xv. 29.* 3. *Banitiones ἀνδ νεκρῶν*, which is meant in this Place, and signifies a washing from the Pollution contracted by the Touch of the dead Corpse. Some carried this farther, and maintained that even going among the Sepulchres, or touching a Bone, or standing too near Persons that were breathing their last, was such a Pollution, as was to be washed away by a legal and ceremonial Lustration. The Force of the Author's reasoning is to the following Effect, As the Water of Separation, and the Ashes of the Heifer sprinkling the Unclean, sanctifieth to very little Purpose towards purifying the Flesh, if the Person so purified contracted a fresh Defilement, by going near to, or touching, another dead Body; so it is equally fruitless for a Man to hope by an outward and formal Repentance to expiate his Sins, if he is not circumspect and careful not to offend in the like Particular again. For then the unclean Spirit returns with more Violence and Power upon him, and brings with him seven other Spirits more wicked than himself; and his last State will be worse than the first. *Matt. xii. 45.* This fine Reflexion of the wise Man is equally applicable to national Sins, which cannot be expiated by the mere Appointment of solemn Days of Humiliation and Fasting, except a general Reformation succeeds,



ceeds, and the old Leaven of Wickedness be purged away.

C H A P. XXXV.

Ver. 1. **H**E that keepeth the Law, bringeth Offerings enough; he that taketh Heed to the Commandments, offereth a Peace-offering.] i. e. He that is mindful of the Commandments of God, and careful to perform them, serves God more acceptably, than he that offers to him a Multitude of vain Oblations. For it is not the Number of Mens Offerings, but the Integrity of their Lives; not their Incense, but their Obedience, which God delights to be honoured by. Outward Sacrifices are only holy, when they are joined with the inward Sacrifice of the Heart; and he no otherwise regards the outward religious Works of Piety, than as they are visible Marks of that spiritual, and invisible Worship, which he claims as his Due, and is the very Essence of true Religion, *John* iv. 23. It is evident that the *Old Testament* gives two different Representations of Religion, the one respecting the mere outward ceremonial Performance, the other the spiritual Design of the Law. The holy Patriarchs and Prophets, and other eminent Persons among the *Jews*, regarded chiefly the spiritual and moral Sense, the true Meaning and Spirit of the Law, as does this Writer; and from many Passages in the Law, and the Prophets, it is evident that the moral Law was chiefly regarded, and insisted on, and the Observance of this was what gave a Value to the other positive Rites, and was indeed the Substance of those Mosaical Shadows.

Ver. 2. He that requiteth a good Turn, offereth fine Flour; and he that giveth Alms, sacrificeth Praise.] The Sense generally given of the first part of this Verse is, that the Sacrifice of a grateful Heart is more acceptable to God than that of Beasts, or any Oblation; and thus *Junius* and our Translators understand it: but, I think, Charity may here be meant as well as Gratitude, and *ὁ ἀνταποδίδως χάριν* be one that returns Charity for the Blessings himself hath received of God. And thus both Parts of the Verse will agree, for in these Sapiential Books the latter Clause is generally exegetical of the former. *Χάρις* seems to be taken in this Sense *Acts* ii. 46, 47. where, according to some Criticks, the Meaning is, that they did eat their Bread *ἐν ἀπλότητι*, in Liberality and Openness of Heart, *ἐχούτες χάριν*, doing Acts of Charity unto all the People. And when the Apostle bids the judaizing *Christians* to offer the Sacrifice of Praise to God continually, *Heb.* xiii. 15. the Advice, according to a very learned *Prelate*, is, that they should make their Offering of Alms (instead of the Fruits of their Herds and Flocks) joined with Praises and Thanksgivings to God, in Token of their Gratitude, and because with

such Sacrifices God was well pleased, as it follows in the next Verse. This seems exactly answerable to that of the Psalmist, *Offer unto God Thanksgiving, and pay thy Vows to the most High.* *Psal.* l. 14. i. e. A truly thankful Heart, gratefully acknowledging God's Benefits, is the most acceptable Sacrifice to him, and above all the Peace-offerings thou canst bring. *Bishop Patrick's Mens. Myst.* p. 307. and *De Muis in loc.* The *ὁ* render here *ὅσον τῷ θεῷ θυσίαν αἰνέσεως*, and the *Vulg.* *Immola Deo sacrificium laudis*, which are agreeable to the Phrase, *θυσιάζων αἰνέσεως* in this Writer. And in this Sense we are to understand the Prophet, when he says, *We will render the Calves of our Lips*, i. e. instead of the Sacrifice of Calves, or Bulls, we will offer to thee the Sacrifice of Praise and Thanksgiving, which is the Fruit of our Lips, *καρπὸν χειλέων ἡμῶν*, as the *ὁ* have it, *Hof.* xiv. 2. It may be proper to observe, that these and such like Expressions, though spoken simply, are to be understood comparatively, and when we say, "That God doth chiefly respect the inward Disposition of the Heart, we must beware that we do not hereupon so worship him in Spirit only, as to take away all outward Worship and Honour from him." *Hooker's Eccl. Pol.* L. vii. The good and charitable Man may also in this farther Sense be said to sacrifice Praise, as in doing Alms, he offers a Tribute of Thanksgiving; for Alms are to be considered under the Notion of a Lord's Rent, which God justly challenges from Men, as their Acknowledgment to him, as their great Lord and Proprietary.

Ver. 4. Thou shalt not appear empty before the Lord. Ver. 5. For all these Things (are to be done) because of the Commandment.] This is what *Moses* appointed in the Law, *Exod.* xxiii. 15. *Deut.* xvi. 16. The wise Man here explains the Precept, and gives the true Design and Meaning of it. The Command is general; nor were the Poor, and such as were in ordinary Circumstances, excused from bringing Gifts, and making their Offering. God indeed respects chiefly the moral Proofs of Men's Love and Regard for him, such as Fidelity in his Service, Obedience to his Will, and a grateful Acknowledgment of his Goodness; these are the Sacrifices which he most delights in, as it is the Heart which he principally regards. Not that Sacrifices were hereby abolished, or the Obligation among the *Jews* to offer them, taken away; God still expected the outward Service and Offerings to be made in his Temple by all the Poor, as well as the Rich, and herein has condescended to their Necessities, in not prescribing, or insisting on the Quantity or Value of them; that if any was unable to sacrifice a Sheep, he might bring a Lamb, and if a Lamb was too much, he might offer Corn, or fine Flour; and if these too were wanting, God was pleased



pleased with Vows of Obedience and Adoration solely. These were never to be dispensed with; but the other, the ritual Part was not to be left undone, where there was an Ability and Power, because of God's Appointment and Command. These Gifts and Oblations were continued in the Christian Church, and called Sacrifices; whence St. Cyprian chides some of the Rich, that they threw nothing into the *Corban*, and came into God's House *sine Sacrificio*, or empty. *De Op. Eleem.* These always made a part of the Eucharist, and a perfect Communion was called *κοινωνία μετὰ προσφορῆς*. And as it was accounted a Favour to be admitted to the Offertory, so was it a Punishment to communicate *χωρὶς προσφορῆς*.

Ver. 6. *The Offering of the Righteous maketh the Altar fat, and the sweet Savour thereof is before the Lord.* Virtue and Goodness are the best Recommendations of any Sacrifice; the mere outward Performance is ineffectual to Reconciliation, and the obtaining the Favour of God. As Expiation, Atonement, and propitiating the offended Deity was the End of all material Sacrifices, so were they more or less acceptable and effectual, according to the inward Sense, Qualifications, and Dispositions of those who offered them. Or the Meaning may be, that he that is a truly good Man will always give to God of the best. It appears from many Instances and Precedents under the old Law, that such as had the most unfeigned Regard to God and Religion, were always the most forward to bestow upon God that which was most perfect. Thus, when *Abel* presented God with an Offering, it was the fattest of all the Lambs in the whole Flock; he honoured him not only out of his Substance, but with the very chiefest thereof; of *Cain* it is only said that he brought simply an Offering. We see herein the Difference between a true and a false, a sincere and a hypocritical Heart: they both offer, the one bringeth his Gift of the fattest and best which he hath, and in the Zeal of his Soul wishes it much better; the other thinketh any Thing good enough, the Blind or the Lame, the Scabbed, or the Rotten: and herein he is a Representative and Father of all such sacrilegious ones in later Times, who either rob God of his Offerings, or serve him only with the Refuse, which they would not offer to their Governor. *Mal. i. 8.* From this Behaviour of *Cain*, St. Chrysostom raises this fine Reflexion, *εἰ ἀνθρώποις τὰς ὁμοιωθεὶς οἱ τιμὰν βεβλόμενοι, κ. τ. λ. Si nostri generis hominibus quos veneramus, prima & precipua damus, illaque offerre maxime volumus, quæ præ omnibus illis digna videntur; quomodo hominem offerentem Deo non oportebit Deo pretiosiora, & magis eximia offerre?* Hom. xxvi. Tom. ii.

Ver. 8. *Give the Lord his Honour with a good Eye, and diminish not the First Fruits of thine Hands.* Gifts, Sacrifices, and Offerings were of an honorary Nature. For as it

was thought anciently an Affront for any to make a solemn Approach unto a King without some Present, especially when any Favour was asked, or expected; so was it counted dishonourable to God, for any to wait upon him in his solemn Worship empty-handed. *Exod. xxiii. 15.* For the true God, as well as the false Deities, was supposed to be appeased, and delighted with the Honour of Gifts and Offerings, especially when those who brought them were duly purified. The Sense here is, that we are not only to worship God with our Lips, and give him Praises with our Tongues, but he has farther required, that we should give him an active Honour, *i. e.* worship him with our Substance. The Psalmist describes this plainly, *Psal. xcvi. 8. Give unto the Lord the Honour due unto his Name;* and what that Honour is, the next Words shew, *Bring Presents, or an Offering, and come into his Courts.* This too must be done with a good Eye, *i. e.* generously, without any Mixture of Covetousness, and uprightly, without any Diminution; and the Present must be of the best, and most excellent in its Kind. *Exod. xxii. 29, 30. Numb. xviii. 26, 29, 30. Prov. iii. 9. Ἀπαρχή*, or the First Fruits, was commanded to be given of the very best, hence it became a Term for the choicest Things, and in this Sense the *ῥ* always use it. The Jews distinguished Offerings into two Sorts, one of which they called Righteousness, or what was strictly and exactly according to the Proportion required by the Law; and the other they called Mercy or Bounty, being above the Proportion fixed. According to which Notion he that performed the first sort was named a just Man, and he that exceeded it, was called a good Man. The Sense therefore of this Verse may be, Do not only do what is necessary, and strictly legal, but make some Free-will Offering, as a voluntary Oblation to the Honour of God; or more briefly, Do not stint yourself to a mere legal Righteousness, in giving thy First Fruits to God, or his Receiver, the Priest.

Ver. 9. *In all thy Gifts shew a cheerful Countenance, and dedicate thy Tithes with Gladness.* *ἐν δὲ προσώπῳ αἰνέσας δαδάτην.* To sanctify, according to the Jewish Sense of it, means to apply, or appropriate to some religious Use; as the First Fruits and Tenths were set apart for the Maintenance of the Priests and Levites, the Repairs of the Temple, and for providing the daily Sacrifice. The vowing or dedicating Tythes was very ancient. *Jacob* promises, that, of all which God should give him, he would give the Tenth unto him, *Gen. xxviii. 22.* It was likewise customary, even among some Heathen Nations, to dedicate Tythes to the Deity whom they adored. Among the Jews the Payment of them was established, the Priests lived upon them, as God's Alms, and he assigned unto them a great part of that Maintenance.



Maintenance, which the *Jews* brought to him. See *Numb.* xviii. 22. *Deut.* xviii. 4. where the Law requires, that they should give the First Fruits of their Land unto the Priest, but does not determine the Quantity, yet because *Ezekiel* says, ch. xlv. 13. that they should offer the sixth Part of an *Ephah* of an *Homer*, their wise Men concluded that they were bound to bring at least a sixtieth Part to God for his Ministers. But notwithstanding this, they accounted him but a covetous Man that brought no more, and they called this a *Terumah*, or the Heave-offering of an evil Eye. For thus *Maimonides*, A good Eye, *i. e.* a liberal Person brings one Part of Forty; a mean Eye, *i. e.* a Man that hath some, but a less Degree of Goodness, one of Fifty; and an evil Eye, *i. e.* a Niggard, one of sixty; less than which it was not lawful to give. See *Patrick's Mens. Myst.* p. 164. *Seld. Hist. Tyth.* c. ii. *Ainsw. on Num.* xviii. 12. This may also be applied to Charity, which is a Gift to God, and its Value is enhanced according to the Alacrity and Readiness expressed in it. Thus *St. Chrysostom*, μέγας ἐκ ἐν τῷ πλῆθει, κ. τ. λ. *Magnitudo eleemosynæ non in multitudine opum sita est, sed ex alacritate dantium judicatur. Propter hoc & qui potum frigidæ dedit acceptus est; ut discamus, quod ubique rectam mentem requirit universorum Dominus. Fieri potest ut qui parum habet, liberalis admodum sit propter alacritatem; & qui multa possidet, minor videatur his qui parum habent, propter sordidi animi tenacitatem.* *Tom.* ii. *Hom.* lvi.

Ver. 10. Give unto the most High according as he hath enriched thee; and as thou hast gotten, give with a cheerful Eye.] This may be understood either of the Payment of Tythes, or of Charity in general, either of which may be considered as a Tribute, or an Acknowledgment to God for what he has bestowed, and as a likely means to procure his farther Blessing; and therefore should be cheerfully given, in Proportion to Mens Circumstances and Fortune. *Tobit* has well determined this, *Be merciful after thy Power; if thou hast much, give plentifully; if thou hast little, do thy Diligence gladly to give of that little, for so gatherest thou thyself a good Reward in the Day of Necessity.* iv. 7, 8, 9. *Psal.* xli. 1. *Prov.* xix. 17. 2 *Cor.* ix. 6, 7. 1 *Tim.* vi. 17, 18, 19. *Heb.* vi. 10. xiii. 16. *Καθ' ὅσον χάρις*, which is the Reading in all the *Greek* Copies, I conceive should be *καθ' ὅσον χάρις*, and so the *Alex. MS.* alone has it. It means, Give cheerfully according to the Gain of thy Hands, (for so *εὐχρημα* is used, and should be understood in this Book. See Note on ch. xxix. 4.) give according to thy Stock and Substance, whether it be Ox, Calf, Kid, or Lamb; let thy Liberality be as God has prospered thee, nor fear to be made poor thyself by such Acts of Goodness, nor let Avarice or private Interest suggest any such Excuse to you. To

make any Gift or Sacrifice acceptable, it must be done in a Manner likewise worthy of God; it must be done with a willing Heart, and with such a Satisfaction as may even shew itself upon the very Countenance. And so the Command is to the Children of *Israel*, *Exod.* xxxv. 5. *Whoso is of a willing Heart, let him bring his Offering unto the Lord; and every one whose Heart stirred him up, and whom his Spirit made willing, brought accordingly the Lord's Offering to the Work of the Tabernacle, &c.* 21. And in that great Offering of *David* and the People, towards building the Temple, Mention is particularly made of their ready and cheerful Heart, *that the People rejoiced, because with a perfect Heart they offered willingly unto the Lord,* 1 *Chron.* xxix. 9. And in his solemn Thanksgiving *David*, who rejoiced also with them with great Joy, says, *I thank thee, O God, that I should be able to offer so willingly after this Sort, for all Things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee, &c.* 14. It is therefore an Instance of unspeakable Goodness in God, to receive and reckon it as a Gift, when we return to him but an inconsiderable Part of what he has given us, and not only to promise sevenfold for a Reward of our Gratitude, as is mentioned here, but, as the Gospel assures us, a hundred fold, both in this World, and the other. Of so great Consequence and Moment is Cheerfulness, and a hearty Concurrence in all Gifts, Duties, and Offerings made to God; and so true is that Reflexion of *St. Austin*, *Nemo invitus benefacit, etiamsi quod bonum est facit.* *Confess.* L. i. c. 12.

Ver. 12. Do not think to corrupt with Gifts, for such he will not receive.] *Μὴ δωροκοπίαι, & γὰρ ποδοδέξαι.* *Grotius* understands it in the Sense of our Translators of hoping to bribe or corrupt God by Gifts, which mean and wicked Attempt the Scripture condemns in many Places. But *δωροκοπίαι* is more generally, and would be better rendred, *De donis refeco.* Agreeable to which is the marginal Reading, *Diminish nothing of thy Offerings;* which *Junius* and *Jansenius* follow; the latter has, *Ne decurtas munera.* The *Tigurin* Version understands it of Goods unjustly gotten, *Ne offeras parva sordibus munera,* and the *Vulg.* probably of such as are blemished and imperfect. However the determinate Sense of the Word be, to offend in any of these Instances is to affront God, nor will the Magnificence, State, Glory, or Reputation of a Man make any Difference. God neither regards the Person, nor Sacrifice itself so much, as a pure Intention, and a Heart truly devoted to him.

Ver. 15. Do not the Tears run down the Widow's Cheeks? and is not her Cry against him that causeth them to fall?] See *Luke* xviii. 3. where the Parable is proposed under the Person of a Widow, rather than of a poor Man, to make it the more affecting, as that Sex is more exposed to Injuries, and

Widows



Widows generally above others. *Quintilian* observes, *Per se imbecilla est femina, Et affert infirmitati naturali non leve pondus, quod vidua est.* Such as are used with Violence, and forced to undergo uncommon Hardships and Oppressions, are said to cry to Heaven for Vengeance. *Gen. iv. 10. Exod. ii. 23. 2 Macc. viii. 3. Luke xviii. 7. James v. 4.* and thus the Martyrs cry, *ὡς ὦντος . . . ἡ ζωὴ;* *Apo. vi. 10.* God has declared himself the Protector of the Widow, and the Father of the Orphan, he places his Greatness in being the Support of the Weak, as well as in ruling the Mighty, and in particular, he is the Defence of those that are poor in Spirit, to whom Earth is as a Place of Banishment, and Heaven the Habitation longed for. By the Widow here we may either understand, according to the *Port-Royal* Comment, the Church, when under a State of Persecution, or such pious afflicted Souls, as cry Day and Night unto God to avenge them speedily; and when they are reduced to such an Extremity, as seemingly to be past all Help and Recovery, then it is that God appears in their Behalf, and makes bare his Arm in their Defence, and Heaven interests itself in their Quarrel.

Ver. 17. *The Prayer of the Humble pierceth the Clouds; and till it come nigh, he will not be comforted.* Humility, or a mean and low Opinion of ourselves, when we address the great and incomprehensible Majesty of God, is a necessary Qualification for Acceptance. As it relates to Prayer, it consists in disclaiming all Right or Pretence of Merit to the Bounty and Munificence of God; and in submitting ourselves entirely to his Wisdom and Providence, both with respect to the Benefit itself petitioned for, and likewise the Time and Measure of it; and lastly, that we should consider ourselves, not only as dependent Creatures, but also as sinful and unworthy Creatures. The wise Man here takes notice of three Particulars, or Effects of the Prayer of the Humble: 1. That it is so effectual as to pierce the Clouds. 2. That it is so persevering, as not to desist, till it reaches to, and is presented before the Throne of God. 3. That it is so importunate and fervent, as not to return back, till it hath obtained its Request. All Virtues and Graces exalt us towards Heaven, say *Mess. of Port-Royal*, and as it were knock at its Gate for Admittance; but it is Humility that effectually opens it, and brings us to the Throne of him, who ascended not thither, till after he had demeaned, and emptied himself, and would not enter into his Glory, till he was made perfect through Humility and Sufferings.

Ver. 18. *For the Lord will not be slack, neither will the Mighty be patient towards them, till he have smitten in sunder the Loins of the Unmerciful, and repayed Vengeance to the Heathen; till he have taken away the Multitude of the Proud, and broken the*

*Sceptre of the Unrighteous.* *Μακροθυμία*, Patience or Long-suffering, signifies Slackness in punishing, and so the Sense may either be, that the Almighty will not delay to do Justice to them, viz. to the Humble or Afflicted, or will not be slack, to execute Justice upon them, viz. the Unmerciful, or the Heathen, to whom *ἐν αὐτοῖς* seems to refer. This Place cannot be better illustrated than by comparing it with *Luke xviii. 7. Shall not God avenge his own Elect, which cry Day and Night unto him; and will he be slack towards them, or forbear long to punish their Enemies: καὶ μακροθυμῶν ἐν αὐτοῖς;* for so the Words should be pointed, and rendred, and then the next Sentence is better connected, *I tell you, he will avenge them speedily.* The Author seems here to hint at the Greeks, Syrians, and such to whom the Jews were at this Time in Subjection in *Judaea, Syria, and Egypt*, and to interd Comfort to his Countrymen, by assuring them, that their Enemies should feel the Weight of God's Arm, and experience his mighty Vengeance, if they continued to oppress them, as in former Time he poured forth his Wrath upon the Egyptians, Canaanites, Chaldeans, and other Nations, for the Cruelties used to his Chosen. But as it does not often happen, that God appears so openly, and so instantly in the Behalf of his oppressed Servants, as to punish such as afflict them, by some remarkable Judgment in this Life, we may properly understand this Place of the last great Day, to which he will reserve the compleat Avenging of his suffering Members; when he will break the Sceptre or Power of the Proud, or Ungodly, and overthrow all that is great in this World, that will presume to oppose, or exalt itself against him.

#### CHAP. XXXVI.

Ver. 1. **H**AVE Mercy upon us, O Lord God of all, and behold us: Ver. 2. *And send thy Fear upon all the Nations that seek not after thee.* Ver. 3. *Lift up thy Hand against the strange Nations, and let them see thy Power.* The Author having spoken, in the Conclusion of the former Chapter, of the mighty Force and Energy of Prayer to succour the Humble and Afflicted, and to procure Help for them against their Enemies and Oppressors, begins this with a set Prayer to God, that he would be pleased, favourably to look upon, and assist his scattered, and distressed People, who, at the Time when this Work was composed, were dispersed in *Egypt, Syria, and all the Provinces of the East*, and beyond the *Euphrates*, and those that remained in *Judaea, and Jerusalem*, were sometimes subject to the Kings of *Syria*, sometimes to those of *Egypt*, and in their Turns Victims of their Power and Ambition. This so low and mortifying a State afflicted the good



good *Israelites*, they fervently beseeched God, to have Mercy upon, and to restore Tranquillity to his People, and either to convert the Hearts of the idolatrous Nations, Strangers to his Fear and Worship, or to lift up his Hand against them, and destroy them with a mighty Destruction; or to deliver his chosen from them with a mighty and stretched out Arm, as he formerly delivered their Ancestors in the Time, and under the Conduct of *Moses*. The Things the wise Man here prays for, are the very same the *Jews* continued to expect in our Saviour's Time, by, and under, the *Messias*, viz. the Conversion of the Gentiles to the one true God, the Destruction of certain Nations, their Enemies, the Restoration of all their Tribes, and the working of Miracles; in both Ages, they prayed that God would hasten the Accomplishment. See Note on c. l. y 23. and Bishop *Chandler's Def. of Christian* pag. 42.

Ver. 4. *As thou wast sanctified in us before them, so be thou magnified among them before us.* Ver. 5. *and let them know thee, as we have known thee, that there is no God, but only thou, O God.* The former Verse will admit of a double Sense, which may either be, As thou hast made thine Anger visible and conspicuous, in punishing us, thy Chosen, with so much Rigour, before the Heathen, so use them, in like Manner, before our Eyes; pour thy Vengeance upon them in our Sight, and let us in our Turns be Witnesses of their Ruin and Overthrow. Or thus, As in ancient Times thou madest thy Power to appear, by bringing thy Chosen out of *Egypt*, in the Sight of the Heathen, and against their Will; so do the same Wonders for us, their Children, before these our Oppressors, and shew thy great Mercy, by delivering us from the Bondage and Slavery we labour under, that we may be Witnesses of thy marvellous Works, as our Fathers were of those thou didst for them in the Land of *Egypt*, and at the *Red Sea*. In this Prayer we find the most pressing Motives that can be made use of, to incline the Almighty to favour his People, and to engage him in their behalf and Assistance. The Author here urges every Inducement, and neglects nothing that can be persuasive; and when he doubts the Sufficiency of his own Reasons, for the obtaining his Petition, he has Recourse to God himself, and enforces his Plea from the Honour of the Divine Nature, engages God to interpose, for his own Glory's sake, and not to give up his People finally into the Hands of their Enemies, who would not only come into his Inheritance, but insult him, their only God and King, for deserting them, *Pf. lxxix. 9, 10, 11*, which is the Substance likewise of some other *Psalms*. This Part of the Prayer seems pretty much the same with that of *Esther*, for her People, O Lord, give not thy Sceptre

to them that be nothing, and let them not laugh at our Fall: Remember, O Lord; make thyself known in the Time of our Afflictions, O King of the Nations, and Lord of all Power: For they have stricken Hands with their Idols, that they will destroy thine Inheritance, and quench the Glory of thy House, and of thine Altar. ch. xiv. 9, 11, 12.

Ver. 6. *Shew new Signs, and make other strange Wonders.* [i. e. *Ἐνδείξεις ἀνέμειναι*, Renew the Miracles which thou didst under *Moses*, against *Pharaoh* and the *Egyptians*, and by *Joshua* against the *Canaanites*; and add new ones to them, that foreign Nations may discern thy infinite Power, exerted in Wrath against the Enemies of thy People *Israel*: And let the Heathens know, and be convinced by the Power of thy Miracles, that thou only art God, that their Idols are lying Vanities, their Kings but weak Mortals, whose Life and Death are in thy Hand, that, urged by the Dread of thy Omnipotency, they may cease to oppress thy Chosen.

Ver. 8. *Make the Time short, remember the Covenant.* The Greek Copies vary here in their Reading, some have *μνησθῆναι ὁρκῶν*, others *μνησθῆναι ὁρίων*, *memento finis*, as the *Vulg.* has it; others *μνησθῆναι ὁρίων*, which our Translators follow. God's Oath or Covenant, and the Assurances given them by the Prophets, were the Ground of Hope of the Blessings expected by the *Jews*, both before, and in our Saviour's Time. What this Oath was, is fully explained *Ecclus xlv. 21, 22*. it was the Blessing of all Men, and the Covenant assured by an Oath to *Abraham*, and established with *Isaac*: It was the Covenant of Kings, that he made with *David*, to exalt his Horn for ever:—His Mercy, whereby he promised a Remnant unto *Jacob*, and a Root unto *David*, or a *Messias* to come out of his Loins, *Ecclus xlvii. 11, 22*. as the *Jews* understand the Words of *Isaiah* there alluded to. See Bishop *Chandler's Def. p. 43*. And thus the holy Men, in the Old Testament, in their Prayers, frequently remind God of his Covenant, and Promise, *Pf. cxix. 49. 2 Chron. vi. 42*. and make mention of his Servant *David*, or *Abraham*, or *Isaac*, or *Israel*, for whom they knew he had an especial Kindness, thereby to move his Regard and Compassion. Some understand the wise Man, when he says, *make the Time short*, as if he prayed that God would hasten to their Succour, and let the Calamities, that shall come upon their Enemies, make haste. *Deut. xxxii. 35*. But this Petition may be considered in a higher Sense, as a Prayer for the speedy coming of the *Messiah*. All the Saints, who lived before the Appearance of *Christ*, have beseeched God in the same importunate Manner, to hasten the Time of his Advent. On this Account *St. Bernard* piously laments, that, when the holy Patriarchs and Prophets waited for this Blessing, with so



much Impatience, and prayed for it with so much Warmth and Earnestness, Christians should at length receive it with so much Coldness and Indifference, and be so little affected with the mighty Mercy of his coming.

Ver. 10. *Smite in sunder the Heads of the Rulers of the Heathen, that say, There is none other but we.*] This probably refers to Ps. cx. 5, 6. where it is prophesied of the Messiah, *That he shall wound even Kings in the Day of his Wrath; that he shall judge among the Heathen, and fill the Places with the dead Bodies, and smite in sunder the Heads over divers Countries.* The Author seems to mean here the Kings of Syria and Egypt, chiefly the former, (for the *Ptolemies*, Kings of Egypt, were on many Occasions kind to the Jews) and among these, the Character suits best with *Antiochus Epiphanes*, who, if he did not affect divine Honours himself, hindred the paying them to the true God. His Blasphemies are expressly foretold Dan. vii. 25. viii. 25. xi. 36. and his History, as recorded in the Books of *Maccabees*, shews, that he was an Enemy to all Religion, and even defied God; and that the End of this cruel Oppressor was as miserable, as his Life had been wicked. The *Vulg.* renders, *Contere caput principum inimicorum*, following a Copy which had, *ἰχθῶν* instead of *ἰθῶν*. This and the foregoing Verses shew the vindictive Temper of the Jewish People.

Ver. 11. *Gather all the Tribes of Jacob together, and inherit thou them, as from the Beginning.*] When this Author wrote, the far greater Number of the Jews was dispersed in different Provinces of the East, in Greece, Africa, and in the Isles: It was a common and settled Form of their Prayer, to beg of God to recall the several Tribes that were dispersed, such of them as were not yet returned into Judea, but were the Outcasts of Israel. We have several Instances in the Book of *Psalms*, of this devout Request. See Ps. cvi. 45. cxxvii. 5. See *Eccles.* xlviii. 10. where *Elias* is said to be ordained to restore the Tribes of Jacob. To which agrees *Matt.* xvii. 11. which refers to this Tradition. This Restoration the Jews promised themselves before, or at, the Coming of their Messiah. *Grotius* observes, that *κατακληρονομήειν* is here to be taken in *forma Hipbil*, as it is used by this Writer ch. xlv. 21. and then the Sense will be, Cause thou them again to inherit, *Fac iterum terras possideant*, the Countries which thou hast given them, as they did in the Days of David, and Solomon; and thus *Junius*, *Tribue hereditatem ipsis, sicut principio*.

Ver. 12. *O Lord, have Mercy upon the People that is called by thy Name.*] i. e. Have Pity upon that People, *λαόν*, who are known by the Name of the People of the Lord; thou art their Father, their Husband, their Master, their King; and art pleased to style

thyself the God of *Abraham*, and of *Israel*. The *Hellenist Jews* love to call the *Israelites* *Λαόν*, the better to distinguish them from the Heathen, who were called *Ἀλλόφυλοι*, and *ἔθνη*. And so *Λαός* and *ἔθνη* are opposed *Acts* xv. 14. where speaking of the prophane, or Gentile Nations called to the Gospel, God is said to have got *Λαόν ἐξ ἔθνων*. Bishop *Fell* observes, that St. *Cyprian* accordingly chuses to call the Faithful, *Plebem*, and not *Populum*, and condemns *Tertullian* for Inaccuracy in using so general a Term. *Not. in L. i. Testim. adv. Jud.*

*Ibid.* And upon *Israel*, whom thou hast named thy Firstborn.] This Term not only signifies the Order of Birth or Generation, but the Degree of Love and Favour with Almighty God. *Exod.* iv. 22. Ps. lxxxviii. 28. in 6. and particularly 2 *Esdr.* vi. 55, 56, 57, 58. They looked upon themselves to be the peculiar People of God, as being the Posterity of *Abraham*, and pretended that God owned them alone for his Children and Favourites, and that for their own, and Forefathers Merit, he would never forsake them. They prided themselves also in their holy City, where God, they imagined, fixed his Abode, as in the Capitol of his Kingdom, and in their Temple, where the *Schechinah* dwelt, which they thought God, for his own sake, would not fail to preserve. All others, who were not favoured with the like Privilege of Descent, or with such visible Tokens of God's Presence, they called unclean, *Is.* xxxv. 8. and looked on them as no better than Dogs, disregarded and neglected by God; and this common Phrase among the Jews, our Saviour is thought to allude to, *Matt.* xv. 26. It has been observed of the Jewish Writers, that they are naturally given to magnify their own Nation and Privileges, more than any other People living, which appears nowhere more clearly than in the *Apocryphal* Writings, where frequent Instances occur of this Vanity, even in the Times of Persecution and Distress.

Ver. 15. *Fill Sion with thine unspeakable Oracles, and thy People with thy Glory.*] The Geneva Version has, *Fill Sion, that it may magnifie thine Oracles*; which is the Marginal Reading, and seems more agreeable to the Greek: Or, *Fill Sion with thy Favours, with the Effects of thy Mercy and Loving-kindness, by fulfilling thy Oracles, and making good thy Promises, that it may celebrate thy Praises, and thy People may have fresh Occasion to publish and display thy Glory.* Or, *Fill Sion with thy Presence, Majestatem tuam, Arab.* and let Tokens of it appear there as formerly. The *Orient.* Versions have, *Et Templum tuum gloria tua redundet, i. e.* Let the Glory of the *Schechinah* adorn thy Temple, following a Copy, which probably had *λαόν σου*, instead of *λαόν*, which is in all the present Editions.

Ver.



## Ch. xxxvi. the Book of ECCLESIASTICUS. 187

Ver. 15. Give Testimony unto those that thou hast possessed from the Beginning, and raise up Prophets that have been in thy Name.] The Sense is pretty much the same, whether we read *ἀλήμασι*, or *ἀλιμασι*, *προφῆτας* or *προφητάς*. i. e. Give unto Israel, whom thou hast chosen for such a Number of Ages past, and to whom thou hast vouchsafed so many Proofs of thy Love, fresh Testimonies of thy Regard, and Notice: Remember the ancient Predictions in their Favour, and fulfil the Promises, which the Prophets have made in thy Name, that thou wouldst not cast off thy Chosen, when they call upon thee in their Distress. *ἔγειρον προφῆτας* does not relate to the coming of new Prophets, as some have understood it, nor is it to be considered as a Wish of that Sort, for when the Prophets had prepared the Way for the Reception of the Messiah, by pointing out the several material Circumstances relating to his Coming, the Gift of Prophecy ceased: Neither was there any publick Succession of Prophets for the Space of 400 Years together before the Coming of Christ, on Purpose to raise in Mens Minds a more earnest Expectation of that happy Advent. It is rather a Wish, that God would accomplish and fulfil the former Prophecies in his Name. And so the Heb. Word is rendred by the *6*, 1 Sam. iii. 11, 12. And thus the Syr. and Arab. Versions, *Affirma testimonia servorum tuorum, & adveniant vaticinia Prophetarum tuorum, qui nomine tuo locuti sunt*. See Bishop Chandler's Def. p. 42.

Ver. 16. Reward them that wait for thee, and let thy Prophets be found faithful.] Reward the Patience and holy Trust of thy People, who, notwithstanding their many Calamities, Revolutions, and Reproaches, have continued true and faithful in thy Service, and have not, since their Captivity, lapsed again into Idolatry, as their Ancestors did under their Kings before. Or, Comfort them that live in Hopes of the Completion of thy Promises, with the happy Accomplishment of the Predictions, that thy Prophets may be found true and faithful in what they foretold. The Author seems to insinuate here, that the Jews, at this Time, waited for the Messiah, or that Prophet, by way of Eminence, foretold and promised Deut. xviii. 15. and by all the successive Prophets. And accordingly by the Coming of the Messiah all the Oracles and Prophecies were fulfilled, and the Faith of his Saints, who had waited for him with so much Eagerness and Constancy, was blessed and rewarded; and by it God filled his People with those spiritual and true Blessings, of which that of Aaron was only a Figure, and shewed himself the eternal God, the Lord of Ages, by bringing to pass, *ἐν συνέλειά τῷ αἰῶνι*, what he had foretold and promised 4000 Years before.

Ver. 17. O Lord, bear the Prayer of thy Servants, according to the Blessing of Aaron,

over thy People.] i. e. Let us mercifully partake of those Blessings, and reap the Benefit of that solemn Form, which thou hast appointed the High-Priest to pronounce, and may the full Force of the Benediction, Num. vi. 24, 25, 26. light upon thy Suppliants; *ἐκείων εὖ*, as the Margin has it, and Grabe prefers to *οἰκείων*, the common Reading. According to Bossuet, the Author here requests of God, that the true regular and lineal Priesthood in the family of Aaron may continue, and not such a corrupt and venal one, as was under Antiochus Epiphanes, purchased with Money by Jason and Menelaus, to the manifest Wrong and Injury of Onias, the regular and true High-Priest. 2 Maccab. iv. 8, 23. However that be, this Passage certainly contains a very particular Commendation of the established Ministry, its Usefulness and Efficacy. For God could give, if it pleased him, his gracious Favours to his People, without the Priests Intercession, but he on Purpose appoints him to be the ministerial Asker, and to be the Means to derive upon his People his designed Goodness. He could not more effectually grace and distinguish his Servants, than by declaring, that what they should beg, he would the more readily give. Thus confirming and recommending their Ministry and Service to all true Members of the Church. If this was more attended to, the Contempt of the Ministry, and of Church Power, would be less complained of: In Health Men would regard the Priest's Prayers, as the stated Means to draw down God's Blessing; and in Time of Sickness would apply to him, as the People did to Samuel, Pray for thy Servants unto the Lord thy God, that we die not. 1 Sam. xii. 19.

Ver. 18. The Belly devoureth all Meats, yet is one Meat better than another. Ver. 19. As the Palate tasteth divers Kinds of Venison, so doth an Heart of Understanding false Speeches.] This and what follows is very improperly connected with the foregoing Prayer, but so it is in all the Versions and Editions. The Sense seems to be, As the Stomach promiscuously receives all Sorts of Food, but all do not digest alike, nor are equally wholesom, so the Mind receives all Sorts of Thoughts, though not equally profitable and good: And as the Will has various Affections and Desires, but the Objects of them are not equally innocent, so the Mind is capable of different Sorts of Knowledge, but they are not alike useful; for the Knowledge of the Law of God, and of religious Truths, is of most Importance, and preferable to all Science whatsoever. Epiphanius has exactly the same Sentiment, *ὅτι μὲν ῥήματα διακρίνει, λαρυγὶ δὲ οἷα γάλα*. Or thus, As the Palate distinguishes Venison from common and ordinary Meat, so does an understanding Heart separate between Flattery and real Friendship,



ship, true and false Reasoning, profitable and evil Discourse. But as the Mouth should be kept clean, that the Taste may be more quick and exquisite, so the Mind, in order to form a right Judgment, should be free from Prejudice, and Prepossession.

Ver. 20. *A froward Heart causeth Heaviness; but a Man of Experience will recompense him.* [Ἀνταποδώσει αὐτῷ. Drusus prefers αὐτῇ, to agree with καρδία, or λύπη, and so the Geneva Version, *A froward Heart bringeth Grief, but a Man of Experience will resist it.* By a froward Heart is meant a wicked and deceitful Person; who often takes the Unwary in his Snares, and involves them in Mischief; but a Man of Prudence and Experience will beware of, and find out his Artifice and Designs, will oppose, and punish him according to his Deserts. For so ἀνταποδίδωμι is often used by our Translators.

Ver. 21. *A Woman will receive every Man, yet is one Daughter better than another.* Various are the Senses of this Place; but a good one, I conceive, may be given of it, without any such Reflection upon the Modesty of the Sex, as Grotius, and some other Expositors, have thrown upon them. May not therefore the Meaning either be, that every Woman will receive Addressees, but there are some among the Sex, who deserve a Preference before others? Or, that Women are not nice and scrupulous, when Addressees are made to them, about the mere Person, or Beauty of a Man; but a Regard is not undeservedly had to the Beauty of a Woman, which is a Perfection that distinguishes them from one another, and is engaging in the Eyes of the other Sex. But I take the true Meaning of the Author to be, that if in Marriage, Regard is only had to the Propagation of the Species, it is but of little Consequence, where the Choice falls; but if Happiness be the thing proposed, and you would have a valuable Companion, an agreeable and accomplished Partner for Life, Regard then ought chiefly to be had to Virtue, and good Qualities.

Ver. 23. *If there be Kindness, Meekness, and Comfort in her Tongue, then is not her Husband like other Men.* If to her Beauty a Wife adds such engaging Qualities, as strict Virtue, and Modesty, prudent Oeconomy, obliging Behaviour, and such good Sense and Address, as by her winning Carriage, and agreeable Manner, to sooth the Passions and Cares of her Husband, and double occasionally his Joys; if she is not haughty and imperious with her Beauty, and places not her Merit in her Person, she cannot fail of crowning his utmost Wishes. Possessed of such a Treasure, he should bless his Choice, and set a just Value upon his Happiness, which has made him even an Object of Envy. *Non est vir ejus humanæ conditionis*, as Castalio well expresses

his good Fortune; his Lot is above that of common Mortals, it resembles that of the Blessed above, where Love and Harmony reign triumphant.

Ver. 24. *He that getteth a Wife, beginneth a Possession, a Help like himself, and a Pillar of Rest.* [Ὁ κτῶμενος γυναῖκα, ἐνάρχειται κτήσεως, βοηθὸν καὶ αὐτὸν καὶ σῦλον ἀναπαύσεως. The Vulg. with great Judgment inserts, *bonam, qui possidet mulierem bonam.* i. e. He, that has a good Wife in all respects, has laid the best Foundation of his House, has the surest Grounds to build his Hopes of Happiness upon, and of raising a Family to his Mind. Janius transposes the Words here, and renders, *Qui comparat mulierem adjumentum simile sibi, & columnam requietis, incipit possessionem constituere*, which is clearer and more explicit than our Version. According to Grotius, ἐνάρχεσθαι means *facere imperare*, and is to be understood in *forma Hipbil*, as βασιλεύειν is sometimes taken, i. e. He, that takes a Wife, sets over his House and Fortunes a Help mate, and an Assistant, equal to himself, that will divide his Cares, and in whose prudent Management and Oeconomy he may safely confide, and will be to him a Pillar of Security, as well as of agreeable Rest. According to this Sense, the Pointing of the Greek should be, ὁ κτῶμενος γυναῖκα, ἐνάρχειται κτήσεως βοηθὸν καὶ αὐτὸν, καὶ σῦλον ἀναπαύσεως. The Orient. Versions give this by way of Advice, and such as rally the matrimonial State, or indulge themselves in criminal Liberties in Celibacy, would do well to remember it, *Inter præcipuas possessiones tuas posside uxorem bonam, adjumentum enim est tibi simile.*

Ver. 25. *Where no Hedge is, there the Possession is spoiled; and he that hath no Wife, will wander up and down mourning.* As by the breaking down the Fence of a Vineyard, all they that go by, pluck off the Grapes, and the wild Boar out of the Wood doth root it up, and the wild Beasts of the Field devour it; so fares it with his House, who is without a proper Help-mate, to order and direct his domestick Concerns; all things are in Confusion for want of Management, and without a careful superintending Eye his Substance is in danger of being devoured by Strangers. And thus the Syr. *Ubi non adest sepes, racemabuntur vineæ; & ubi non adest uxor, omnia detecta sunt ac dilapidata.* A Man so solitary and alone, is obliged either to leave all things at random, or to trust wholly to Servants, whose Fidelity is not always to be depended on. But in a well regulated Family, where a prudent Woman presides, such Inconveniencies and Disorders are prevented. Whilst her Husband is abroad, and attending publick Business, and providing what is necessary in his Sphere, she discreetly orders Affairs at home, and looketh so well to the Ways of her Household, that the Heart of her Husband



Husband can safely trust in her without any Apprehension of Waste or Spoil.

Ver. 26. *Who will trust a Thief well appointed, that skippeth from City to City? So who will believe [trust] a Man that hath no House, and lodgeth wheresoever the Night taketh him?* i. e. An unmarried Man, being always unsettled, is esteemed but little better than a Vagrant; as he hath no Wife, no little Family to engage him to be at home, and to endear him to it, he is vague, and often wandering abroad, in Danger of falling into loose Company, of being tempted to Incontinence, and, which has sometimes happened, injuring the Honour of the Family he is admitted into. The Advice therefore here is, say *Mess. of Port-Royal*, that such, for Prevention sake, should marry, as *St. Paul* advises those, *οἱ ἐν ἐκκλησίαις*, who do not contain, (for so the Words should be rendred) *qui non se continent*. *Vulg.* for it is better to enter into that holy State with chaste Intentions, than to be exposed to the Dangers, and criminal Liberties which usually attend a wandering and unsettled Life. The Question here proposed, supposes such, who treacherously attempt by private Intrigues, to injure the Honour of others, to be at least as bad, and detestable as Thieves, who lie in wait for their Prey, and are always ready to seize upon another's Property on every Occasion that presents itself. And indeed the *Orient.* Versions instead of *ἀνην* put *Adolescens cælebs*. It may not be amiss to observe, that in ancient Times such as had no Wife or Family, no fixed Dwelling, or certain Way of Life, were looked upon as loose and disorderly Persons, as suspicious Vagabonds or Strollers, not fit to be trusted, lying where or with whom they could, and therefore spoken of in Terms of great Reproach, especially among the *Jews*, all of whom married at a proper Age, and thought it both to their Credit and Advantage, to be settled in that State.

## C H A P. XXXVII.

Ver. 1. **E**VERY Friend saith, I am his Friend also: But there is a Friend which is only a Friend in Name.] *Aristotle* has well defined Friendship to be, *Medietas inter assentationem & inimicitiam*. The true Friend, who appears such in all his Actions, makes not loud or reiterated Profession of his Friendship, nor indeed has he any Occasion: The Loss of such a one, whether by Death, or some unhappy Misunderstanding, is a Misfortune that affects a Man in the most sensible Part: The Flatterer attempts to gain your Affections by pretending to be your real Friend, or Admirer, though he is only so in Appearance, and for his own Ends; his Favour and Continuance is precarious. Adversity shews the Cheat. *In adversitate ad mortem usque non*

*persistit.* Arab. As if the Copy, which those Translators used, read Ver. 2. *ἐκ ἐν λυπη* *μῶς ἐως θανάτου*. Even an open Enemy is preferable to one, who, under the Mask of Friendship, lies in wait to do Hurt, and while his Words are smoother than Oil, has Mischief and War in his Heart.

Ver. 3. O wicked Imagination! Whence camest thou in to cover the Earth with Deceit? i. e. O dire and wicked Hypocrisy! from what cursed Origin didst thou spring, from what infernal Region camest thou up to sow Discord and Mischief among Mankind? This Exclamation seems forced from this Writer, either by what he personally suffered from some pretended Friend; or was, as some conjecture, occasioned by the Persecution of the *Jews*, under *Ptolemy Lagi*, who was once, seemingly, their great Friend. Or it might arise from a Reflection, how general the Vice of Hypocrisy was become, even so general as to cover the Earth, and infect all the habitable Parts of it.

Ver. 5. *There is a Companion which helpeth his Friend for the Belly.* *Φίλων συμπονεῖ.* Will labour with, or for, his Friend. *Drusus* understands it in the Sense of grieving, that he will be concerned, or at least seem so, upon any Accident which happens to his Friend. And so the *Vulg. Sodalis amico condolet*, sympathizes, or takes Part in his Grief or Sufferings; but his Concern is for himself, and his own Interest; his Fears and Apprehensions are not for his Friend, but for his own Support and Subsistence; it is his Table, more than the Man himself, that he is really concerned for. *Grotius* renders, *Collaborat in iis quæ ad ventrem pertinent*, that the Parasite spares no Pains to provide for, and feed his Belly.

*Ibid.* And taketh up the Buckler against the Enemy.] This seems the Character of a true Friend, and so the *Syr.* makes it, *Bonus est amicus, qui pugnat contra inimicum, & tenet clypeum*; but as this Sense suits not with the former Part of the Verse, nor with the preceding one, which is the Counterpart of this, *Grotius* prefers a quite contrary one, viz. Such a Counterfeit will not take the Buckler in his Friend's Behalf, nor stand by, or protect him in the Time of Danger. There is also another Sense of this Place, that when the Enemy is present, which is the marginal Reading, he will take up the Buckler to fight against him whom he formerly followed for his own Convenience and Advantage. This is preferred by *Drusus*, which *Camerarius* favours in his Rendering, *Scutum sumet pro hoste*, i. e. He will take his Buckler to assist the Enemy.

Ver. 6. Forget not thy Friend in thy Mind.] *Drusus* thinks the original Reading was, Forget not a Friend after thine own Heart, or one according to thine own Mind, and that the Grandson probably mistook *γ* for *δ*, and so rendred *in thy Mind*, instead of, according to thy Mind. Or the



Sense may be, Forget not thy Friend in thy Prosperity, when things go according to thy Mind, *dans la joye de v<sup>otre</sup> ame*, says Calmet.

Ver. 7. *Every Counsellor extolleth Counsel, but there is some that counselleth for himself.*

Ver. 8. *Beware of a Counsellor, and know before what need he hath . . . lest he cast the Lot upon thee.*] A false Friend extolleth his own Counsel, will boast of his Ability and Inclination to serve you, whereas his Advice aims only at his own Interest. Consider what selfish Ends he may have in View, and that his Forwardness to advise you, may not be owing to any sincere Regard for you, but to make a Prey of you, and to draw you into some Mischief. The Syriac rendering is more explicit, *A consiliario iniquo cave tibi, & nosce prius quid requirat, ne dolo malo te circumveniat.* μήποδ βαλὴ ἐνὶ σοὶ κλῆρον. Grotius ingeniously conjectures, that the true Reading here is *καλῆρον*, *durum aliquid*, which Dr. Grabe likewise prefers, and it is confirmed by the Vulgate, *Ne forte mittat sudem in terram*, i. e. lest he throw some Impediment, or stumbling Block in the Way, and encourage thee to go on in it, in order to entrap thee, and then laugh at thy Fall and Disgrace.

Ver. 10. *Consult not with one that suspecteth thee: And hide thy Counsel from such as envy thee.*] i. e. Ask not Counsel of thy Enemy, nor communicate any Secret to such as do not wish you well. And thus the Arab. *Ne consilium petas ab inimico tuo ulla in re, & cetera eum arcanum tuum.* One would think this Piece of Advice was almost needless, and that there could be no Occasion to admonish any not to consult with an Enemy, or such as do not bear them Goodwill: But there are Persons who are too unwary in this respect, and because they intend no Harm themselves, are not willing to suspect any from other People; and others who make Confidants of all they meet with, without considering whom they trust, or what may be the Consequence. The Caution therefore of the wise Man here is very necessary, neither to consult with, nor open your Mind to, others, without being assured of their Fidelity, and likewise of their Respect and Regard for you, lest by an imprudent Application to improper Persons, who perhaps through some Jealousy inwardly hate you, you put yourself in the Power of such, as will never promote your Interest, and will make an ill-natured Use of what you have communicated, the first Opportunity.

Ver. 11. *Neither consult with a Woman, touching her of whom she is jealous.*] See ch. xxvi. 6. i. e. with a Wife, for so Grotius understands γυνή, about her Rival, ἀνίστημι, Lev. xviii. 18. where it means another or second Wife, (Polygamy being customary, and allowed among the Jews) who having a Jealousy of the other, will say or advise

something to her Injury or Disadvantage. As was the Case of Peninnah and Hannah, the former of whom is expressly called, 1 Sam. i. 6. the other's Adversary, and is represented as taking a Pleasure in vexing her. This may also be extended to others, not espoused, who are Rivals any Way, either in Trade or Science, Profession or Invention, Wit or Beauty, between whom, as there usually is a Jealousy, if not an open Disagreement, so a fair and impartial Account is not to be expected, nor a Character or Judgment formed from thence. Ibid. *Nor with a Merchant, concerning Exchange.* Refer not the Exchange of your Goods. i. e. the Value to be allowed for them, to the sole Judgment of the Merchant, who will not tell you honestly the true Price of them. The Vulg. seems to understand this of Freight, or Exportation, the Difficulty or Danger of which the Merchant will enlarge upon, that he may ask the more. Briefly the Sense is, In Selling be not directed by the Buyer, nor in Buying, by the Seller. Ibid. *Nor with an envious Man, of Thankfulness; nor with an unmerciful Man, touching Kindness.* By βάρκαρος is meant the covetous Man, who having no Sentiments of Honour, Generosity, or Gratitude towards Benefactors of any Sort, will discourage Acts of Kindness and Liberality in others. He is always ready to receive Favours, but never disposed to return them: And as the unmerciful Man has no Tenderness in his Nature, nor Bowels of Pity, he will neither relieve Objects in Distress himself, nor recommend any to the Charity of others, and is the last to be consulted about Ways and Means of doing Good. Ibid. *Nor with an Hireling for a Year, of finishing Work:* Who, being assured of his Salary, will not trouble himself about Dispatch, nor hasten to finish any Piece of Work. The Advice in general here is, not to consult with Persons that are prejudiced, and have some private Ends of their own to serve.

Ver. 13. *And let the Counsel of thine own Heart stand, for there is no Man more faithful unto thee than it.*] The Sense of this Verse, as connected with y<sup>e</sup> 12. according to Calmet is, Endeavour to free and disengage your Heart from all Passion, Prejudice, and Self-love, and to conduct yourself according to the Rules of Piety and Justice, and you will want no other Director. You will find Light enough in yourself to determine you how to act. That which disqualifies us, and renders us incapable of proceeding and judging as we ought, is our excessive Self-love; we suffer ourselves to be swayed and influenced by Passion, or Prejudice; and when this is the Case, a Man is no more in a Condition to judge what is true and right, than the Eye, when it is obscured with a thick Film, can distinguish Objects clearly. Or thus, Chuse one according to your own Mind,



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Mind, and be advised by him, for you will never find any Person so faithful to you, as a true and disinterested Friend. Or, according to others, the Sense may be, Though you are acquainted with many, be intimate only with a good and pious Person; let him be to thee as your second Self, consult freely with him, for you will find none more faithful, or more improving. A good Man is often more enlightened, and, through the Grace afforded him, of an Understanding superior to other Instructors. Thus the Psalmist, *I have more Understanding than the Aged, because I keep thy Commandments.* Psal. cxix.

Ver. 14. *For a Man's Mind is some time wont to tell him more than seven Watchmen, that sit above in an high Tower.* The Sense of this Verse differs not greatly from the former, and is, that a Person who is a true and real Friend, and thoroughly in your Interest, is more capable of assisting you, and of giving you good and proper Advice, than the most able and experienced Counsellors. As he knows better your Wants, your Dispositions, the State of your Affairs, and has your Interest more at Heart than a Stranger, he will direct you best, and give his Advice the most effectually and cordially. The Vulg. inserts *Sancti*, understanding it of a good Man particularly; and the Context, says Calmet, both requires and justifies the Addition: for as there is no Knowledge or Counsel against, so neither is there without the most High. He communicates Illumination, and makes Discoveries to such as faithfully serve, and truly love him, sooner than to any others. And therefore, as is advised in the next Verse, we must pray to God with Faith and Perseverance, and address ourselves to him for his Direction and Assistance, before we apply to our Friends for theirs. For Men do but imperfectly guess at what is right, but 'tis God that takes us by the Hand, and leads us into the right Way, and makes us go on successfully in it, by the Light and Influence of his Grace, as being himself the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

Ver. 17. *The Countenance is a Sign of changing of the Heart.* ἵχνος ἀλλοιώσεως καρδίας πρόσωπον. Some Copies have ἵχνος ἀλλοιώσεως χαρῆς πρόσωπον, i. e. One sees upon the Countenance, whether the Heart is gay or sorrowful, content or afflicted. There is also another Reading, ἵχνος ἀλλοιώσεως καρδίας τέσσαρα μέρη ἀναλέλει, ἀγαθόν, κακόν, κ. τ. λ. which Grotius prefers, and is countenanced by the Vulgate, i. e. There are four Things which make such an Impression upon the Heart, as appeareth in the very Countenance; Hope and Fear, Life and Death. Bossuet furnishes still another Sense, viz. that in every Action or Affair of Consequence, the Mind is as it were in Suspence for a Time, and cautiously examines four Particulars: whether the Thing is like to be

advantageous or otherwise, good or evil, sinful or allowable, and the Occasion of Life or Death to us.

Ver. 19. *There is one that is wise and teacheth many, and yet is unprofitable to himself.* This Observation holds more in moral than in civil Life; for in the latter, each endeavours to be most profitable to himself. The Truth of it wants not much to be illustrated, and yet is too notorious to be denied. There are too many of this Sort of wise Men, says Calmet, who are wise only with respect to others, who abound in Knowledge, and yet have not the Sense to make use of, and apply it to their own Advantage and Happiness; who deliver useful Precepts of Instruction, and have the Satisfaction to please and edify others, and yet themselves continue unfruitful. But to what Purpose is Learning or Knowledge, if it terminates only in Speculation, and is not accompanied with a good Life? What signifies the understanding all Mysteries, and all Knowledge, or even speaking with the Tongues of Men, and of Angels, if, after preaching savingly to others, and being admired for his great Accomplishments, the Man himself, for his evil Conduct, be at length a Cast-away? Unhappy in so abusing the Tree of Knowledge, as thereby to fall short of the Tree of Life. Or possibly the Author may here condemn those who place Learning and Knowledge in such Things, as are not perfective of their better Part, who prefer profane to sacred History, and human to divine Literature.

Ver. 20. *There is one that sheweth Wisdom in Words, and is bated; he shall be destitute of all Food.* Ver. 21. *For Grace is not given him from the Lord, because he is deprived of all Wisdom.* Many Copies instead of σοφῆς have σοφίας, as is the marginal Reading; but that whole Clause seems to be an Interpolation, from the like Words in the next Verse. By σοφίζομενος ἐν λόγοις all the Commentators, with St. Austin, understand a cunning Sophister, who deals in Subtleties, who makes a vain Shew and Ostentation of Knowledge, without the true Use and Power of it; one who uses captious and ensnaring Arguments, true in Appearance only, to impose upon Men, and lead them into Error, instead of enlightening, and improving them. As the Design of such is not to teach true Wisdom, or to mend the Heart, nor so much to rectify Mens Passions and Wills, as to cheat and bewilder the Understanding, their Knowledge is vain and trifling, and the Study of it contemptible. 'Tis a Science falsely so called, devoid of the Grace of God, and of his Blessing, which he has promised, not to Learning, as such, much less to a vain Pretence of it, but to Regularity and Goodness, and a diligent Meditation in his Law.

Ver. 22. *Another is wise to himself, and the Fruits of Understanding are commendable*  
in



in his Mouth. Ver. 23. *A wise Man instructeth his People, and the Fruits of his Understanding fail not.*] In the two foregoing Verses our Author has described a wise Man who is so in Appearance only, or in outward Discourse; whose Wisdom not being rightly employed, and for want of other Recommendations to go along with it, is useless and unprofitable. Here he describes a truly wise Men, who is inwardly such, and wise to the best Purposes: who makes Use of the Parts God has blessed him with, as well to edify himself, as to instruct others, and is, as the *Vulg.* excellently expresses it, *Anima sue sapiens*. True Wisdom is in order either to our own, or others Happiness; and to be truly wise, is to be wise unto the great Purposes of Salvation. Whatever Knowledge contributes not to this, is beside the Mark that ought principally to be aimed at. "The careful and good Pastor furnishes himself with Knowledge for his own Use and Direction, and communicates it liberally and painfully for the Benefit of others. As he rightly divides the Word of Truth, he feeds his Charge with sound Doctrine, and has the Pleasure to see his Labours succeed, and the Work of the Lord prosper in his Hands. And if he wants Sciences humanly acquired, his affectionate and real Concern for the Welfare of Souls, will abundantly compensate that; he will yet know more than human Wisdom can teach him, because he has that Master within him that teaches Man Knowledge." *Bona De via compend. ad Deum*, p. 172. As he has laid the Foundation of Religion deep in the Hearts of his Hearers, and the Seed has had the Fortune to fall into good Ground, it withereth not, as soon as it is sprung up, but bringeth forth Fruit to Perfection, some an hundred-fold, some sixty-fold, some thirty-fold. By *καρπὸς πιστῶν, fructus fideles*, *Vulg.* we may also understand, that his Instructions are hearty and sincere, and such as may be depended upon; that he is not as many that corrupt the Word of God, or handle it deceitfully, but in Sincerity, and by the Manifestation of the Truth, commending himself to every Man's Conscience in the Sight of God. 2 Cor. iv. 2.

Ver. 25. *The Days of the Life of Man may be numbered, but the Days of Israel are innumerable.*] The Days of Man are ordinarily short, and the Reputation acquired in Life passes away with it; but the true *Israelites* live for evermore, and their Name shall not be blotted out. According to *Calmet* the Sense is, that though the Life of a wise Man is short and limited, and consists only of a certain Number of Days, like that of other Men, yet the Remembrance of him shall not die, it shall continue as long as

Israel itself; as is expressed more clearly in the following Verse. Or it may mean, according to the Jewish Conceit, that God will never cast off the Seed of Israel, but they shall always be his peculiar People, and their Law never fail or pass away; which the Jews assured themselves, especially with regard to the moral Precepts of it, would be perpetual. *Philo* has expressed their Sentiments very strongly on this Head, τὰ τέταρτα μόνον βέβαια, ἀσάλευτα, ἀνεγείδαντα, κ. τ. λ. *Hujus unius [Mosis] firmæ, immotæ, inconcussæ perstiterunt leges, tanquam sigillis ipsius naturæ obsignatæ, jam inde usque ab illo die, quo primum scriptæ sunt, ad hanc memoriam, ac porro mansuras in posterum spes est, & inveteraturas omnibus sæculis, dum Sol, Luna, Cælum ipsum, mundus denique universus extabit.* De Mose, L. ii. Joseph. Antiq. L. iii. c. 8. Matt. v. 8. Luke xvi. 17.

Ver. 27. *My Son, prove thy Soul in thy Life, and see what is evil for it, and give not that unto it.* Ver. 28. *For all Things are not profitable for all Men, neither hath every Soul Pleasure in every thing.*] According to *Calmet* the Sense is, Learn and know your own Power and what you are capable of doing; but undertake nothing before you have made trial of your own Strength, according to that of the Poet, *Versate diu quid ferre recusent, Quid valeant humeri*: Or, as others understand, In every Action or Affair of Consequence, examine principally whether the Thing is like to be advantageous, or otherwise to you, whether it be good or evil in itself, forbidden or allowable, and so may either be the Occasion of Life or Death, Happiness or Misery to you. Or perhaps, the Meaning may be, which seems countenanced by what follows, Consider what agrees best with your own Health, and indulge not in any thing which you have Reason to think will be injurious to it; regard not so much what may please your Gout or Palate, as what may contribute most to the Continuance or Improvement of Health. *Mess. of Port Royal* understand this of Men's different Natures and Dispositions; that it is not sufficient to give good Advice in general, without great Skill and Circumspection to apply it properly, according to their different Capacities, and respective Qualities of Body and Mind, of Nature and Grace. That there is in each Man, as in the several Sorts of Earth, a different Soil, or Nature, and partaking of different Qualities; one has his Gift after this manner, and another after that. And as Allowance must be made for the different Sorts of Grounds, which are not equally susceptible of the same Culture and Improvement, so Advice or Instruction must be diversified, and suited according to the Nature and Wants of those to whom we give it.



## C H A P. XXXVIII.

Ver. 1. **H**ONOUR a Physician with the Honour due unto him, for the Uses which you may have of him: for the Lord hath created him.] The Precept of honouring all Men, 1 Pet. ii. 17. varies according to the several Degrees whereby Persons are more or less beneficial; but more is here intended than civil Honour, it includes Reward; Reward the Physician with a handsome and proper Gratuity, because of the very great Use he is of in Life, in healing the many Distempers incident to it, and that God has appointed him for a general Good. And so τιμή is often used in the *New Testament*, and by the best *Greek Writers*; *Tully* too applies *honos* to a Physician in this Sense, *Epist. Fam.* The Goodness of God cannot be sufficiently admired, which displays itself in proportion to that Multiplicity of Evils and Infirmities to which we are subject, all of which come from the Sin of Man, but the Remedies to cure them from God; and therefore we ought to respect and honour a Profession, whose Original is so exalted and noble, and which contributes so much to the Preservation and Health of human Life.

Ver. 2. For of the Most High cometh Healing.] As it was a prevailing Opinion among the Ancients, that the Gods were the Authors of all Diseases incident to Mankind, in some of which the Hand of God was more particularly discernible, so they looked upon Physick as a Gift from Heaven, and ranked their first Physicians in the Number of their Gods. Hence the Heathens ascribed the Original of it to *Apollo*, and erected Statues and Temples to *Æsculapius*. The *Hebrews* attribute to God himself, or however to *Adam* as taught by him, the Invention of Physick, and make *Moses*, either by Inspiration, or by what he learned among the *Egyptians*, to have excelled in this Art. Healing may also be said to come of the Most High, as he created Medicines, *ψ 4.* out of the Earth, and is the Author of all their sanative Virtues; for though God cursed the Earth, and made it produce Thorns and Briars, yet he as greatly blessed it too, by giving a restorative Power, a medicinal Virtue and Efficacy to Roots and Plants, for the Health of Mankind, and for the healing of the Nations. Physick may also in this further Sense be ascribed to the Deity, as a natural Sagacity is required in such as arrive at a great Perfection in it. And thus the *Orient. Versions*, *Dono Dei sapit medicus.* *Virgil* intimates, that Application and Industry, however necessary in this Profession, are not alone sufficient without a happy natural Genius, which peculiarly fits Men to shine in this Art, and is derived immediately from the Deity. It was by the Favour of *Apollo*, that *Iapis* so excelled; if he had not been

*Phæbo ante alios dilectus*, he had never arrived to such a Perfection in that Faculty.

Ibid. He shall receive Honour of the King. Ver. 3. The Skill of the Physician shall lift up his Head, and in the Sight of great Men he shall be in Admiration.] Some Copies have ἀΐψαι δόμα, He shall receive a Gift from the King; and so the *Marginal Reading* is, which is confirmed by the *Vulg.* and *Oriental Versions*. That Physicians of Note and Eminence anciently had large Salaries fixed upon them by great Men and Princes, appears from *Budæus*, *Sex millia ducentos quinquaginta aureos annua mercede celebres multos medicos Romæ a principibus habuisse.* De Affe. And our Author here seems to speak of what he saw or heard was done in his Time at Court by the Kings of *Egypt*; and however they might be less esteemed elsewhere, yet among the *Jews* they were in high Reputation; and the Dignity of their Profession was such among the *Athenians*, that by an express Law none of servile Condition might undertake it. *Cujac. Observ. L. xvii. c. 27. Pliny's Nat. Hist. L. xxix. c. 1.* There are some Passages of Scripture too which seem to prove that formerly among the *Hebrews*, as well as *Greeks*, Persons of the highest Rank practised Physick, and that it was thought an Accomplishment not even beneath a Prince. *Is. iii. 6, 7. Hos. v. 13. Pliny, L. xxiv. c. 1.*

Ver. 4. The Lord hath created Medicines out of the Earth, and he that is wise will not abhor them.] As God has given to Medicines their healing Qualities, which, applied by a skilful Physician, are of sovereign Use, and even in common Hands have been often found serviceable, a Man of Wisdom or Modesty should not decry the Benefit of them, nor in Sickness decline the Use of them. There are two Reasons assignable for the Commendation here given to the Art of Physick, and for the wise Man's dwelling upon the Power and Virtue of Medicine: *First*, To beget an Abhorrence of magical and superstitious Remedies, or Charms, as they are called, sought after, and confided in, by the *Vulgar*, though God has forbidden the Use of them in his Law. *Secondly*, To oppose the Mistake of those, who on false Grounds, and without any good Reason, reject the Use of all kinds of Medicines; a sort of Fatalists, who think, if a Man's predestinated Time is come, as their Expression is, all Applications will be useless; and if it is not come, he will assuredly do well without them. Both these Extremes are to be condemned. As God has blessed the Earth with medicinal Plants and Vegetables, and has imparted Light and Skill to the Physician to apply them occasionally, Recourse must not be had to Remedies neither permitted, nor natural; nor must the Use of what is really serviceable for the Recovery and Preservation of Health, be rashly rejected, under the Pretext of its being abused by ignorant



ignorant Pretenders to the Science. To which I must add, that, though great Things are deservedly spoken of Physick, and of the surprizing Cures wrought by it, yet must we not wholly rely upon, or put too much Confidence in Medicines, as King *Asa* did, who fought not unto God, but to the Physicians only; but should expect our Cure from God's Blessing upon the Use of known and approved Means.

Ver. 5. *Was not the Water made sweet with Wood, that the Virtue thereof might be known?*] The Author of this Book seems to have been of Opinion that *Moses* sweetened the Waters of *Marah*, by the natural Virtue of a certain Wood; and indeed it seems necessary to understand him in this Sense, because he brings this Instance to prove the Power and Efficacy of natural Remedies. A very learned Writer disapproves of this Opinion for the following Reasons: 1. That we cannot suppose, that even the largest Tree steeped in a Lake should immediately communicate a sufficient Quantity of its natural Sweetness to correct the bitter Taste of the Waters enough for the Occasions of so many hundred thousand People. 2. That there is great Reason to believe that there was no Tree in those Parts, of that Virtue. Had there been such a one, after the Virtue of it was thus known and recorded, it would certainly have been much used by others, and enquired after, particularly by the Naturalists; but though *Strabo*, *Diodorus Siculus*, and *Pliny* have all remarked, that there were bitter Waters in these Parts of the World, yet they knew of no Trees of such a medicinal Quality to correct the Taste of them. 3. Had this been a received Opinion of the Jewish Writers, *Josephus* would certainly have had it; but he has a particular Fancy of his own, that these Waters were made sweet by dashing them about at the Bottom of a Well, which purified them from its mineral Taste. *Antiq. L. iii. c. 1.* But this seems to be a Reason, rather why the Taste should be stronger. *Philo*, who was well acquainted with the Opinion of our Author, doubts the Truth of it, and queries whether the Wood here used had naturally such a Quality, or whether God was not pleased to give it such a Virtue for this particular Occasion. *De Vita Mos. L. i.* For these Reasons it seems probable, that God, who is the Author of Nature, either then gave such a medicinal Virtue to the Wood, or that he then first revealed to *Moses* the Virtue of such a Tree, before quite unknown, and undiscovered ever since; and that the true rendring of the Greek, *εἰς τὸ γνωστῆναι τὴν ἰσχύα αὐτοῦ*, is, that his Power, i. e. the Power of God, might hereby be known. And so the Orient. Versions understand it, which have, *ut nosceretur potentia Dei*. See *2 Esdr. i. 22, 23.* This Sense the Words will very well bear, and the Objections against the other Interpretation are thereby removed. *Shuckford's Connect. Vol. III.*

Ver. 7. *With such doth he heal Men, and taketh away their Pains.* Ver. 8. *Of such doth the Apothecary make a Confection: and of his Works there is no End, and from him is Peace over all the Earth.*] i. e. The Physician, by the Virtue of Simples and other Medicines performs great Cures; for so I understand *ψ 7.* rather than of God; and to this agree all the Versions. Thus *Vulg. In his curans mitigabit dolorem*; and the *Syr. Per ea medicus recreat a doloribus*; and the *Arab. more explicitly, Per ea medicus quoque homines curat a morbis, annuente Dea.* The following Verse we may understand either of God, or of the *μυροφός*, as applied to God. The Sense is, that the Works of God are infinite, and the Virtues, and wonderful Effects of them cannot be sufficiently admired; his Goodness is displayed in, and his Mercy and Blessing is over all his Works; and so the *Vulg.* with the old *English* Versions understand it. As applied to the Apothecary, who from the Knowledge he has of Plants, Minerals, Fruits, Spices, &c. can make of them a most agreeable and refreshing Composition, *μύγμα*, see *John x. 39.* diffusing Health and Comfort, the Sense is, that a Person that has traversed the vegetable Kingdom, and is well skilled in the Nature of Simples, can from thence compose a safe and easy Remedy against many dangerous Diseases, the very Odour of which shall by its grateful and refreshing Smell in some Measure relieve the Sick, and contribute to the Cure; for so *εἰρήνη* may be understood here, as equivalent to *ἀνάρτασις*, *ψ 14.* Or instead of it we may read with *Grotius*, *Ἐπειτα, i. e. Neque absolverit opus suum, quin inde late se diffundat dulcis aura.*

Ver. 9. *My Son, in thy Sickness be not negligent: but pray unto the Lord, and he will make thee whole.* Ver. 10. *Leave off from Sin, and order thy Hands aright, and cleanse thy Heart from all Wickedness.*] One sees from several Passages in this Chapter the Notion and Persuasion which prevailed in the Times of this Writer, that all Sickness was a Punishment for some Sin committed. And indeed our common Mortality, or that unavoidable Necessity of dying, to which the whole Species is condemned, and our Passage to it by an Infinity of Accidents and Diseases, is a Consequence of the Sin of our first Parents: but the ancient *Jews* believed, besides this hereditary Fate, that every Evil that happened to us was a Chastisement sent from God for some particular Fault or Crime; hence that Question of the Disciples, *Master, who did sin, this Man, or his Parents, that he was born blind?* *ch. ix. 2.* As it was a received Opinion therefore that Sin was the Occasion of Sickness, the wise Man here well advises to leave off from Sin, to avoid the Punishment of it, and to be in such a Frame and Disposition as to hope for, and expect Pardon. *St. Austin's* Reflection on this Passage is fine and apposite: In the Time of Sickness, when the Punishment of Sin



Sin lies upon us, we should retire into our Breasts, and consider with ourselves what Sin or Defilement has probably drawn down such Affliction upon us; should humble ourselves under the Hand of an avenging God, and acknowledge that we suffer less than we deserve; that he has dealt with us, not as a severe Judge, who would condemn us, but as a merciful Father who would reclaim us.

Ver. 11. *Give a sweet Savour and a Memorial of fine Flour, and make a fat Offering, as not being.*] *ὡς μὴ ὑπάρχων*, as a dead Man, according to the Margin. Grotius reads *ὡς μὴ ὑπάρξων*. Badwell, and some others make the Sense to be, Give your Offerings to God, as not being yourself the original Proprietor of them; but having received them at first from him, return them to him by way of Acknowledgment. But this Sense seems too general, and is not countenanced by the Context. Calmet's Interpretation is preferable, viz. In thy Sickness offer readily unto the Lord, as one that is leaving the World, and has but little Hopes of Life, and endeavour to make your Peace with him by Sacrifices, and devout Oblations to him in Prayer; but think not yourself altogether in so desperate a Condition, as to hinder you from making Use of proper Medicines towards your Recovery. Trust in God does not supersede or exclude all Application of Medicines, which God has created and appointed for Man's Help and Use; nor on the other Hand ought the Opinion, which one has of a Physician, to weaken the sick Man's Reliance on God, or hinder his pious Breathings to the Fountain of Health and Life, and the great Physician of Souls.

Ver. 12. *Then give Place to the Physician, for the Lord hath created him.*] As Disease and Sickness is often sent for the Punishment of Sin, and is a merciful Call to Reformation and Amendment, so nothing can more contribute to the Removal of the Affliction, than to take away the Cause of it: to pray therefore unto God in Time of Sickness, and make hearty and sincere Resolutions against Sin, is the way to regain his Favour, and the most probable means to qualify the Patient, through the Blessing of God, to receive Benefit from the skilful Applications of the Physician. We are not here advised first to send for the Physician, and when we despair of his Help, and are breathing our last, then to send for the Priest, when our Weakness perhaps has made him useless; but first to make our Peace with God by the ghostly Offices of the Priest, and then give Place to the Physician. Which Method our Saviour has also taught us by his Method of Cure, who, when any came to him for bodily Cures, first healed the Soul of Sin before he removed the bodily Infirmary, *Matt. ix. 2.* teaching us, that Sin is the Occasion of Sickness, and that the Cure and Removal thereof is first to be looked

after. This Order the holy *Psalmist* intimates, when speaking of God, *Psal. ciii. 3.* he says, *Who forgiveth all thy Sins, and healeth all thine Infirmities.* There is an excellent Canon to this Purpose, *Decretal. L. v. Tit. 38. c. 13.* "By this present Decree we strictly charge and command all Physicians, that, when they shall be called to sick Persons, they first of all admonish, and persuade them to send for the Physician of Souls; that after Provision hath been made for the spiritual Health of the Soul, they may the more hopefully proceed to the Use of corporal Medicines: for when the Cause is taken away, the Effect may be expected the sooner to follow.

Ibid. *Let him not go from thee, for thou hast need of him.* Ver. 13. *There is a Time when in their Hands there is good Success.*] Grotius points the Greek thus, καὶ γὰρ αὐτῶν χρεῖα ἐστὶν ὅτε καὶ αὐτοὶ ἐν χερσὶν αὐτῶν ἐνδοία, quia opera ejus sunt necessaria, quando in manus illorum incurras: Et saepe adest operi ejus successus, & οὐδία, not & οὐδία, as the common Editions have. See *Prov. xxv. 15.* Though Medicines are uncertain in their Operation, and do not always reach the Case, and effect a Cure, and though our Lives are undoubtedly in the Hands of God, who can take us out of the World when, and in what manner, he pleases, notwithstanding any Precautions or Remedies we may use to preserve, or prolong Life, yet are not these Reasons sufficient to make us reject the Use and Application of Medicines, which God himself has created out of the Earth, to be used with Thanksgiving, and has appointed as the ordinary and stated Means to restore Health, under the Direction, and in the Hands of an able Physician.

Ver. 14. *For they also shall pray unto the Lord, that he would prosper that which they give for Ease, and Remedy to prolong Life.*] A good Physician will not depend only upon the Greatness of his Skill, the Secrets of his Art, and the Efficacy of his Medicines, but will occasionally invoke the Assistance of Heaven, to prosper him in his Profession: he will live in a constant Sense of his own Dependance upon God, and recommend himself and others often to his Favour and Mercy. He will add Piety to his Knowledge, and when intent upon doing good, may be considered as a Guardian Angel to all around him. The *Vulg.* which renders, χάριν βιάσας, propter conversationem illorum, See *Acts xxvi. 4.* seems to intimate, that God will prosper the Prescriptions of a skilful Physician, who is himself also a good Man, sooner than of any other, as he aims chiefly to please God, both by his own Conduct, and his Endeavours to lessen or remove the Misery and Infirmities of his Creatures, referring the Success of them to the Blessing of Heaven. This Notion, that Success in Physick depended upon Application to the Deity, was common among the Heathens, and may, without



without Violence be inferred from the Story of *Iapis*: it is plain he relied not on his own Skill only, but had secretly invoked the God of Medicine while he was busied in the Cure. The Words, *Nibil auctor Apollo Subvenit*, sufficiently imply this. He altogether disclaims all Pretences to personal Merit in the Cure, and denies that Art in general, or his own in particular, did, or could perform it.

*Non hæc humanis opibus, non arte magistra Proveniunt, neque te, Ænea, mea dextera servat.*

Æn. L. xii.

He acknowledges, that it was the Interposition of a divine Power that had effected the Cure, without which all his Application and Skill had been fruitless. Nor is this the only Place where *Virgil* joins these two Qualifications together, the Skill of Remedies and Medicines, and a Dependance upon the Gods for Success; particularly, where he mentions *Hippolitus*, as brought to Life by the Favour of *Diana*, and the Skill of *Æsculapius*.

—*Pæoniis revocatum herbis, & amore Dianæ.* L. vii. According to *Mess. of Port Royal*, the wise Man here, and in the Context, points out the spiritual Physicians of the Soul, who, sensible of its many Infirmities and Diseases, should apply often to the Throne of Grace in behalf of others, that they may be healed and saved, that God would crown their Labours, and bless the engrafted Word, with all Joy and Comfort in believing, and with the Power of an endless Life: and particularly in Times of publick Calamity, or epidemical Sicknes, should, by the powerful Ministry of Prayers, and holy Intercessions, stand between the Dead and the Living, and stop the Progress of the destroying Angel.

Ver. 15. *He that sinneth before his Maker, let him fall into the Hand of the Physician.* The Intention of the Author here is not to undervalue Physicians, or cast a Reflection upon them, as if it was a Misfortune, and as it were a sort of Curse, to fall into their Hands, of whom such honourable Mention has been made in the preceding Verses; but to intimate, that God will bring upon the Sinner Sicknes and Diseases, and reduce him to such a low and helpless Condition, as to make necessary the help of a Physician, on purpose to convince him of his Weakness and Folly. The common Reading indeed is *ἐμπέσοι* in the Optative Mood, but *ἐμπεσῇ* seems preferable, as the *Vulgate* has it, *Qui delinquit coram eo qui fecit eum, incidet in manus medici*, and the *Syr.* *Qui peccat coram Deo, traditur in manus medici*. It means only, that the Sinner shall be visited with Sicknes, and that, without the Help of Art, or even with it, he shall with Difficulty recover, and shall be given over unto Death and Perdition, if he shew no Signs of Contrition upon his Bed of languishing. One sees by this Passage, that this Author thought that Sicknes was

a Punishment sent by God for past Sins. And so it appears from our Saviour's Charge to the impotent Man, *Sin no more, lest a worse Thing come unto thee.* John v. 14.

Ver. 16. *My Son, let Tears fall down over the Dead, and begin to lament, as if thou hadst suffered great Harm thyself, and then cover his Body according to the Custom, and neglect not his Burial.* Humanity and Religion equally require, that we should shed Tears, and pay our last Debt to Friends and Relations deceased; these are the only Instances in which we can give Proofs of our Tenderness and Respect for them. Besides the ordinary Tribute of Tears, the wise Man probably means by *θρήνοι*, publick and solemn Mourning, and Lamentation in Memory of the deceased, in which his good Deeds and Praise were rehearsed or sang; *Cane lamentum*, *Syr.* and by *περίσειλον τὸ σῶμα αὐτῆς*, the *Lintea sepulchralia*, or the wrapping the dead Body in Linen, according to the Custom of the Jewish, and other Nations, *John* xi. 44. xix. 40. κατὰ τὴν κείσιν αὐτῆς, *secundum dignitatem ejus*, as *Bossuet* renders, which I should prefer, but that it follows in the next Verse. Our Translators omit αὐτῆς; it would probably be better rendered, According to his Right, or the Rule and Custom in his Case. For *ὑπόμνημα*, as *Grotius* observes here, often signifies Custom, and is commonly translated by *κείμενα* or *κείμενα*. So κατὰ τὸ κείμενα αὐτῶν, 1 *Kings* xviii. 28. ἐπὶ τῷ κείματι αὐτῶν, 2 *Kings* xvii. 33, 34, 40. κατὰ τὴν σύγκεισιν αὐτῶν, *Num.* xxix. 6, 33. κατὰ τὴν κείσιν αὐτῶν, 1 *Chron.* vi. 32. xxiv. 19. and so the *Syr.* translates here, *prout eum decet, i. e.* as is due to him.

Ver. 17. *Weep bitterly and make great Moan, and use Lamentation as he is worthy, and that a Day or two, lest thou be evil spoken of: and then comfort thyself for thy Heaviness.* Though the usual Term for Mourning was seven Days, the Rabbins themselves allowed, and approved of divers Degrees of Mourning; the three first Days they allotted to Grief and Tears, and in the following ones the Sorrow might be somewhat abated. As Man is apt to go into Extremes, the Author on this Occasion advises a prudent Moderation; he approves that the Love, which one had for Persons when alive, should extend unto them even after they are dead, that Care should be taken of burying them, and paying the last Offices to them: he allows that great Mourning should be made for those, who were dear to us as Friends, or related by the closer Ties of Blood; and that we should lament more or less for Persons, according to their respective Merit, lest we give Offence by our Indifference and Insensibility, and should be reproached for want of Affection and Humanity. But at the same Time he sets Bounds to our Grief, and would not have us inconsolable, or give ourselves up, in the Bitterness of Soul, to such an immoderate



rate Degree of Sorrow, as can do the Dead no good, and may do us much hurt. He here condemns those, who, during the Interval of Mourning, so passionately indulged Grief, as to refuse all Comfort, and his Advice briefly is to this Effect, Let Nature prevail for a Day or two, a Concern for the Dead is no ways unbecoming a wise, or good Man: though you cannot suppress the Sentiments of Grief at first, yet endeavour to moderate your Sorrow, and call in Reason and Religion to your Aid. Πένθος probably, as κοπιός and κλαυθμός are mentioned before, relates here to funeral Preparations in general, or the *Epulum funebre* in particular, both of which were according to the Dignity and Circumstances of the Party deceased.

Ver. 19. *In Affliction also Sorrow remaineth; and the Life of the Poor is the Curse of the Heart.*] Some Copies have παραβαίνει λύπη, that Grief passeth away or weareth off by Degrees; but the Reading, which our Translators follow, seems preferable, that in Affliction, ἐπαισώγη, or any grievous Tribulation, such as the Loss of Friends and Relations, Grief sits heavy, and is with Difficulty removed. The *Vulgate* seems to have followed a Copy which had ἀπαγωγή, *abductio*, i. e. that, after the Body is carried out and buried, Grief continueth. The Sense of the whole Verse I conceive is, that Sorrow, when it is deeply rooted, from whatever Cause it arises, whether our own Sickness, or the Death of others, makes even Life itself a Burthen, as a Sense of Poverty often induces the necessitous Person rashly to curse his Fate and Condition. The other Reading, βίος πτωχῆ καὶ καρδίας, *vita pauperis est ex animi sententia*, is neither agreeable to the Context, nor confirmed by Experience.

Ver. 20. *Take no Heaviness to Heart, drive it away, and remember the last End.*  
Ver. 21. *Forget it not, for there is no turning again; thou shalt not do him good, but hurt thyself.*] i. e. Remember Death, which by over much Grief thou mayst hasten, and bring upon thee. Or, according to *Calmet*, When you see others dying, or lying dead before you, give not up yourself to Sadness; remember that you are mortal, as well as they, and that by afflicting yourself, you can neither bring the Dead back, nor exempt yourself from following them. As the Thoughts of Death naturally present themselves, when we are in the House of Mourning, we may draw this Advantage from attending the Obsequies, and paying the last Duty to our Friends, viz. to reflect upon our own Mortality; that we perhaps may be the next that follow, and should therefore prepare ourselves in Time against our great Change. This Advice is of so much Consequence, that the wise Man repeats it a second Time. But though he would have us provide for, he would not have us hasten,

our latter End, by excessive Grief for any beloved Object, when our Tears can neither help him, nor bring him back. In a religious View the deceased Person must be considered upon his Death, in an unalterable and fix'd State, either of Happiness or Misery; if in the former, and he experiences in himself a pleasing Anticipation and Foretaste of Happiness, we are in the wrong to make ourselves uneasy, when he is at Peace and happy. If in the latter State, and his Conscience speaks nothing but Horror and Misery to him, he is indeed to be pitied; but neither ours, nor even his own Tears, will be available to him in that sad and wretched Condition.

Ver. 22. *Remember my Judgment: for thine also shall be so: Yesterday for me, and To-day for thee.*] The wise Man here, to make the stronger Impression upon his Readers, or Pupils, makes the dead or dying Person address the living in these affecting Terms, *Remember my Judgment, &c.* i. e. my Doom, the Sentence of Death that is passed upon me. Κεῖμα is used in this Sense ch. xli. in several Places upon the like Occasion. Or the Sense may be, When you attend at a Funeral, think that the dead Person speaks thus to you in dumb Shew or in a low Voice: Remember the Sentence of Mortality passed upon me; as my present State is, the same will be your Condition soon. To-day was my Turn, To-morrow will be your Visitation; what has happened to me is thine and every Man's Lot. What a fine *Memento* is this to the Living! how much better would this plain, short, instructive Sentence adorn a monumental Stone, than the tedious, fulsome, and often false Inscriptions of modern Epitaphs?

Ver. 23. *When the Dead is at Rest, let his Remembrance rest, and be comforted for him, when his Spirit is departed from him.*] i. e. Dwell not upon his Memory, so as to give yourself fresh Occasion of Grief continually; if Nature upon such Accidents calls forth your Tears, Faith ought soon to stop them, and wash them away. If we have a true Value for our Friend, we ought rather to rejoice than grieve that he is released from a sinful and troublesome World, and is passing from the Miseries of Life, to a State of Rest and Peace. The Rest which the Dead is entred upon, ought to assuage and moderate that afflicting Sense and Regret which we have of his Loss. And we ought to consider, that, if it seems hard and disagreeable to us to be parted and separated from him, 'tis however a Gain and an Advantage to him, that his Soul, being freed from the Body, is disengaged from the many Crosses and Accidents, which are inseparable to Life. The very Sight and Remembrance of one deceased so dear to us, should make us reflect upon our own Death, and bring it present to us; that our Friend,



who is gone before us, being now all pure Spirit, and whose Concern for us now can only be for our Good, says to us silently, Consider my Condition, which will as certainly be yours soon. I have been, and am no more; you now are, but shall shortly cease to be; Yesterday took me away, and this Day may be your last: let your Concern for the Dead lead you to the Thoughts of your own Death, which likewise is inevitable, and so to provide in Time for your future State, that your Death may be only a short Passage to Life eternal.

Ver. 24. *The Wisdom of a learned Man cometh by Opportunity of Leisure: and be that bath little Business shall become wise.*

*Γεγραμμένος* here signifies one learned in explaining the Law, and answering the Difficulties arising concerning the true Sense of it; one, who being bred up in the Knowledge of the Law of God, and the Tradition of the Elders concerning it, taught it in the Schools and Synagogues of the Jews, and judged according to it in the Sanhedrim. Such a one, says this Writer, arrived to his Perfection of Knowledge by a right Employment of his vacant Time. Or the Sense may be, that the Study of Wisdom requires Retirement and Solitude; a Man should divest himself of all other Business and Avocations, who would excel in those Sciences or Callings, which require Meditation and deep Attention. The wise Man's leisure Hours, if they may be so called, is the best and most useful of his Time, and generally produces better Works, than the more publick and active Life of others. This may also be considered in a religious View, *viz.* He that endeavours after heavenly Wisdom, and would gain the Knowledge and Love of God, is fond of Retirement; he banishes from his Heart all earthly Thoughts, and all secular Concerns; his chief Employ and Wish is, to be disentangled from all worldly Incumbrances, that he may be filled with God only: he avoids all, even the most necessary Offices, which may disturb his holy Meditations, and if he is called to a publick Function, he accepts it only that he may thereby impart to others some of that Light, which God, by sweet and secret Communications, has imparted to him.

Ver. 25. *How can he get Wisdom that holdeth the Plough, and that glorieth in the Goad; that driveth Oxen, and is occupied in their Labours, and whose Talk is of Bullocks?* *Καυχώμενος ἐν δόξῃ κέντρῳ*, is the Reading in all the Editions except *Grabe's*; but that Critick prefers *κέντρῳ*, and undoubtedly the true Reading of the Passage is, *ὁ κατὰ τὴν ἀρετὴν, ὃ καυχώμενος ἐν δόξῃ; κέντρῳ βόας ἐλάυνων*, which *Bochart* likewise prefers, and is natural and easy. *Δόρυ κέντρῳ*, *bastile stimuli*, is an unusual Expression, nor is there any Instance of a Goad being so called. This Alteration too is confirmed by the *Vulgate*, which has, *Qui gloriatur in ja-*

*culo, stimulo boves agitatur, &c.* which in the main is right, only it is mistaken in rendering *δόρυ* by *jaculum*, which in this Place has the same Sense of *ἐχέταλη*, *stiva aratri*, or the Plow-Tail. The original Reading in the *Hebrew* probably was *בִּרְחָן*, which signifies *Gladius, Culter, bastile latæ cuspidis, &c.* either of the two latter are applicable to this Place. With respect to *Culter*, 'tis certain the *Romans* called the Plow-share by that Name, to which agrees *Pliny's* Etymology of it, *Culter, quasi a colendo, quod cum eo terra culta fit.* Hence we have adopted the *Coulter* into our Language for the same Thing, and in the *French* 'tis likewise styled *Coultre*. It may also with Propriety enough be called *Hastile*, from the Resemblance which the Plow-share, inserted in the Wood, bears to a Spear of a very broad Point. *Καυχώμενος ἐν δόξῃ* is undoubtedly therefore the true Pointing, and answers to *ὁ κατὰ τὴν ἀρετὴν* in the former Sentence, and is a Phrase equivalent to it. *Κέντρῳ βόας ἐλάυνων*, is a further natural Description of the same kind of People.

*Ibid. Whose Talk is of Bullocks.* *i. e.* of the Breed of Bullocks, according to the Margin. The *Syriac* furnishes another, and no less natural Sense, *Cujus confabulationes sunt cum taurorum progenie*, and the *Arab.* is to the same Purpose, *i. e.* that the Talk of such as hold the Plow, and drive Oxen, is with the Bullocks themselves. *Bochart*, who prefers this Interpretation, produces very many Passages out of the *Greek* and *Latin* Poets, of Shepherds, Plowmen, &c. talking to their Flocks and Herds in the Manner referred to. *Hieroz. L. ii. c. 39.* Perhaps the true Reading here was, *ἡ διήγησις αὐτῶν σὺν ὑοῖς ταύρων*. See *Virg. Eclog. i. 75. vii. 44. Theocr. Idyll. iv. 46. xxvii. 47.* from whence many more Instances might be produced of such Discourse.

Ver. 27. *So every Carpenter and Work-master, that laboureth Night and Day: and they that cut and grave Seals, and are diligent to make great Variety, and give themselves to counterfeit Imagery, and watch to finish a Work.* According to *Calmet*, this is not to be understood of every Carpenter, and Work-master in that way, as our Version has it, nor indeed of any of that Trade; by *τέκτων* he understands one, that cuts Figures and Devices upon Seals, precious Stones, or Metals, him that labours at, and executes the Work, called properly the Engraver, and by *ἀρχιτέκτων*, the Designer, Inventor, or Finisher. But probably the Words *πᾶς τέκτων ἢ ἀρχιτέκτων* relate to all the Artificers after mentioned, not only those in this Verse, but *χαλκῶς*, *ψ 28.* and *κεραμῶς*, *ψ 29.* And as the Author says, *πᾶς τέκτων*, every Artificer, even the Chief of them, the Master Workmen, I presume he intends, in what follows, to include them all under three Denominations: *First*, The whole Tribe of the



the Workers in Imagery and Picture, which takes in Statuaries, Painters, Artists in Needle-work, in Weaving, Inlaying, &c. Secondly, The Workers at the Forge and Anvil, comprehending the whole Class of Smiths, &c. Thirdly, The Plastick Tribe, Potters, Turners of Clay, and all kinds of Earthen Ware. Having mentioned among the Artificers of the first Rank or Class, Seal-cutters by Name, as exercising, perhaps, the most profitable and curious Trade, he proceeds in general to every Artist that worketh, as they do, by Imitation. For I understand the Passage thus, They who cut the Engravings of Seals, and he whose Diligence is in Variety of Imagery, will give his Mind wholly to finish the Resemblance, and watch for the perfecting of his Work; ἡ ὑπομονὴ αὐτῶν is the same by a *Hebraism* with ἡ ὑπομονή, or rather ἐπιμονή, viz. He who attends to the varying of Imagery, whose Affiduity, *cujus perseverantia*, is ἀλλοιωσάτω ποικιλίαν, to diversify Art and Ingenuity in these kinds of Works, called Ποικιλιστικὴ ἐπιτήμη, *Variegativa Scientia*, Job xxxviii. 36. And if the rendring be, as it ought without the *Hebraism*, *Et ille, cujus assiduitas variat picturam*, the Sense will be more easy, and the Construction of the *Greek* just, without seeking out for a particular Verb to answer the Nominatives, πᾶς τέκτων, and οἱ γλύφοντες: And the Sense of the whole is to the following Effect, As the Countryman above-mentioned gives his Mind to his proper Business, in like Manner every Artist, who labours Night and Day, superintends his. Thus the Cutters of Seals, and he who attends to the varying of Imagery, who gives his Mind to the finishing the Similitude, and who watches for the perfecting his Work: Thus the Smith sitting, &c. &c.

Ver. 28. *The Smith also sitting by the Anvil, and considering the Iron-work, the Vapour of the Fire wasteth his Flesh, &c.* Smiths anciently, says *Calmet*, did not work in the Posture and Manner they do now, standing upright near the Forge or Anvil, nor was their Bellows fixed in the Forge, which must occasion them more Labour and Trouble. Thus *Homer* describes *Vulcan* all in a Sweat, and on leaving off his Work, laying aside his Bellows, and shutting up his Tools in a Silver Chest. *Il. L. xviii.* Mr. *Pope*, in his Translation of it, does not reach the Force of the Original. In the Eastern Countries, according to a Writer of good Credit, Smiths at this Day work in the same Posture that Taylors do, and if they go Abroad to work, they carry with them proper Tools, and even an occasional Forge and Bellows, for all these were portable, and one Man could easily carry the whole Budget. *Chardin's Travels into Persia, Tom. ii.* In the next Sentence, the Smith is described as καταμανθάνων ἔργον σιδήρεον, as the *Alex. MS.* and the *Complut.* Copy has it, which our Translators follow, i. e. according to a strong

Metaphor, gazing earnestly upon, and as it were studying his Work, forming it according to the Pattern before him. There is also another Reading, καταμανθάνων ἀργῶ σιδήρεον, which the *Vat.* has, and *Drusius* follows, i. e. labouring at the rude, stubborn, and unpolished Iron, to bring it to the desired Shape. But the former, which obtains in most Copies, seems preferable, and is confirmed by the *Latin* Versions. The whole Description of this Artificer, his Diligence, Intenseness, fighting with the Fire, and the gradual and insensible Decay of his Flesh through the Violence of it, and the continual Noise about him, are beautifully here described, and can only be equalled by the inspired Passage, *Is. xlv. 12.*

*Ibid.* *The Noise of the Hammer and the Anvil is ever in his Ears.*] καυιῖ τοῦ ἔργου αὐτοῦ, *Innovat aurem ejus*, *Vulg.* which affords no determinate Sense, or none but what is forced. Some Copies have καυιῖ, *movet aurem*, which is too weak and soft, as κρείσσει may seem too strong and violent, and the Alteration too great. One would think from the *English* Version, that the Copy which our Translators used had αἰεὶ in it, and perhaps the Copy used by more ancient ones had some other Word besides; for, agreeably to some old *Latin* Versions, the *King's Bible* 1541, and that of *Coverdale*, have, *foundeth ever in his Ears.* Among other Conjectures, καναχῇ (if there is any Authority for its being used actively) is not to be despised, as being expressive of a tinkling kind of Sound — Καναχῆσε δὲ χάλκος *Od. τ. 469.* which, though applied to the Sound of a Caldron, does not always mean a hollow Sound. Dr. *Grabe* condemns the present Reading καυιῖ, and hath given a very ingenious Emendation of it, *Prol. c. 4. § 6.* with a just Censure of *Beza's* κενοῖ, which indeed has nothing to recommend it. But I think he treats *Grotius's* Interpretation of the Word, as it now stands, which is not an unnatural one, viz. *delectat*, too contemptuously; for one may suppose such a Man's Ears recreated with what he gets Money by, though it be not harmonious. He thinks καυιῖ the better reading, which I would not understand in the Sense of *rado*, to grate, as the Noise, being familiar to the Smith, cannot be thought grating or unpleasant to him, but in its other Sense of *titillo*, or *pruritus moveo*, and is more agreeable to a Word often applied in *Heb.* to the Ears, viz. *ללע תinnire, palpitare*, from whence are derived the *Hebrew* of *Cymbalum*, and *Tinnabulum*. There is something musical thought to be in the Sounds of the Hammer and Anvil, and tis said of one of the old *Greek* Philosophers, that he got his first Ideas of the several fixed Tones in Musick, from the different Sounds expressed by the Smith's Anvil and Hammer. And so the Meaning here may be, that the Sound, or Reverberation of them chinketh, or chimes in his Ears.

Ver.



Ver. 29. *So doth the Potter, sitting at his Work, and turning the Wheel about with his Feet, who is always carefully set at his Work: And maketh all his Work by Number.*] As the third differs very little from the first Sentence, I would understand it of the Mechanick's great Care and Concern to make his Work perfect, or without Flaw. *Grotius* accordingly thinks the true Reading of the Greek to be, *ὅς ἐν μέμνῃ καὶ διαπαντός ἐπὶ ἔργον αὐτοῦ, εἰ ἐναριθμῶ πάντα τὰ ἐργασία αὐτοῦ*, *Ob opus suum in perpetua versatur sollicitudine, an scilicet numerus constat omni labori suo*. He is in continual Uneasiness, lest any of his Work should be broken, or spoiled, or be incompleat; and the *Vulg.* seems to confirm this, *Qui in sollicitudine positus est semper propter opus suum*. The Manner in which Potters labour and work was different in different Countries; *Jeremiah* represents them sitting in his Time, as this Writer does, *Behold, he wrought a Work upon the Wheels*, the Margin has, *Seats*, and the *ὁ, ὅτι καὶ λιθῶν*, i. e. Sitting upon the Stones, ch. xviii. 3. with which *Isaiah's* Description agrees. *Homer* makes the Potter turn the Wheel with his Hands, *ὡς δ' ὅτε τις κεραμεὺς τροφὸν ἀρμενον ἐν παλάμῃσι. κ. τ. λ.*

Ver. 30. *He fashioneth the Clay with his Arm, and boweth down his Strength before his Feet.*] *Calmet* thinks the Author alludes to the Custom of the *Egyptians*, who, according to *Herodotus* L. ii. trod the Clay, and kneaded it, as it were Dough, with their Hands and Feet, to prepare, and make it fit for the Wheel; and thus some understand *καὶ αὐτὸς αὐτοῦ* in the following Sentence, as relating to the Stubbornness of the Clay, which the Potter subdues, or, as the Margin well expresses it, tempers with his Feet, and so the *Tigurin* Version very explicitly, *Nunc pedibus vimipius luti profubigit*. Others apply the Words to the Man himself, and his Posture, that the Nature of his Work obliges him to stoop. *Calmet* therefore conjectures the true Reading to be, *πρὸ ποδῶν κάμψει ὀσφύν αὐτοῦ*, *lumbos ejus*, that, to reach up the Clay, he is forced to bend his Loins or Body. The *Orient.* Versions understand it, not of an occasional Stooping to work, but of a fixed Infirmary of the Potter himself, stooping in his old Age, through his past hard Labour, *Antequam moriatur, curvus est & inflexus*.

Ver. 32. *Without these cannot a City be inhabited: And they shall not dwell where they will, nor go up and down.*] The Translation in our Version is very indeterminate, and that of the Greek is more so, and perhaps the original *Hebrew* was not clearer. If we interpret it, as we may, thus, They are fixed by their Crafts to their Abodes, they cannot stir abroad where they will (which our Translators add pretty arbitrarily) and saunter about as others do, but must attend their Business at home, the

thing is very true, but it makes very little to the Point the Writer is here speaking to, which is the Usefulness of such Artificers. The *King's Bible* 1541, gives a more apposite Sense than this, viz. without these may not the City be maintained, inhabited, or occupied. And the *Vulg.* from some Gr. Copies that have *οἰκισθεῖς*, *Non civitas edificatur, non [homines] inhabitabunt nec inambulabunt*, i. e. Without these a City could neither be built, inhabited, nor frequented. But if *οἰκήσε* be the Word, as the *Alex. Ms.* and some correct Copies have it, then *παροικήσουσιν* must not be rendred by inhabiting, or dwelling, but sojourning, like the *Heb.* *וַיִּדְרֹשׁ* *diversatus fuit*, from whence *וַיִּפְרֹשׁ* *peregrinus*, *πάροικος*. See *Buxtorf.* and *ἐπαλίσσων*, if rendred, as most likely, from *הלך*, *obambulavit*, to walk up and down, will signify also to travel, whence *הלך*, *viator*. The Sense then of the Verse in this Construction will be, that, without these inferior Artists, there would be no dwelling in Societies, no sojourning, or travelling; Men could neither live at home, nor abroad, in their own Country, nor among Strangers; Handicrafts and Occupations of this Sort being necessary to accommodate Persons wherever they are.

Ver. 34. *But they will maintain the State of the World.*] *Κτίσμα αἰῶν* *ἐργασίαι*. This is inaccurately rendred; undoubtedly *κτίσμα* or *κῆμα αἰῶν* signify here Handicraft Work, or worldly Furniture. *Αἰών* seems to be the present State or Form of living, and *κτίσμα αἰῶν* is a Creature of Time literally, but means rather, a Work of Art according to the Times, or, in a Word, a Piece of Furniture in Fashion. The whole Context points to this Sense, viz. That as to the Administration of Government, § 33. or the Laws and Policy of the City, these Labourers and Mechanicks are of no Use; they are not to be expected, nor will be found *במשרים* amongst Parables, or, which seems the most natural Rendring here, amongst the Makers of Parables: But as to inferior Conveniences, the common Provisions, and ordinary Instruments of Life, they are owing to the Labour of this Sort of Men, who support and carry on the Mechanick Business of the World, and in their Sphere are very useful to Society, as their whole Employ and Study is, to furnish the many Implements necessary for the Use of it. And it is for this Reason that, without these Men, there could be no Accommodations for Habitations in Cities, for sojourning in them, or travelling through them, as in § 32. from the Examples here proposed of Persons labouring so industriously at their secular Employments, which this Writer has described to the Life, *Mess. of Port Royal* draw the following useful Reflections, 1. That if such as are employed in manual Arts, which concern only the Convenience of Life, take so much Pains about them, and attend upon them



Day and Night, they who follow a more noble Calling, and whose Study is heavenly Wisdom, ought not to engage in their Charge with Negligence and Indifference, nor embarrass themselves with a Multiplicity of Cares, which are not only incompatible with, but even contrary to, so sacred a Profession.

2. If each of the Artists, here proposed, are thoroughly skilled in the Mysteries of their Trade, it is an Instance of great Rashness and Presumption, to undertake the holy Calling, without the proper Qualifications for it; to aspire on a sudden, without considering the Importance of the Office, or the necessary Rules of Conduct, to so high and tremendous a Ministry, as the Care of Souls, which is a Science the most divine, and at the same Time the most difficult of all others.

3. If they, who apply themselves to Works merely human, aim at doing Good in their respective Ways, it is a Reflection upon Religion, to make the Study of it merely an Art or Accomplishment, a Matter of Curiosity or Amusement, without influencing Mens Lives, or regulating their Conduct.

## C H A P. XXXIX.

Ver. 1. **B**Ut he that giveth his Mind to the Law of the Most High, and is occupied in the Meditation thereof, will seek out the Wisdom of all the Ancient, &c.] Πλὴν τῷ ἐπιδόντῳ καὶ ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ, κ. τ. λ. which Words afford no easy Sense, if they are made Part of the former Chapter, as in many Editions; nor good Grammar, if they are made the Beginning of another Verse and Chapter, as in *Vat. Alex. Ms.* and the Copy followed by our Translators. *Flam. Nob.* helps out the Construction by supposing an Ellipsis, It belongs not to any, πλὴν τῷ, κ. τ. λ. Or, Not so he that gives his Mind, &c. ἐχ' ἑαυτοῦ, ἐχ' ἑαυτοῦ, as *Pf. i. 4.* And *Grotius* adds all are such, πλὴν, κ. τ. λ. Either Ellipsis is harsh. The best way probably to account for the Difficulty about the Exordium of this Chapter with πλὴν τῷ ἐπιδόντῳ κ. τ. λ. is, that it refers to *δέησις* just going before, which Word our Translators have rendred by *Desire*, as some of the older Versions have by *studium*, which seems the undoubted Sense, and was, I believe, the true Sense of the original Word whatever that was. Now admitting this, the Construction may be, All the Desire [*viz.* of these Craftsmen] is in the Work of their Craft; πλὴν τῷ ἐπιδόντῳ, κ. τ. λ. but [the Desire] of him who giveth his Mind to the Law of the most High, and is occupied [therein, or makes that his Study] is in the Meditation thereof. They who divided the Chapters so as to make the xxxix<sup>th</sup> begin with σοφίαν πάντων ἀρχαίων ἐκζητήσας, seem to have tacked the former Word to *δέησις*, or *studium*, and to have allotted to the next Chapter the Effects of this Desire upon the Person there de-

scribed, as a separate Subject of Discourse. But if πλὴν τῷ ἐπιδόντῳ, κ. τ. λ. may be taken nominatively to all that follows (and indeed the *Syr.* and *Arab.* translate as if they understood the original Word; to which ἐπιδόντος answers, to have been a Nominative in the Sense of our Version) it may then stand as it does at the Head of the Chapter, though I confess it appears harsh to me, except πλὴν be taken in the Sense of *ἄλλῃ*, or perhaps made from it. I shall only observe, that it is probable that the Beginning of this Chapter is a Continuation of *χ' 24.* of the last, and a Comparison instituted between the ὁ γραμματεὺς, and mechanic Occupations; that the Pursuits of each is different, and different their Prayer: The one aims at, and asks for Perfection in mean Arts comparatively, the other seeks after heavenly Wisdom; and his *δέησις* is, δός μοι τὴν ᾧ σὺν θρόνων πάρεδρον σοφίαν.

*Ibid.* Will seek out the Wisdom of all the Ancient.] *i. e.* He will not content himself to hear only the Masters of his own Times, but will consult the Works of the Ancients, and form a System of Knowledge from all that Antiquity has most bright and improving. *Josephus*, speaking of the *Essenes*, and *Philo* of the *Therapeutæ*, remark their Assiduity and Attention to the Study of the sacred Books, and of the ancient Authors of their own Nation. *De Bell. Jud. L. i. c. 7.* *Philo De vit. contempl.* The ancient Hebrews in the general were not very curious to enquire into the Learning or Affairs of other People, and still they retain a Dislike and Contempt of the Learning of Strangers; but under the Monarchy of the *Greeks*, and the *Macedonian* Empire in particular, they applied themselves to reading the Poets and Philosophers, as is very visible in the Style of those Jewish Authors, that wrote after that Time; as appears likewise from the Author of the *Book of Wisdom*, and the Translators of *Job*, and the *Proverbs*; the like may be observed of *Josephus*, and more especially of *Philo*.

*Ibid.* And be occupied in Prophecies.] *i. e.* He will be very diligent in searching out their true and latent Meaning; and no Wonder that this Writer should press the Necessity of studying the Prophets, and endeavouring to attain the right Sense of them, as both particular Persons, and whole Nations, have sometimes miscarried from their Ignorance of, or Non-Attendance to, the Voices and Predictions of the inspired Men of God, and for want of comparing the Predictions with the Events. To have an Insight into, and form some Judgment of, their recondite Meaning, was the chief and principal Employ of the holy and great Men of old. 'Twas thus *Daniel* studied the Prophecy of *Jeremiah*, which foretold the Time of the Captivity, and the Return from it, and the Restauration of *Jerusalem*, *Dan. ix. 2.* and before the Coming of *Christ*, the greater



part of the Prophecies were in such Obscurity and Darkness, and yet of so near and great Importance, especially to know when the great and magnificent Promises of the Kingdom of the *Messiah* would be accomplished, that they both called for, and deserved the serious Application of the most learned Men, to understand and form a Judgment about them. The Excellence and Usefulness of reading the Prophets, almost all the Fathers acknowledge, who spent much of their Time and Labour about them, and from thence composed elaborate Homilies for the Good and Edification of their Hearers. We cannot have a fuller Instance of the surprizing Effect of studying the Prophets, than in *Justin Martyr*. He acquaints us himself, that in his *Gentile* State he was confounded and bewildered in the Uncertainty of human Philosophy, and after many painful Searches, and shifting from Sect to Sect, like a doubtful and benighted Traveller, he happily at length was directed to the Scriptures, and from thence was led into the way of Truth, and received that solid Instruction and Satisfaction, which he had in vain sought for from the *Peripateticks*, *Stoicks*, *Pythagoreans*, and even the beloved *Plato* himself. *Οὐδὲν ἔμοι μέλει Πλάτωνος, ἔδὲ Πυθαγόρου* was from thenceforward his Conclusion. *Dial. cum Tryph.*

Ver. 2. *Where subtle Parables are, he will be also.* Ver. 3. *He will seek out the Secrets of grave Sentences, and be conversant in dark Parables.* To speak sententiously, to pronounce Apophthegms, to propose *Ænigma's*, and to be able to resolve and explain them, was a piece of Knowledge much in Vogue among the *Hebrews*. Under the Reign of *Solomon*, Kings and Princes, and even Queens, as appears from the Visit of the Queen of *Sheba* for that Purpose, delighted themselves in proposing Questions, *1 Kings* x. 1. of Difficulty, and receiving ready and ingenious Answers. *Mechanicks*, and Persons of ordinary Education attempted not such *Ænigma's*, either to invent, or resolve them, *ch. xx. 20. xxxviii. 33. Prov. xxvi. 7.* they were the Province of the learned, and more refined. To understand a Proverb, and the Interpretation, the Words of the Wise, and their dark Sayings, is the Description which *Solomon* himself gives of Wisdom, *Prov. i. 6.* This sort of Knowledge was in ancient Times the Accomplishment, as well as Entertainment, of Courts, and thought the properest Way, as being the most inoffensive, of Address to Kings. *Nathan*, the Prophet, and the Woman of *Tekoah* came each to *David* with a Parable, *2 Sam. xii. 1. xiv. 4.* And *Jeboash*, King of *Israel*, sent a Message, couched in a Parable, to *Amaziah*, King of *Judah*, *2 Kings* xiv. 9. And *Cyrus* answers the Petitions of two Nations at once to him in a short Parable, *Herod. L. i. c. 141.* By seeking out the Secrets of dark Parables, we are to understand the

propounding and explaining of Riddles, which part of Mythology was as old as *Sampson's* Time, *Judg. xiv. 12.* *Solomon* and *Hiram* are related by *Josephus*, *Antiq. L. viii.* and *Cont. Appion, L. i.* to have propounded Riddles, or Problems to each other, upon Condition of a Forfeiture to be paid by him, who could not explain the Riddle sent him. This was that ἀμύλλα σοφίας, or Prize of Wisdom, between *Amasis* King of *Egypt*, and the King of *Ethiopia*; and it obtained likewise among the *Greeks*. It was the Custom anciently at their Feasts to propose and resolve Questions, which might whet the Wit, and form Mens Manners, or open the Secrets of Natures, and at the same Time both refresh and instruct the Mind; such were the Sentences propounded at *Darius's* Feast, *1 Esd. iii.* There are many such learned Questions resolved in *Plutarch's* *Symposiaks*; and *Athenaeus* hath collected the Flowers of almost all Authors, Poets, Philosophers, and Historians, *L. x.* that afford any Entertainment this way.

Ver. 4. *He shall serve among great Men, and appear before Princes: he will travel through strange Countries, for he hath tried the Good and the Evil among Men.* Wisdom will gain a Man Admittance and Acceptance at Court, and recommend him to the Notice and Favour of the Great. 'Twas this introduced *Daniel*, and his Companions to the Service of *Nebuchadonoser*; and it was by the same Accomplishments that *Ezra*, and *Nehemiah* arrived at so high Honours, and that *Joseph* acquired such Authority at the Court of *Pharaoh*. One of the most likely means to make a Proficiency in the Study of Wisdom, and to improve in the Knowledge of Arts and Sciences, is to travel; by this a Man will gain Experience, and make proper Observation upon what passes before him, both good and bad. And thus *Calmet*, *Il passera dans les terres des Nations étrangères, pour éprouver parmi les hommes le bien & le mal.* The *Vulg.* likewise takes it in the Future. *Homer* describing an accomplished Person says, that he knew all things both good and bad—*αὐτὰρ ἐγὼ θυμῷ νοέω, & οἶδα ἕκαστα.* *Εἰδὼτά τε καὶ τὰ χεῖρεϊα.* *Od. xviii.* Instances of Wickedness, in the Sight or Hearing of a good Man, do not tempt him to the like Commission, but serve rather to excite an Abhorrence in him of Evil, and his Knowledge of what is amiss in others teaches him to shun it. Nor are the Examples, which we meet with in History, of Lust, Drunkenness, Cruelty, or other enormous Vices without their Use, as the bad Effects of them there described, beget an Abhorrence in the Reader, and form him to the contrary Virtues.

Ver. 6. *When the great Lord will, he shall be filled with the Spirit of Understanding.* In the former Verse it is observed of the wise Man, that he will rise up early to offer



offer unto God his Prayers, and the Fruits and Labours of the growing Day, will beg his Direction, and implore his Blessing: here it is said, that God will answer his Request, and fill him with the Spirit of Knowledge and Understanding in his own good Time, and in the Manner and Proportion he thinks proper; and that, when God has so blessed him, Wisdom shall flow from him like a Torrent: He shall perceive his Heart enlarged, disposed, and as it were transported, to shew forth the Praises of God, and to publish his Greatness in the most solemn Manner. And thus it often happens to his Saints, in consequence of their Prayers, they feel themselves ravished with a holy Extasy, and devout Enthusiasm, they are lifted up above themselves, are for a Time out of the Body, and with St. Paul caught up to the third Heavens; and their Heart glows and burns within them, to celebrate the Wonders of the Lord, in Terms more than human. What the Author here, and in the Context mentions, as necessary Requisites to his wise Man, viz. a serious Meditation in the Law of God, an unwearied Application to the Study of the Prophets, and a thorough Search and Insight into the Learning of the Ancients, *Mess. of Port Royal*, from the Authority of St. Basil, St. Austin, and other Fathers, apply to all Christian Pastors. He that is called to so holy a Ministry, say they, must himself be a Disciple of those whom God has chosen to instruct and enlighten his Church in all Ages; he must employ himself diligently to study, and understand the Wisdom of those inspired Persons, whom God made the first Dispensers of his holy Word, and as it were the Tongues of his holy Spirit; and particularly be well versed in the sacred Books of the Evangelists, and Apostles, who are as the Prophets of the New Law. 'Tis from these pure Sources of heavenly Wisdom, that he must derive that Light which he wants to penetrate into, and unravel those Types, Figures, and Prophecies, which are the Veils and Shadows, in which God has thought fit to conceal the Depths of his holy Mysteries and Truths. As he converses often with God in Prayer, the Lord enlightens him in all the Counsels which he gives, and the Answers which he makes to others; he teaches only what he has learned from him and his most enlightened Servants, and glories in not speaking from himself, but in being the faithful Interpreter of the Law of God, and the constant Doer of his Will.

Ver. 9. *Many shall commend his Understanding, and so long as the World endureth, it shall not be blotted out; his Memorial shall not depart away.* Ver. 11. *If he die, he shall leave a greater Name than a thousand; and if he live, he shall encrease it.* Grotius very justly observes, that ἐκ ἀποσώσεως was a Gloss put into the Margin by some Scholiast, to explain the foregoing Verb, and

crept afterwards into the Text, and that the true Reading is ἐκ ἐξαλειφθήσεως μνημόσυνον αὐτοῦ. See *Exod. xvii.* where the Phrase is used in this Sense, and is harsh, if applied to συνέσις foregoing. The Sentences are transposed in some Editions of ὡ 11. but it does not much affect the Sense. It may be more material to observe, that instead of ἐμποιεῖ αὐτῷ, which is the reading of all the Greek Copies, the Vulgate seems to have followed one which had ἐποιεῖ αὐτῷ, *proderit illi*, which furnishes a more determinate, and, I think, a better Sense, viz. that the wise Man, who acts up to his Character in all respects, does well to himself, with respect to another, and better State, or to his Family and Children, whom he leaves behind, who will be the more valued on his Account, as Grotius understands the Passage. According to Calmet the Sense is, If he lives long, he has established a Reputation, far more glorious than a thousand others; and if he dies young, he dies happy, in full and assured Hope of a better Life after this. It may also be understood in this farther Sense, viz. If he continues in Life, he enjoys a Reputation which gives him more Pleasure, and will continue his Name longer than a numerous Posterity; his Wisdom supplies the Place to him of every thing else, Fortune, Family, or Descendants. It gives him a Name more illustrious and durable, than what springs from a numerous Offspring, and when God calls him out of the World, he will be more happy than a thousand others which are gone before, or left behind him. Whether the wise Man therefore lives, or dies, his Reputation is fixed and established, and in either State he will be remembered to his Honour. And in this Sense we may understand those Words of the Prophet, *Thus saith the Lord unto the Eunuchs that keep my Sabbaths, and choose the Things that please me, and take hold of my Covenant; even unto them will I give in mine House a Place, a Name, better than of Sons and Daughters: I will give them an everlasting Name, that shall not be cut off.* Is. lvi. 4.

Ver. 17. *And none may say, What is this? Wherefore is that? for at Time convenient they shall all be sought out.* Why was this made, or why in this Manner? what Good doth this Thing, or what Use is there of that? would it not have been better, if this had never been made at all, or had been made otherways? Such Censures, tho' not innocent, would be more pardonable, if employed upon the Works of Men only; but to charge the good Creatures of God either with manifest Ill, or however, with Unprofitableness, betrays a Distrust either of his Wisdom, or Goodness. If no other Answer could be given to such bold Enquiries, it might suffice to say, that in the Creation God must be supposed to act by his own divine Prerogative, and according to his Will



Will and Power; but the Apostle assures us farther, that God created all Things κατὰ τὴν βουλὴν τῆς θελήματός αὐτοῦ, *Ephes. i. 11.* not merely by his own Will, but according to the Counsel of his own Will. They who search for hidden Knowledge, out of a Spirit of Contradiction, or from a criminal Curiosity, rather than for Improvement, or Edification, are like the Men of *Bethshemeth*, *1 Sam. vi. 19.* who looking into the Ark of God unwarrantably, will be more like to meet with their own Destruction, than to find out the Truth. *Job* well observes of God, *He giveth not Account of any of his Matters, wherefore dost thou strive against him? xxxiii. 13. i. e.* Why do we presume to dispute with God, or call him to account for his Actions, who will not reveal to us all the Secrets of Creation and Providence; neither indeed would our present Capacities admit of such a Discovery; *Such Knowledge is too wonderful for us, we cannot attain unto it.* Excellent therefore is the Counsel of *St. Cyril*, *Firmam fidem mysteriis adhibentes, nunquam in tam sublimibus rebus illud Quomodo aut cogitemus, aut proferamus. L. iv. c. 13. in Job.* For as another Father observes, 'tis an Argument of Infidelity, ἐλεγχος ἀπιστίας τὸ πῶς περὶ θεῶν λέγειν, *Just. Mar.* Our Author, § 16. lays down this Thesis, That all the Works of the Lord are excellent; and he proves it in the following Verses by an Enumeration of Particulars. To stop the captious Disposition, was the very End, according to *St. Chrysostom*, of God's pronouncing the whole Creation completely good; God, says he, as if foreseeing this dangerous Curiosity of Man, to silence at once all Cavils, pronounces, upon a particular Survey of all his Works, that they were very good, that none, after the Declaration of infinite Wisdom in their Favour, should hereafter presume to censure, or find Fault with them. *Tom. v. De iis qui scandal. &c.* Would Men but consider the infinite Distance between God's Immensity, and their own Nothingness, his unerring Wisdom, and their notorious Ignorance, they would be more modest in their Decisions. It is excellently observed by *Seneca*, *Nunquam nos verecundiores esse debere, quam cum de Diis agitur.* And by *Cicero*, *Timidè de potestate Deorum, & pauca dicenda sunt.* *De Nat. Deor.* And the Apostle, in Admiration of the stupendous Mystery, cries out, *O the Depth of the Riches both of the Wisdom and Knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his Judgments, and his Ways past finding out! Rom. xi. 33.* The Author has well determined the Case himself, when he says, § 21. πάντα εἰς χρῆμα αὐτῶν ἐποίησας, *i. e.* all Things are created for their proper and peculiar Uses; and though we cannot now discover what Use there may be of some of the Creatures, or Good in them, yet Time may discover much Benefit and Excellency, which we see not. Later Times have found out the profitable

Use of many Creatures, whereof former Ages were ignorant; and why may not After-times find Advantage in those Things which are of no Service to us, because perhaps their Virtues are unknown to us at present, *Multa venientis ævi populus ignota nobis sciet. Senec. Nat. Quæst.*

*Ibid.* At his Commandment the Waters stood as an Heap, and at the Words of his Mouth the Receptacles of Waters.] This relates to the Passage of the *Israelites* through the *Red Sea*, and *River Jordan*, on both which Occasions the Waters collected themselves so as to become a Heap, and opened a Way for the *Hebrews* to pass over; afterwards they returned to their primitive State and Form, and took Possession of their former Reservoirs. Others explain it of the State of the Waters in the Beginning; at first God created the Mass of Waters as one huge immense Chaos; afterwards he separated them, and placed them by his Word in their proper Receptacles, some above the Firmament, and some in the great Abyss, or Bottom of the Sea; agreeably to the *Psalmist's* Description, *He gathereth the Waters of the Sea together, as it were upon an Heap, and layeth up the Deep as in a Treasure-House. Psal. xxxiii. 7.* And to this *Psalm* the Author seems to allude in some other Passages.

*Ver. 20. He seeth from Everlasting to Everlasting, and there is nothing wonderful before him. Ver. 22. His Blessing covered the dry Land as a River, and watered it as a Flood. Ver. 23. As he hath turned the Waters into Saltness, so shall the Heathen inherit his Wrath.]* As God at once comprehends all Times and all Things, and their very Possibilities, nothing which happens is new or wonderful to him; and as all Things and Persons are beneath his Majesty, and subject to his Power, nothing can appear great to him, or give him any Surprise. Or the Sense may be, that nothing is secret or unknown to him; for so the *Hebrew* Word, as *Junius* observes, here rendred *wonderful*, sometimes signifies. Having enlarged upon God's Knowledge and Power, in answer to the unreasonable Cavils of the Disputers of this World, the wise Man now proceeds to shew the Effects both of God's Goodness, and of his Displeasure; that when he bestows his Blessing upon any Nation or People, he pours it out in Abundance, and scatters his Mercies with Profusion: when *Israel* pleased him by walking in his Ways, what a Number of Blessings did he heap upon them, and what a Variety of Miracles did he work in their Favour, and for their Safety and Protection? on the contrary, when he is angry, he is mighty to punish: Was he displeased at the Wickedness of the old World? he destroyed it by a Flood. Was he offended at the Inhabitants of the five Cities? he burnt up their Land, and turned it into a filthy Lake.



Ver. 24. *As his Ways are plain unto the Holy, so are they Stumbling-blocks unto the Wicked.*] Some apply this Verse to the Passage of the *Israelites* through the *Red Sea*; that as the Way was made plain and safe for them, so to their Enemies it was a Stumbling-block, or their Ruin and Destruction. Or the Sense may be, that the holy, or the true Believers do not raise Objections against God's Works or Proceedings, nor quarrel with his Law, as difficult, mysterious, and obscure; they confess, that the *Word of the Lord is true, and all his Works are faithful, that it is a Lanthorn unto their Feet, and a Light unto their Paths*, and being desirous to know, and to do God's Will, they neither dispute the Reasonableness of his Laws, nor the Methods of his Providence, but readily comply with the Directions of both. Whereas Men of perverse and disobedient Tempers pretend, that the Way of the Lord is not equal, they repine at his Commands as grievous, and what is both easy and equitable shall be matter of Offence to them. A Writer of profound Erudition, illustrates this by the Instance of the *Israelites*, to whom anciently the *Mosaical* Writings were a most plain and perfect Rule; but the later ones, in Excuse for their swerving from this Law, pretended it was too obscure, and too difficult to be understood. This Hypocrisy *Moses* foresaw would be the Cause of their Apostasy, and the Beginning of all their Miseries, and therefore he laboured most earnestly to prevent it, *Deut. xxx. 14.* but through Perverseness they departed from this plain and strait Rule, and thereby their Ways became crooked and their Actions unjust. The like may be observed of their Obstinacy with respect to the Gospel; had they done God's Will revealed unto them in *Moses's* Law, they would have known *Christ's* Doctrine to have been of God; but, as *St. Peter* observes, *Christ is become a Stone of Stumbling, and a Rock of Offence to the Disobedient*, *1 Pet. ii. 8.* Jackson's Works, Tom. i. B. 2.

Ver. 28. *There be Spirits that are created for Vengeance, which in their Fury lay on sore Strokes; in the Time of Destruction they pour out their Force, and appease the Wrath of him that made them.*] I cannot agree with those Interpreters who understand here by *πνεύματα*, Winds, or Tempests, because Fire, Hail, Famine, and the like Instruments of Vengeance immediately follow; it means rather Spirits properly so called, who can indeed occasionally bring Fire from Heaven, and raise Storms and Tempests, as appears from the History of *Job*. The Angels are God's Ministers, as well to execute his Wrath, as to declare his Favour; and as some are employed *εις σωτηρίαν*, for Men's Good and Preservation, so others are appointed for Vengeance, *ἐκτίσαι εἰς ἐκδίκησιν*. It was the Commission of the two Angels, *Gen. xix.* to destroy *Sodom* and *Gomorrab*, as well as to save *Lot* and his Family, and the

Angel of the Covenant that so wonderfully preserved the *Israelites*, was the very destroying Angel that cut off all the first born of the *Egyptians*. There is an Angel of the bottomless Pit, expressly called *Apollyon*, from the Destruction which he makes, *Rev. ix. 11.* The Expression of *laying on sore Strokes in their Fury*, seems to determine the Sense of the Passage to Devils, or evil Spirits, who *ἐν καιρῷ συνέλείας*, when the determined Time of Vengeance is come against Persons or Nations, or at the great Day of Judgment, the final Consummation of all Things, and the Time fixed for the Destruction of the Wicked, are the commissioned Instruments to torment them, not so much as they wish to do according to their Malice, but as much as God permits them, according to the Rules of Justice.

Ver. 29. *Famine and Death.* Ver. 30. *Teeth of wild Beasts. . . punishing the Wicked to Destruction.*] In the Oriental Languages the Plague or Pestilence, which is here meant, goes by the Name of Death, and the *δ* sometimes translate the *Heb.* Word by *θάνατος*, See *Jerem. xxi. 7. xxiv. 10.* and the *Chaldee* Paraphrast often puts one for the other. *Mortalitas* is used by *St. Cyprian*, as synonymous to the Pestilence. As to the Punishment of a wicked People by the Teeth of wild Beasts, &c. both sacred and prophane Story confirm it. Not that these Beasts, by being made the Instruments of divine Vengeance, had any Sense of the Wickedness of those they were sent to destroy: *Josephus*, speaking of the Lyons that devoured *Daniel's* Accusers, has a very fanciful Conceit, *viz.* that it was not their Anger, but the others Wickedness that made them so keen: and then adds something very particular, *δήλη γὰρ ἡ τοῖς ἀλόγοις, κ. τ. λ. Nihil impedit quin hominum nequitia etiam irrationalibus animalibus sit manifesta ad pœnam exequendam, Deo ita volente.* *Ant. Jud. L. x. c. 11.* In the following Verse the Author represents all these Ministers of Vengeance as animated and alive, as listening to, and rejoicing in, their appointed Work; *in mandatis ejus epulabuntur*, *Vulg.* They shall feast themselves in doing his Will, and run with Readiness and Delight, where he orders them, *εις χρείας*, for the Uses they are designed for. Some Copies have *εις χεῖρας*, *i. e.* they shall be ready at hand, like Troops prepared to march upon the first Notice.

Ver. 32. *Therefore from the Beginning I was resolved, and thought upon these Things, and have left them in Writing.*] The wise Man *χ' 16.* proposed this Thesis, that all the Works of the Lord are exceeding good, &c. which having proved by an Induction of Particulars, he concludes thus, All that I have hitherto remarked confirms me in the Principle which I, *ἐξ ἀρχῆς*, at first maintained. I have weighed and considered the Matter thoroughly with myself, and have now committed my Thoughts to Writing,



the Sum whereof is, that all the Works of God, are exceeding good, and every Thing will be found useful in its proper Season, so that there is no reason to undervalue any Creature of God; for the Things which seem most exceptionable and mischievous, will in Time be acknowledged to serve to good Purposes. Even the greatest Plagues and Scourges have their Use, to humble the Wicked, and to warn and exercise the Faithful: and Sinners themselves, by executing sometimes the divine Purposes and Decrees, serve to display his Justice and Almighty Power. And therefore the Conclusion standeth sure, that God is ever to be adored by Men and Angels, for the numberless Instances of his Goodness; and to be praised, as St. *Austin* finely observes, “For all the Wonders which we do perceive and know in his Works, and even for those which we do not know or understand; for our Life being of so short a Continuance, and present to, and acquainted with, but a very inconsiderable Part of Time, and of the World, it is impossible to comprehend the Order and the Design of that eternal Wisdom, which sees through all Times at one View, and which by the innumerable Variety of the Events of this Life, as by so many Links fastened together, forms that long Chain of Providence, which extends through the Succession of all Ages.”

## CHAP. XL.

Ver. 1. **G**REAT Travail is created for every Man, and an heavy Yoke is upon the Sons of Adam, from the Day that they go out of their Mother's Womb, till the Day that they return to the Mother of all Things.] Three Particulars are here mentioned of the heavy Yoke said to be laid on all the Sons of Adam. 1. Its Continuance, that it lasts for the Term of Life, from the Day of Nativity to that of Death. 2. That this Yoke is a Composition of Miseries, made up of Cares, Fears, deceitful Hopes, delusive Pleasures, and a continual Dread of Death, which damps all Enjoyments. 3. That it is equally the Lot of all Men, Persons of all Conditions, Ages, and Sexes, groan alike under it. St. *Austin* has beautifully described it, *Parvulos intueri quot & quanta mala patientur, in quibus vanitatibus, cruciatibus, erroribus, terroribus crescant; deinde jam grandes, etiam Deo servientes, tentat error ut decipiat, tentat dolor aut labor ut frangat, tentat mæror ut deprimat, tentat superbia ut extollat; & quis explicet omnia festinanter quibus gravatur jugum super filios Adam? quod jugum non fuisset, nisi delicti originalis meritum præcessisset.* Aug. cont. Jul. iv. 16. The Earth, that common and hospitable Parent, is with great Propriety here called the Mother of all Things: The particular Reasons for that Appellation we meet with in *Pliny*, *Sequitur Terra, cui uni*

*rerum nature partium, eximia propter merita, nomen indidimus maternæ venerationis. . . quæ nos nascentes excipit, natoque alit, semelque editos sustinet, novissime complexa gremio, jam a reliqua natura abdicatos, tum maxime ut mater operiens, nullo magis sacra merito, quam quæ nos quoque sacros facit.* L. ii. c. 63.

Ver. 2. *Their Imagination of Things to come, and the Day of Death [trouble] their Thoughts, and [cause] fear of Heart.*] All the Copies have τὰς διαλογισμὸν αὐτῶν καὶ φόβον καρδίας, ἐπινοία προσδοκίας, ἡμέρα τελευτῆς. The Construction here is perplexed, and chiefly so, for want of a Verb to connect the whole, and give it a determinate Sense, which our Translators have attempted to supply. *Bossuet* and the *Tigurin* Version insert, *dico, i. e.* I mean their Cares, Fears, &c. *Grotius's* Conjecture, that αὐτῶν is understood, must be allowed acute; but even had it been expressed, is it ever joined with an Accusative and Nominative, immediately following each other? Dr. *Grabe* comes the nearest to restore this corrupt Passage, by an ingenious Conjecture; he reads, διὰ λογισμὸν αὐτῶν (if he had transposed τὰς would it have been amis?) καὶ φόβον καρδίας ἐπινοία προσδοκίας ἡμέρα τελευτῆς, i. e. Life is made miserable by their Surmises and Fears, through the Thoughts and Apprehension of the Day of their Death. Not much unlike that, *Luke* xxi. 26. ἀποψυχόντων ἀνθρώπων ἀπὸ φόβου καὶ προσδοκίας ἡ ἐπερχομένης.

Ver. 5. *Wrath and Envy . . . and Anger and Strife, and in the Time of Rest upon his Bed his Night-sleep do change his Knowledge.*] There is great Variety of Reading here in the Greek Copies. *Complut.* has μίμημα καὶ ἔρις, which *Junius* follows. *Rom.* and *Ald.* μνήμα, espoused by the *Vulg.* others μανία, or μήνιμα, which *Grabe* prefers, and is, I conceive, the best, as it gives a distinct Sense from θυμός, mentioned just before. Each of these Plagues alternately in the Day-time affect and distract the Mind of Man, and even in the Time of Rest (for so I understand καὶ) Troubles and unquiet Dreams create new Whims and Imaginations, and disturb his Thought, γινώσκον αὐτῶν, his reasoning Faculty. The *Tigurin* Version renders not improperly, *Ingenium cujusque variè efficiant.* *Mess.* of *Port Royal* observe here, that the Author, by styling Men the Children of Adam, points out the Original of Sin, the Cause of all their Evils and Misfortunes. He does not only mention the outward Plagues with which it pleases God to visit Men, and to which the frail Condition of Mortality exposes them, but dwells chiefly upon the Wounds of the Spirit, the Passions and Weaknesses of the Soul. Such who are great or rich, may keep themselves from many Accidents and Inconveniencies in their outward State which attend others, but Uneasiness of Mind, Concern for the present, Fears for the future, (especially the Remembrance of Death,



Death, ch. xli. 1.) and Remorse, perhaps for what is past; together with the other Passions here mentioned, often seize upon those most, who are of a more superior Rank and Fortune than others. Cares and Troubles attend all, from him who is clothed in Purple, to him who wears a coarse Linen Frock, *Vestem paupertatis*, as the Syr. well expresses it: but those who fancy themselves the most happy on account of their State or Riches, have often less Content, and that sweet Season of Rest and Repose, which Nature seems to have given to the rest of the World for their Refreshment, is to them frequently a Time of Disquiet and Uneasiness.

Ver. 6. *A little or nothing is his Rest, and afterward he is in his Sleep, as in a Day of keeping Watch, troubled in the Vision of his Heart, as if he were escaped out of a Battle.* *ὀλίγον ὡς ὕπν.* See *Acts* xxvii. 33. *μηδὲν προσλαβόμενοι*, where *μηδὲν* signifies, *Fere nihil quidquam*: and *Matt.* xxv. 29. Here are two very beautiful Comparisons of a distracted Imagination, either the unhappy Person gets no Rest, and then he is like to a Centinel at his Post, or to one set on a Watch-Tower, to observe the Motion of the Enemy, and is continually looking about him, and alarmed with every Vision and Appearance; or he wakes out of Sleep through some frightful Dream in a Hurry and Confusion, and with such Impressions of Horror, as if an Enemy was pursuing him, and he was flying from the Face of him, *ἀπὸ προσώπου πολέμου*, for so I would read, and not *πολέμου*, as the present Reading is. And thus the *Arab.* *Similis est fugienti a conspectu inimici.* And when he is recovered from his Fright, and finds himself safe, and out of Danger, he is surprized at his vain Fear, *εἰς ὕπνῳ φόβον*, *ad nullum timorem.* *Vulg.* i. e. at his Fear which had no Foundation.

Ver. 8. *[Such Things happen] unto all Flesh, both Man and Beast, and that is sevenfold more upon Sinners.* That Men are subject to all the Passions above-mentioned, viz. to Fear, Anger, Revenge, Jealousy, and Uneasiness, is agreed on all Hands; how far Beasts are influenced by some of them is a Question, especially if we deny them the Use of Reason and Reflexion: for how can one impute to them Passions which arise from reflex Acts, from reasoning on what is past, or what is future? They are manifestly afraid of Death, are enraged at each other, treasure up Revenge, and give evident Tokens of Jealousy, and are not without Symptoms of Uneasiness, and yet have no Claim or Pretence to Reason; what they do is ascribed to Instinct, and mere natural Inclination. *Grotius*, as if sensible of this Objection, applies to this Verse the Particulars mentioned in the following ones; but this Solution I think is attended with as great a Difficulty. For what Relation has *σομφαία*, or the Sword, to the brute Creation, or was it for their Sakes too that the universal Deluge hap-

pened? *Hæschelius* observes, that some Copies change the Order of these calamitous Particulars, and place *αἷμα* next *σομφαία*, *Ezek.* v. 17. xxviii. 23. xxxviii. 21, 22. but as *θάνατος* probably here means the Pestilence, as in ch. xxxix. 29. and is frequently joined with *αἷμα*, see *Ezek.* v. 17. xxviii. 23. xxxviii. 22. there is no need of any Alteration.

Ver. 11. *All Things that are of the Earth shall turn to the Earth again; and that which is of the Waters doth return into the Sea.*

This is a Consequence of the Sentence of Mortality pronounced on all Mankind in Adam; and the very Name of *Adam* signifies one that was taken out of the Earth, and therefore naturally mortal. It is observed of Man, *Job* xx. 7. *That he shall perish for ever like his own Dung*, i. e. by returning to Earth again; and *Ecclesiastes* xii. 7. that the Dust shall return to the Earth again as it was. Hence by a very apt Expression the Grave is called Man's long Home. *ψ* 5. *Domus sæculi sui*, his old House out of which he first came forth; or *Domus sæculi* may mean the House of Generations, or of the whole World in general, the Abode from whence they all came, and whither they must all return. The Metaphor in the next Clause is manifestly taken from *Ecclesiastes* i. 7. The Connexion of this with the foregoing Verses, tho' not very discernible, seems to be this, that the only Remedy against all the Evils before enumerated, is often to think of Death, and provide for our last Hour; to consider that all Things and Persons naturally tend, and shall return to their primitive Dust, when all Pains and Uneasiness shall cease, and the Reflexion only of having behaved well in Life will give real Comfort.

Ver. 13. *The Goods of the Unjust shall be dried up like a River, and shall vanish with a Noise like a great Thunder in Rain.* Ver. 14. *While he openeth his Hand, he shall rejoice: so shall Transgressors come to nought.*

The first Part is not accurately expressed, for Rivers, properly so called, are not usually dried up. *ποταμός* is here used in the Sense of *χείμαρρος*, see *Job* vi. 15. to which probably this refers. The meaning is, that the Goods of the Unjust shall be dried up like a sudden Land Flood, *quasi torrens*, Syr. and *ποταμός* is used *Luke* vi. 49. Or, the Author may here perhaps allude to *Prov.* x. 25. The second is obscurely expressed, for it does not appear who is meant in *ψ* 14. whether the unjust or the charitable Person. As applied to the former mentioned in the foregoing Verse, the Sense is, according to all the Interpreters almost, that an unjust Magistrate or Judge, that opens his Hands to receive Gifts, and delights to enrich himself by Acts of Injustice, shall be destroyed in the End; but I must observe, that this Phrase is used for giving, *Deut.* xv. 8. *Psal.* civ. 28. cxlv. 16. And therefore *Bosquet* and *Junius* suppose the charitable or merciful



ful Man to be understood, who delights in Acts of Kindness and Beneficence, and takes a Pleasure while he opens his Hand to do Good. But in this Sense it agrees not with the latter Part: If the Sentences were transposed, and that which is now the first, subjoined with an adversative Particle to connect them, the meaning I conceive would be altered for the better.

Ver. 16. *The Weed growing upon every Water, and Bank of a River, shall be pulled up before all Grass.*] The Term *αχαι* is purely of Egyptian Extraction, and signifies, in that Language, the *Juncus* or Sedge which grows in marshy Grounds, and on the Banks of the Nile. *Hody de Vers. Græc. Aut. L. ii.* It is used in Egypt chiefly for Fuel, and is probably what the Evangelist means by *χόσμος τῆς αἰχῆς*, which *To-day is, and To-morrow is cast into the Oven*, Matt. vi. 30. It is called *βέτομον*, Job. viii. 11, 12, 13. from whence this Passage was undoubtedly taken, and the Comparison both there and here is applied to the Destruction of the Wicked. The LXX by mistake make *αχαι* a proper Name, Gen. xli. 2. where it means only a Meadow. The *Vulg.* takes it for a Verb, and renders it by *sonat*, mistaking it for *αχαι*, as *Junius* does for *αχην*, translating it *spuma*. The *Syr.* renders it much better, *Similis (impius) algæ, quæ ante omnem herbam arefcit*, i. e. which withers before all Grass, either as coming soon to Maturity, and so decaying apace afterwards, which agrees with what the Scripture says of the short lived Prosperity of the Wicked; or, as Fuel cut down, dried up, and withered, which agrees yet better. Or, the Sense may be, that the Weeds by the Water-side, and within its Banks, are soon cut down, as, where Water is precious, sucking it up, or however stopping its Course. Thus do rapacious Persons, mentioned *γ 12.* and such shall be their Fate; whereas liberal ones are represented as watering the Ground round them. The Sense of the Context from *γ 12.* to *γ 18.* is briefly this, that Wickedness appears happy and successful for a little while, but it soon vanishes and disappears: all the Gains of the Wicked are like a hasty Rain which is soon dried up, or the Thunder which is gone, as soon as it is perceived and heard. They please themselves indeed with the Spoils of Injustice, but they shall do them no Good, and their End shall be to perish. And even those they leave behind them, shall not continue long, or take deep Root, they shall be like Trees that grow upon the Top of a barren Rock, exposed to the Assault of every Wind: Or like some worthless Weed on the Bank Side, which is plucked up and cast away, sooner than any other that has some Use or Value in it. Works of Mercy, on the contrary, are like a fruitful Garden, which God has blessed, and whose Fruits shall be as lasting, as they are inviting and lovely.

Ver. 18. *To labour, and to be content with that a Man hath, is a sweet Life; but he that findeth a Treasure is above them both.*] The *Gr.* literally is, The Life of a contented Labourer is sweet: But then to what does *both* relate? Something seems here wanting, for there must be at least two Particulars to which a third is compared. *Grotius* thinks *α* is wanting here, which indeed the *Tigurin* Version inserts, and our Translators seem to have followed a Copy which had such a connective Particle. The *Vulgat.* renders without it, and makes no Comparison, *Vita sibi sufficientis operarii condulcabitur, & in ea invenies thesaurum*. *Mess. of Port-Royal*, to form the Comparison, insert *or*, the Life of the Labourer, *or* of him who is content with what he has is sweet; but he that hath both together, is as one that findeth a Treasure; and instance in the primitive Hermits, who took Pleasure in labouring with their Hands, and were not only contented to satisfy their own Necessities by painful Travail, but contributed to relieve those of others; hereby gaining a double Treasure, that of Humility, so contrary to the Spirit of the World, and of Charity, which delights to do good to others at its own Expence. *Vatablus* explains it, He that findeth a Treasure, i. e. that hath a Competency or Fortune left him, or, as *Calmet* further explains it, who comes suddenly to be rich, without any Fatigue to himself, or Injustice to others, is happier than a labouring Man, or any one that is content with what is of his own getting. *Bossuet* thinks all these Senses low, and by a Treasure, to which the Preference is here given, he understands the Treasure of Righteousness, *Prov. xxi. 20.* or of Wisdom, *Wisd. vii. 14.* as *Junius* does by it that of Mercifulness, mentioned in the former Verse. The *Oriental* Versions give still a different, but agreeable, Sense. That Bountifulness being as a fruitful Garden, he that shews himself charitable by repeated Acts of Kindness, shall enrich himself thereby, shall be as one that findeth a Treasure.

Ver. 19. *Children and the Building of a City continue a Man's Name; but a blameless Wife is counted above them both.*] i. e. Posterity called by the Name of their Ancestors, or a People by that of their Founder, as the *Perfidæ*, *Romani*, &c. and Cities called by the Names of their Conquerors, or first Establishers, as *Alexandria*, *Seleucia*, *Antiochia*, continue the Glory of such to late Generations; but a Woman of great Accomplishments, and who in the conjugal State shines, as well as in other Parts of her Character, is as excellent in her Way, *Her Husband is known in the Gates, when he sitteth among the Elders of the Land*, *Prov. xxxi.* such was *Esther*, *Judith*, *Deborah*, *Jael*, *Artemisia*, *Zenobia*, &c. who were as well the Glory of their Times, as the Comfort of their Husbands. The wise Man's Meaning here, says *Calmet*, is not that a blameless

Wife,



Wife is more capable of immortalizing her Spouse, than a Series of Descendants from a noble Stock, or the Founding of a Kingdom or a City, but that she is a Blessing preferable to either. In the following Verse he gives Wisdom the Preference, (which in the Sapiential Books is described as a lovely and beautiful Female) to all outward Satisfaction, as Piety, or the Study of it, gives more Pleasure to the Soul, than Wine and Musick at an Entertainment to the Senses. The Pleasures of the Understanding are always superior to those of the Body; by the former we approach to, and resemble the Deity; by the latter, especially the Abuse of them, we degenerate into, and act like the Beasts. St. *Austin* has the like Sentiment, *Delectatio cordis humani de lumine veritatis, de affluentia sapientiae; non invenitur voluptas cui possit aliqua ex parte comparari.* Serm. 139.

Ver. 22. *Thine Eye desireth Favour and Beauty; but more than both, Corn when it is green.* *Χαίρει ἡ κάλλος.* For some Copies omit *καί*. The Eye is pleased in beholding artificial Symmetry and Proportion (for so I would render *χαίρει* rather than Favour, according to the common Acceptation of it) whether of Building, Statues, Pictures, &c. but more so in contemplating the Beauty of Nature even in minute Things, whose Colour and Simplicity it is beyond the Power of Art to come up to, or imitate; such as is observable in green Corn, a Blade of Grass, or the Lilies of the Field, of which Wisdom itself pronounced, that even *Solomon* in all his Glory was not so beautifully arrayed, *Luke* xii. 27. Amongst the natural Entertainments of Sight, the wise Man says, that the Eye is most delighted with what is green, as it refreshes the Sight, and assists its Weakness, according to *Pliny's* Observation on this Colour: *Nullius coloris aspectus est jucundior; ideo herbas virentes, frondesque avidè spectamus.* L. xxxvii. c. i. In this *Grotius* acquiesces. *Bossuet* makes the Reason of the Preference to be, that the green Leaves of Trees, &c. are successively renewing, whereas the Perfection of Art is impaired by Time. *Junius* thinks that Corn was particularly instanced in, because it contains *utile dulci*, what is serviceable to the Necessities of Life, as well as agreeable in outward Appearance.

Ver. 28. *My Son, lead not a Beggar's Life, for better is it to die, than to beg.* The Author here speaks of begging, according to the Notion which the *Jews* had of it, by whom it was regarded as a Curse of God for some Offence, given to him. And indeed, God does threaten the Extremity of Want to the Transgressors of his Commandments. Nor could the *Psalmist* think of a greater Curse upon the Wicked, than when he says, *Let their Children be Vagabonds, and beg their Bread; let them seek it also out of desolate Places,* *Pf.* cix. 9. When a State of

Poverty is decried or discommended in the Scripture, it is to be understood generally of such Poverty, as Men have brought upon themselves by Idleness, or evil Conduct, than which Death is more eligible. The Scripture throughout expresses an Abhorrence of Idleness, and consequently must condemn a Vagabond or begging Life, which proceeds generally from Laziness. We may understand our Author here, as if one who followed this Trade, was not worthy, or fit to live; according to that of St. *Paul*, *If any will not labour, neither let him eat,* 2 *Thess.* iii. 10. for every one should be made sensible, and acknowledge that he ought to work in the Manner and Way that he is most capable of, and that it is the Lot and Penance, which God has imposed upon all Mankind, since the Entrance of Sin: That St. *Paul* laboured with his own Hands, as well as enjoined it to others. Nor is the Receiving carnal Things, which he thinks both equitable and reasonable, by such as impart spiritual Things, to be looked upon as begging, which is only the Discharge of a Debt, a proper Return for the other's Labour. It is observable, our Saviour condemns a wandering begging Life, when he orders his Disciples not to go from House to House, but to continue in the same they first entered into, and there to refresh themselves, adding this Reason, that *The Labourer is worthy of his Hire,* *Luke* x. 7.

Ver. 29. *The Life of him that dependeth on another Man's Table is not to be counted for a Life: For he polluteth himself with other Mens Meat; but a wise Man, well nurtured, will beware thereof.* *Ἄνθρωπος βλέπων εἰς ἀλλοτρίαν τραπέζαν, ἐκ ἐστὶν αὐτῷ ὁ βίος ἐν λογισμῷ ζωῆς ἀλισγῆσθαι ἢ ψυχὴν αὐτῆς ἐν ἰδέσμασιν ἀλλοτρίοις.* As *βλέπω* is here used in the Sense of *ἐλπίζω* as the *Syr.* and our Version rightly take it, so *ἐλπίζω* is in Scripture taken in the Sense of *βλέπω*, *Pf.* cxlv. 15. *οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ πάντων εἰς σὲ ἐλπίζουσιν*, where the marginal Reading is, The Eyes of all look upon thee. The Description here belongs to the Parasite, who lives at the Pleasure, and is a Slave to the Table, of another; and only so long lives, or rather subsists, as that other shall please to give him Room, or Refreshment. His Life is not to be reckoned Life, in the true Estimate of Living, *ἐν λογισμῷ ζωῆς.* His Subsistence is precarious, as it depends upon the Will and Humour of another; he renders himself contemptible by his Obsequiousness and Fawning, and is forced to submit to a thousand Meanesses, to accomplish his End, and gain Admittance and Sustenance. *Ἀλισγῆσθαι ψυχὴν ἐν ἰδέσμασιν ἀλλοτρίοις* the *Vulg.* badly renders, *alit animam suam cibis alienis*; the Sense is much stronger, and our Translators give it more truly. It is a Metaphor taken from eating forbidden Meats, and particularly the *εἰδωλόθυτα*, or Things offered to Idols, whereby legal-Pollution was contracted. It does



not imply Pollution only in general, but that Species in particular, which arises from unlawful Eating and Drinking. See *Dan. i. 8. Mal. i. 7.* Not to offend in this Respect, or subject himself to the Danger of it, will be the Endeavour of every Man who is well bred, or well instructed, or well disposed, for ἀνὴρ περαιομένης may signify any, or all of these.

Ver. 30. *Begging is sweet in the Mouth of the Shameless, but in his Belly shall burn a Fire.* Ἐν στόματι ἀναιδέος. 'Αναιδής means here a Beggar, who is impudently importunate, and will take no Denial, and is here used in its proper and original Sense. It is not Want merely, but a bold and clamorous Expression of it, which is here condemned. The Sense is, that the professed Beggar loses all Shame, he makes a mere Trade of it, and will not resolve, nor be persuaded, to work, to get his Living, and ease his Necessity. This Experience abundantly confirms in all those Vagrants, who infest Cities and Countries; they will not quit that Course of Life, however enticed by good Offers, or threatened with hard Usage. Nay, will sometimes even threaten others themselves, if not relieved at the Time, or in the Manner, they expect. They love better, to live in shameful loitring Idleness, though exposed to a thousand Inconveniencies and Wants, than to alter their Way of Life, and gain a Livelihood by honest Means and Labour. *Plato*, in the ordering of his Republick, expressly enjoins the Magistrates to drive them out of all Towns, that the Country might be altogether free from such Cattle. *L. xi. De Leg.* *Grotius* understands by πῦρ here great Voraciousness and Greediness, and *Bossuet* the Extremity of Hunger. This Metaphor is not unusual in the Poets. Thus *Ovid* in his fine Description of *Fames*, or Hunger,

— furit ardor edendi,  
Perque avidas fauces, immensaue viscera  
regnat.

Utque rapax ignis non unquam alimenta  
recusat,

Innumerasque faces cremat, & quo copia major  
Est data, plura cupit. Metamorph.

*Junius* understands it of the Curse of God, and the Fire of his Wrath, that shall consume Gluttons; and others expound it of bodily Diseases, which are usually the Consequence of Intemperance.

#### CHAP. XLI.

Ver. 1. **O** Death, how bitter is the Remembrance of thee, to a Man that liveth at Rest in his Possessions, unto the Man that hath nothing to vex him. . . .

Ver. 2. O Death, acceptable is thy Sentence to the Needy, and unto him whose Strength faileth, that is now in the last Age, and is

vexed with all Things.] How beautiful is this Contrast of the wise Man's! Death, says he, is considered as a most Sovereign Evil, as the greatest of Misfortunes, by one in flourishing Circumstances, and in the Bloom of Years, and Vigour of Constitution. A State of Affluence is so engaging, and has so many Charms and Endearments, that it steals Mens Affections, and binds those Chains more strongly, which fasten them to the Earth, and their mortal Prisons; and when Death approaches to break and dissolve them, the ungrateful Prospect gives Horror and Uneasiness, and the faster the earthly Knot was tied, the greater will be the Pain, and Unwillingness at the Separation. *Diogenes* rallies *Alexander the Great* in the Shades, and asks how he could patiently bear the Thoughts of being there, when he remembered the Happiness, Glory, and State he was possessed of on the Earth, the quitting his σωμαλοφύλακας, ὑπασιπας, σαλπείρας, τιμὴν ἃ δόξαν. *Luc. Dial.* And indeed that mighty Conqueror himself, that so often despised Death in the Field, when he was struck with a mortal Disease in *Babylon*, and had Death in his View, betrayed an inglorious Pannick; his Palace was filled with Priests, and Diviners, and no Superstition, says *Plutarch*, was so sottish, but he used it to preserve himself. And the Exit of this Conqueror of the World shews the Impartiality of Death, in making no Distinction. Some Critics observe, that in those Words of *St. Luke* ch. xvi. 22. ἀπέθανε δὲ ἃ ὁ πλούσιος there is a particular beautiful Emphasis in ἃ, intimating, that as rich as he was, his Riches could not keep him from the Power of the Grave. On the contrary, to one in Poverty, sunk with Misfortunes, and overwhelmed with Grief, or to the Person stooping under the Burden of decrepit old Age, Death is esteemed as the End of all Pain and Misery, and as a seasonable Relief and Good. As nothing ties him to the Earth, he looks upon Death, especially the good Man that is departing, with a composed Countenance, and his Approach to it is attended with Hope and Pleasure; he considers it as the Haven of his shattered Bark, as the final Period of all his Vexations, and the agreeable Passage to a better, and more welcome Life, and he rightly estimates the Exchange, when it shall happen, to be, as it really is to those that die in the Lord, a substantial Gain. How much nobler is a Contempt of Life, proceeding from such a Principle, than that of the conceited Stoic, who either from an affected Insensibility under the Evils of Life, or the mere Want of its good Things, defies and laughs at Death? The Conclusion we should draw, and the Use we should make of the Remembrance of Death, which will unavoidably intrude itself into all Breasts, is not to shrink from it abjectly, but to reconcile ourselves to it, to familiarize the Thoughts of



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of it by Meditation and Reflection, and to prepare for it by dying daily to the World.

Ver. 3. *Fear not the Sentence of Death, remember them that have been before thee, and that come after, for this is the Sentence of the Lord over all Flesh. And why art thou against the Pleasure of the most High? There is no Inquisition in the Grave, whether thou have lived ten, or an hundred, or a thousand Years.*]

*Κεῖμα* would be as properly rendred Condemnation, this is the Condemnation from the Lord, upon all the Descendants of *Adam*, who received their Sentence of Mortality in his: And this may be one Reason, that, though the first Fathers of the World lived so long, yet it is noted of those that lived the longest, that at length they died, to shew that this Sentence of God is infallible and irreversibile, and that he will be found true in whatsoever he decrees. The Law of the most High, in this Respect, admits of no Exception; we are not better than so many others that have gone before us, or than those that will follow after us, why should we therefore expect an Exemption, or be so alarmed at what must necessarily happen? The great Number that suffer alike, and undergo the same Fate with us, should diminish and take off the Horror, and the Insignificancy and Unserviceableness of the Fear ought to encourage us against the Danger; as in a Battle, where there is only a Probability of Death, despair drives away all Fear, and turns it into Bravery and Courage. *Seneca* has a pertinent Observation on the Occasion, *Stultum est timere quod vitare non possis. Stultum est dolere in ejusmodi conditione te esse, in qua nemo non est; solatium est grande cum universo unà rapi.* De Provid. c. v. Another Motive to reconcile us to the Thoughts of Death is, that long Life is far from being always desirable, it may perhaps occasion our sharing in more Misfortunes, or only serve to encrease the Number of our Sins. The Enquiry in the other World will not be how long, or how little, Persons have lived here; none will then envy or reproach others about the Number of Years, or the State and Condition they lived in upon Earth; but the grand Inquisition will be, which no Age or Quality can escape, how they behaved themselves here, how their Stewardship was managed, and their Time improved; how the Account stood at the very Instant of Death; for after that, there will not be any Possibility of altering, changing, or correcting what is past.

Ver. 5. *The Children of Sinners are abominable Children, and they that are conversant in the Dwelling of the Ungodly.*]

The evil Example, and bad Principles of Parents have an Influence upon the Conduct and Sentiments of their Children; and as Vice spreads, and grows worse in every Generation, the Son of a wicked Father is generally more abandoned and corrupt. The last Clause is but indifferently rendred;

the Sense according to the *Gr.* is, that the Children of Sinners, as being born corrupt, and with evil Dispositions, seek out for loose Companions, like themselves, and are chiefly conversant with the Wicked, and in such Places of Infamy as they resort to.

Ver. 7. *The Children will complain of an ungodly Father, because they shall be reproached for his Sake.*]

A Parent, who bestows nothing better upon his Children, than the sad Lot of a spurious Birth, and the Ignominy and Contempt which generally attends it, is to be looked upon rather as an Enemy, than a Father; and he that gives his lawful Issue no better Inheritance, than the Poison of a bad Example, and makes them the Children of Wrath, by the loose Maxims, which he instils into them, and his evil Communication before them, or by giving them too much Liberty, permits them knowingly to follow evil Courses without Restraint, is he not rather a Murderer, than a Father? But such Parents as encourage their Children in Vice or Lewdness, that are themselves the Seducers, and Betrayers of their Innocence, that teach them to sin, and perhaps sin together with them, are not such unnatural Tempers very Fiends? We read with Astonishment of those merciless Parents, that offered with their own Hands *Souls destitute of Help*, in Sacrifice to *Moloch*, *Wisdom* xii. 6. and are such as initiate their own Children into impure, or Bacchanalian Rites, less wicked and barbarous? Will not such unhappy ones rise in Judgment against, and accuse, their Parents at the great Tribunal of Cruelty and Inhumanity, and be loud Witnesses of Wickedness against them in the Day of their Trial? *Wisd.* iv. 6.

Ver. 8. *Wo be unto you, ungodly Men. . . for if you encrease, it shall be to your Destruction.* Ver. 9. *And if you be born, you shall be born to a Curse: And if you die, a Curse shall be your Portion.*]

The wise Man here addresses himself to the Wicked, whose Birth at first, as it was through a Curse, so their Death will end with one. It had been better for Persons with such evil Dispositions, never to have been born, than to be born and live in continual Sin, and be eternally miserable. Was it not to be wished that such Men, as *Cain*, *Jeroboam*, *Antiochus*, *Epiphanes*, *Judas*, *Simon Magus*, *Maxentius*, &c. and other wicked and notorious Sinners, had never seen Light? The Author of *the Book of Wisdom* describes the *Canaanites* in like Manner as a naughty Generation, or accursed Seed from the Beginning, xii. 10. *Grotius* finds fault with the present Reading of the *Greek*, and restores it thus, *ἰὼν ὃν πληθυνθήτε, εἰς ἀπώλειαν γενήσετε, καὶ ἰὼν ὀλιγοθήσετε, εἰς καλῶς μερομήσετε, i. e.* If ye encrease by a Multitude of Children, ye shall beget them to their Destruction; and when ye die, ye shall be ranked among the Cursed. In the following Verse many Copies



pics omit *καὶ ἐλάττω*, and the Sense indeed seems better without it, that as Earth returns to Earth, so Evil as naturally to the Evil.

Ver. 16. *Therefore be shamefaced according to my Word; for it is not good to retain all Shamefacedness, neither is it altogether approved in every thing.* *Οὐ γὰρ ἐστὶ πάντων ἐν πάσῃ διαφύλαξαι καλόν, ἔστι δὲ πάντα πᾶσιν ἐν πάσῃ ἀποδοκιμαστέον.*

Various are the Senses of this last Clause. *Bossuet* renders with the *Vulg.* All things are not to be approved of in all, or by all, or are not equally profitable and delightful to all. The *Geneva* Version has, *Neither are all things allowed as faithful in all Men.* *Grotius* has still a different Sense, nor is it commendable to be altogether incredulous, or to disbelieve every thing, and reads *ἀπιστεῖν* instead of *ἐλάττω*. But I conceive, as the Author proceeds in the remainder of the Chapter, to lay down divers Rules, not only to distinguish that which is shameful, from that which is not so, but also to set down the Degrees and Circumstances, which enhance the Turpitude of any Action; that this Verse should be considered as the Entrance upon that Subject, and the Sense to be, that there are some Instances, when we should not be ashamed, and some when we should, for it is not good *διαφύλασσειν* to avoid all Shame [so *Grotius* understands the Word, and so it is used *Prov.* vi. 24. and elsewhere] for that there is a commendable Shame, this Author has determined, ch. iv. 21. which seems indeed to be a better Rendering, than that of our Version, and makes the whole clearer and more consistent, viz. that it is neither good to avoid all Shame, because there is a Shame, which is a Glory and Grace, nor is Shame to be approved of in every Person, or on every Occasion, because there is a faulty and a criminal Shame. This is confirmed by what follows in this and the next Chapter, where the wise Man instances in several Particulars, and shews when, and of what things, we ought or ought not to be ashamed.

Ver. 17. *Be ashamed of Whoredom before Father and Mother, and of a Lie before a Prince or a great Man.* *Αἰσχυνεσθε, καὶ πόρνην ἐνώπιον πατρὸς καὶ μητρὸς. Ἀπὸ δὲ ἐνώπιον ἀρχαίου καὶ μεγάλου.* *Ἀπὸ* is here used in the Sense of *coram*, denoting the Person, before whom the Offence is committed, see *1 John* ii. 28. and so answers to *ἐνώπιον* among the Hebrews, a facie, in conspectu, as *ἐξ*, which follows here, denotes the Matter of the Sin. Some *Latin* Copies have *propter*, i. e. upon Account of the Relation, or Dignity, of such Persons. As Fornication or any indecent Act or Word, in the Presence of Parents, or in such an open Manner, or Place, as may come to their Knowledge, for so far it may be extended, betrays a Contempt of them, and must occasion great Concern to them; so with respect to Truth, as great a regard should be had to Princes, who may be considered as Fathers too in their

publick Capacity, and as their Persons and Office are sacred, they have a Right not to be imposed upon by any Falshood. What *Terence* says of private Parents, may include also civil ones, *Qui mentiri aut fallere instituit patrem aut matrem, tanto magis audebit ceteros.* Here is a great Hiatus in the *Orient*. Versions, scarce one of the Particulars, from this Place to *9.* of the next Chapter, is taken any Notice of, which, according to *Jansenius*, are no less than fourteen Subjects of real Shame, very different from each other. Some are Crimes, others only Faults, more or less considerable, according to the Circumstances of them. There are others, which are rather Instances of Inadvertence and Incivility, than Sins, properly speaking, against God.

Ver. 18. *Of an Offence before a Judge and Ruler, of Iniquity before a Congregation and People.* *Πλημμελεία* means here some open Misbehaviour, or Crime before Persons in Office, whose Authority and Dignity as they demand a respectful Obedience, so will they be sure to punish what gives any Offence in their Presence, and make an immediate Example of such, as seem to disrespect and slight them. Crimes done covertly, not being known, have often the good Fortune to escape Punishment; but such as are done perhaps in the Court of Justice, or in the very Verge of it, in a bold and daring Manner, or contemptuous and prophane Words spoken in the Hearing of the publick Magistrate, being so many Instances of Defiance, as well as Folly, are sure to be punished, as such an Insult deserves. By *εὐσεβείᾳ* some understand the great Sanhedrim, and by *ἀνομιᾳ* Sedition. Others think any publick Injury against the Good of the State to be here meant, in which may be included evil Counsels, and Designs, Threats, Conspiracies, and Attempts upon the Laws, Privileges, and Liberties of a People, which occasion Jealousy and Clamour, and often bring down publick Punishment upon such as have been suspected of a Design to infringe them. History abounds with Examples of Impeachments and Proscriptions of bad Patriots, and sometimes the People have been so exasperated against the supposed Enemies of their Country, as to assassinate, stone, or otherwise destroy them. One sees by the Example of *Rehoboam*, King of *Judah*, how dangerous it is to provoke the People by any imprudent Answer, or threatening Language, *1 Kings* xii. 14. The Advice seems nearly the same with that ch. vii. 7. See Note on it. *Ἀδελφία*, which follows, is not to be used, even towards a Stranger, but the Relations we may be engaged in, will claim even beyond strict Justice. Something is due to our Acquaintance, more to our Friends, but most to a Partner, who may be considered as our other self.

Ver. 19. *And of Theft in regard of the Place*



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*Place where thou sojournest, and in regard of the Truth of God and his Covenant.]* ὁτι τὸ πρῶτον ἐπαροικεῖς ἐν κλοπῇ, καὶ ὁτι ἀληθείας θεῶν καὶ διαθήκης. Some, and our Translators in particular, seem to unite these Sentences, as if they related to the same thing, viz. Be ashamed of any Cheating or Fraud in a strange Place or Country, for thereby you shew your Forgetfulness of the Law of God: Or, Above all be ashamed of Unfaithfulness in transgressing the Law and the Covenant of the Lord, by any Instance of Falshood or Theft. Others make them distinct, and to relate to different Things, and refer the second Clause to what follows, thus, Be ashamed of violating the Truth and Covenant of the Lord, by mixing with Idolaters, and eating Meat offered to Idols at a prophane Table. *Jansenius* thinks it an Interpolation, and that it crept in here from ch. xlii. 2. because no Sin is mentioned here, as in the other Sentences, of which a Man should be ashamed. *Grotius's* Emendation seems to set all right, and contains the Particular supposed wanting here, viz. Forgetfulness of God; for with great Probability he conjectures the true reading to be, ὁτι λήθης θεῶν, καὶ τ. λ. i. e. Be ashamed of Forgetfulness of God, his Law, and Covenant. Dr. *Grabe* accordingly adopts this as most preferable, *Prolegom.* c. iv. tom. 3. It may be proper to observe that ὁτι in most of the following Passages takes the Sense in which ἐν hath been used.

*Ibid. And of scorning to give and take.]* i. e. Be ashamed to use any Deceit with respect to what you pay or receive. One may cheat either by paying in bad Coin, or by paying too little, or by refusing to do it but by Compulsion: And in receiving, the same Fault is committed by taking more than is due, or by demanding it too soon, or unseasonably, or by oppressive Methods. This may also be extended to Accounts, which are not fairly and honestly kept, when one enters more than he has paid, or less than he has received. Or a Wrong may be done to Creditors by refusing to pay at all, or by deferring Payment unreasonably, or by a fraudulent Bankruptcy. The Sense briefly is, that in Matters of Commerce, for so the Phrase is used ch. xlii. 7. and by the *Rabbins*, we should be ashamed to be dishonest, and both pay and receive with Honour and Justice. Σκοραπισμός, here rendred Scorning, means Cheating, and is equivalent, according to *Hesychius*, to ἀπάτη; if we take the Phrase in the Sense of Charity and Generosity, as it is used *Phil.* iv. 15. the meaning then is, that we should be ashamed to alienate to a private Use publick Money, and particularly to abuse or mispend what is given for the Relief of the Poor, or to other pious Uses; but this Caution is mentioned y 21. and is better so understood there than of detaining a private Gift or Legacy.

Ver. 20. *And of Silence before them that*

*salute thee.]* The wise Man having instanced in the former Verse in a Species of Rudeness, viz. lolling on the Table, instead of resting with the Elbow upon the *Triclinium*, as was the Custom in this Writer's Time, proceeds to mention another Instance of Unpoliteness, viz. the not receiving Civilities kindly, and returning them obligingly; which distant Behaviour proceeds from Pride, and a Contempt of others. To return a Salutation is one Species of Debt due to those that are so obliging to us; and we should even prevent those that are approaching us in a respectful Manner, however, not be behind Hand in returning their Civility. Politeness and Good-manners demand this, especially towards our Friends, who are cordial and sincere in their Affections, and Professions towards us. They differ widely from such Flatterers as address, and would insinuate themselves by fulsome Language, whose Carriage is affected, and their Visits insidious. Such officious designing Persons *Solomon* means, when he says, *He that blesseth his Friend with a loud Voice, rising early in the Morning, it shall be counted a Curse to him,* Prov. xxvii. 14. How much better and clearer is the Rendring of the ὁ, ὅς ἀν' ἐλόγη φίλον τὸ πρῶτον μεγάλη τῇ φωνῇ, κατὰρῶμεν εἶδεν, διαφέρειν δόξει. *Non differt ab eo qui maledicit.* Syr. to which agrees the *Vulg.* After these the Author proceeds to mention some suspicious Instances of Over Civilities, as too great Admiration of, and Regard for another Man's Wife, or too much Intimacy and Familiarity with his Maid: Next he instances in an over Fondness for a Man's self, whereby he becomes tiresome by a tedious Repetition of his own Actions and Words, for so *Grotius* understands δόλιγος, y. 23. and, which may be resolved into the same Cause, the spreading Reports, λόγος ἀκοῆς, publishing all one hears to the Detriment and Disparagement of others. To be careful not to offend in any of these Particulars, will be to a Man's Honour.

## C H A P. XLII.

Ver. 2. *AND of Judgment to justify the Ungodly.]* This carries a very bad Sense, as it stands in our Version, as if the Advice was, not to be ashamed of a Judgment or Sentence to justify the Ungodly; except δικαιῶσαι means here, as it does sometimes in *Greek* Writers, to condemn or punish. The Sense is, Be not ashamed to oppose any Judgment or Sentence, in which a wicked Man is intended to be favoured, or acquitted; be so far from concurring in a wrong Sentence, as to resolve to oppose all Wickedness, as soon as it is discovered, and known to you: Let neither Fear, nor Friendship, nor Interest, nor any human Regard stop you in the Prosecution of Justice, according to the Direction, *Deut.* i. 16, 17.



Ver. 3. *Of reckoning with thy Partners, and Travellers.*] *Ἐν λόγῳ κοινωνῶν καὶ ὁδοιπόρων.* Grotius understands this of not being ashamed to entertain Companions and Fellow-Travellers, *συνδοιπόρους*, with agreeable Discourse, to shew Civility to those we travel with, or meet on the Way, to take in good part what they say, and to contribute by friendly Intercourse to make the Time and Journey pass agreeably. Others more justly of doing Business uprightly, as an Agent for other People, whether Neighbours, or Strangers, and keeping a fair Account. *Badwell* explains it, which seems the best Sense, of a judicial Hearing between an Acquaintance, and a Stranger, and of not being influenced by Prejudice in Favour of the former, but to judge equally and impartially between Friends and those that are unknown, between Domestics and Foreigners. That *ὁδοιπόρος* is sometimes used in the Sense of *ξένος*, see *Montfauc. Hexapl. 2 Kings xii. 4.*

*Ibid. Or of the Gift of the Heritage of Friends.*] *Ἐν δόσεις κληρονομίας ἱταίρων.* I do not greatly approve Grotius's Exposition, Be not ashamed to declare your Friends for your Heirs, or to give Legacies to your Acquaintance, though your Relations be discontented, and take it amiss. The Sense may either be, Take great Care not to be partial in the dividing an Inheritance, where your Friends are concerned, and have an Interest, *Dans le partage d'un heritage où vos amis sont interessez*, according to *Calmet*. For where a Man has several *ἱταίροις*, and they have, as they naturally will have, different Degrees of Interest and Influence with him, he may be in great Danger of accepting Persons, in making a Division between them. Or, the Advice here may be, to distribute the Estate, Inheritance, or Effects of a deceased Friend, according to his Mind and Intention, and conformably to the Tenour of his Will, without listening to, or regarding the Solicitations or Talk of interested and dissatisfied Persons: and, if the Trust be vested in you, to divide the Inheritance impartially among the several Co-heirs. According to this Sense *δόσις* is equivalent to *διάδοσις*.

Ver. 4. *Or of getting much or little.*] Look narrowly to the Weights and Measures of those with whom you have any Dealing, and also to the Prices which are set upon their Goods, and trouble not yourself about those who blame, or laugh at, your scrupulous Exactness in these Particulars; or adhere strictly to Right and Equity, even at the Expence of your own Interest; mind not the getting more or less in any Dealing or Bargain, but the getting it honestly and fairly. Nor be ashamed in Traffick, says *Calmet*, to be honest, and deal fairly, *Dans les petits comme dans les grands gains*, in small, as well as large Gains, in little Matters, as well as greater.

Ver. 5. *And of Merchants indifferent selling.*] *Ἐν ἀδιαφορίᾳ πρῶσεως ἐμπορέων.* *Ni de corriger le desordre qui regne dans le Commerce entre les marchands*, says *Calmet*, applying it to Magistrates, whose Business it is to prevent any Injustice between Buyers and Sellers. As referred to selling, the Greek literally may mean, Be not ashamed to look out for a good Chapman, to treat with different Persons or Merchants, and to chuse among them him that offers the best Price. As referred to buying, Be not ashamed to ask the Price of Things, to examine and cheapen that which you are about to buy, if you cannot depend on the Person's Truth and Honesty; or, if imposed upon, to complain of a bad Commodity, to turn it back, or to insist on an Exchange, or an Abatement. Most of the Versions and Commentators understand *διαφορίᾳ* in the Sense of indifferent, as our Translators do; but *ἀδιαφορίᾳ* in this Writer more generally signifies Money. See *ch. vii. 19. xxvii. 1. and 2 Maccab. i. 35.* According to this Acceptation it may mean, Be not ashamed to ask for the Money for Goods sold and delivered to the Merchant; or, when you are about to receive a Sum of Money, scruple not to look at it, to try and examine it, to tell it, and, if need be, to weigh it.

Ver. 6. *Sure keeping is good, where an evil Wife is.*] *ἐν γυναικὶ πονηρᾷ καλὸν σφραγίς.* *Σφραγίς* here signifies a Signet or Seal, with which Things valuable and precious were sealed, for their better Safety and Preservation. A wise Master of a Family, says this Writer, denies even to his Wife the usual Power in his House, if he knows her to be indiscreet, and has reason to question her Management. This Advice, though well meant, is matter of great Tenderness; as one should not distrust, when there is no very pressing Occasion, nor raise a Commotion and Family Difference for only Trifles missing, or abused, lest Resentment should make her throw off all Care in general; so neither, when there is room enough for Distrust and Complaint, should Things be carried to such an Extremity, as to exclude the Mistress of the House her proper Province, and by putting Matters out of her Reach, or Cognizance, to make her, as it were, a Cypher in it. A generous Confidence in a Wife, joined with well-timed Persuasion, Observation on others thriving and flourishing by means of Management, and a sensible Experience of domestic Uneasiness, and their common Loss for want of Oeconomy, will at length, 'tis probable, produce a happy Change, and effect that, which Upbraiding or violent Methods must despair of attaining. Some extend this Advice further, and by *γυνή πονηρᾷ* understand, not merely a careless Wife, who gives herself no Concern about Family Affairs, but one who is loose and intriguing, that such a one, if not confined, should at least be



kept within Doors, and be denied Opportunities of gadding abroad, cultivating, or continuing a dangerous Acquaintance, and executing any latent Scheme of Mischief and Wickedness.

*Ibid. And shut up where many Hands are.]*

A discreet Governor of a Family keeps an Account of all, and has an Eye to Things how they go, not so much out of a Spirit of Distrust or Covetousness, as not to give Servants an Opportunity to injure, or defraud, and to hinder that Mischief and Waste, which is a sure Attendant upon Carelessness and Negligence. This fine Precept of Economy, is chiefly intended, says *Calmet*, for the Benefit of great and rich Families, which can never be so grand and considerable, as to be above the Use of prudent Management, nor indeed long continue their Greatness and State without it. As their Number of Domestics and Dependents is considerably larger, so is the Danger of Extravagance and Waste proportionably greater. As these have no Property in what is consumed, and their Stay and Continuance generally but precarious, and imagine an unnecessary Profusion for the Credit of the Great, they cannot be suspected of any Principles of Economy, nor to have either Inclination, or Forecast to prevent needless Expences. To stop such Inconveniences, arising often merely from Wantonness, by prudent Inspection or Provision will be no Reflexion, either upon the good Sense, or Dignity, or Character of the Great. This wise Writer has observed upon another Occasion, that *he that despiseth little Things, shall perish by little and little*, ch. xix. 1. which is equally applicable to Matters of Expence, the small Particulars whereof, whether arising from Servants Negligence, or other Instances of Mismanagement, seemingly trifling and insignificant, and as such taken no Notice of, will be found at length to compose large Sums, and the overlooking of these may be assigned as one probable Cause of the Decay of Estates. On the contrary, a great and well regulated Family, where Order, and a well conducted Plenty reigns, is a sort of Microcosm, or the natural World in Miniature, where, though the constituent Parts are numberless, nothing in the Structure of it is idle or superfluous, every thing knows its Place, has its Use, keeps its Course, and the more minute, as well as greater Concerns of it, are administered with the most consummate Wisdom.

*Ver. 8. Be not ashamed to inform the Unwise and Foolish, and the extreme Aged, that contendeth with those that are young.]*

It is never shameful to reprove or correct the Wicked and Unwise, of whatever Age, or Condition they be. If an old Man acts beneath himself, betrays a misbecoming Levity in Words or Actions; if he falls into Crimes, which even the Giddiness and Fire

of Youth is no Excuse for; scruple not to reprove and admonish him. Remember with what Zeal and Spirit young *Daniel* proceeded against the two incontinent Elders. The Marginal Reading is full to this Sense, and *Hæschelius* refers to a Copy which had *νενομένος πρὸς πορνείας*, an old Man accused of Fornication. *Grotius* understands it in the Sense of our Version, that it is proper to admonish an old Man, differing or quarrelling with young Men, or Boys, as being unworthy of his Character, and a Contest unsuitable to his Strength and Age. According to others, the Sense is, Scruple not to take the Part of elderly Persons insulted by the younger Sort; preserve the Reverence due to old Age, and remind them who play upon them, if Occasion be, of the Fate of those jeering young Men (for so it should be rendered) who insulted the Baldness of the Prophet *Elisba*, 2 Kings ii. 23. This is proper Advice literally taken; in a spiritual Sense it may be understood as a Direction according to *Mess. of Port Royal*, to stand up for, and maintain the Truth and Purity of the Church, so venerable for its Antiquity, and recommended by the pious Zeal of so many Saints and Fathers, who have appeared in its Defence, when it is attacked by the upstart Errors of such, whose proper Character is a Fondness for Novelty.

*Ver. 9. The Father waketh for the Daughter, when no Man knoweth, and the Care for her taketh away Sleep; when she is young, lest she pass the Flower of her Age, and being married, lest she should be hated.]* The received Sense of the former Part is, that a Daughter is the Cause of secret, or hidden Inquietude to the Father, *καὶ ἀπόκρυφον ἀγρυπνία*, which our Translation follows; but *Grotius*, and others, apply *ἀπόκρυφον* to *θυγάτηρ*, and thereby mean a Virgin Daughter, who has not yet left her Father's House and Family, but continues confined to her Apartment, or the *Gynæceum*. The *Hebrews* called such a one before Marriage, *Alma*, i. e. one concealed, because before they were espoused, and led in form to their Husbands, they remained always shut up, and concealed from the Sight and Acquaintance of Men; and even, when a Proposal was made for Marriage, the whole Courtship was transacted by Proxies, without either of the Parties seeing one another. The following Sentence, *When she is young, lest she pass the Flower of her Age*, the *Vulg.* renders, *Ne forte in adolescentia sua adulta efficiatur*, which affords no Sense, *adulta* being the prime Time for Espousals: I think the Rendering should either be, *superadulta*; or, if the *Greek* would admit, *adultera efficiatur*, as *Jerom's Bible* has it, and that of *Sixtus V.* which indeed the *Syr.* and *Arab.* greatly confirm; the former has, *In pueritia ipsius ne injuriam patiat*; the latter, *In adolescentia ipsius ne efficiatur injuria*.



ria. But still there seems good Reason against admitting this Conjecture, as this very Sense is expressed in the beginning of the next Verse. *Superadulta* therefore seems preferable, and answers better to the Greek; and no wonder the Father should be concerned on this Head, as, according to the common Notion of the Jews, it was esteemed dishonourable to pass the Flower of Age unmarried, 1 Cor. vii. 36. and in particular, from the Precept to increase and multiply, they thought themselves obliged to marry at Twenty, and declared, that whosoever neglected this Precept, offended against the Law, and was guilty of Homicide. When married, the Parent's Care still continued for his Daughter, lest she should be disagreeable to her Husband by any bodily Infirmary, Badness of Temper, or Breach of conjugal Chastity, for so the Orient. Versions understand, what our Translators render Misbehaviour; or, lest she should at length prove barren, which was reckoned a great Disgrace in *Israel*, a barren Wife being always looked upon with an evil Eye in her Husband's House. All, or any of which Cases was a legal Cause of Divorce, and must occasion fresh Concern, and new Difficulties to her near Relations, by her being returned with Disgrace, τοῖς παλαινοῖς αὐτῆς, an elegant, and truly classical Expression.

Ver. 12. Behold not every Body's Beauty, and sit not in the midst of Women. Ver. 13. For from Garments cometh a Moth, and from Women Wickedness.] The literal Rendering of the Greek is, Look not earnestly on every Man for Beauty, which *Calmet* understands of Pædoraftism, or Sodomy, and says this Piece of Advice was necessary to be directed to those who lived among the Greeks, or Heathens, among whom this detestable Crime, and the most shameful and unnatural Actions, were notorious and common. It may be considered also as a Direction to young Women, not to gaze upon, or admire Mens Beauty, as what follows relates to Men, and their Behaviour, with respect to Women. The Caution is, not to avoid Womens Company altogether, or not to continue long in it, which is both inoffensive, and agreeable; but not to communicate, or reveal Secrets, or Matters of Consequence to them, or consult about grand Arcana in their Presence or Hearing; so συνέχευ is sometimes taken; and so it seems to be understood here by the Arab. Version. The next Verse seems to bear harder still upon them, which the *Vulg.* renders, *A muliere iniquitas viri*, and it makes the Sense rather clearer. I cannot persuade myself to think with many Expositors, that the Author here, rightly understood, declares against the Company and Conversation of Women in general, as if certain Danger and Mischief attended it; or that he was such an Enemy to the Sex as to forbid all Intercourse with them, whom

God made for Man's Society and Comfort: what is said relates, I conceive, to bad or lewd Women, whose Acquaintance will kindle the Fire of Lust, and from such may be expected to come *πονηρία*, both Wickedness, and Misery. For impure Love is as a Worm that gnaws the Soul, it preys upon, and eats insensibly what it fastens upon, and the Danger is more to be feared, as it is less perceived, and the Temptations to it more engaging; it is as the Moth which breeds and engenders in Clothes, continually fretting the Garment without being perceived, till it is too late to prevent, and remedy the Mischief. Such is the Danger, and such the Decay that will ensue from an artful, designing, and wicked Woman.

Ver. 14. Better is the Churlishness of a Man, than a courteous Woman, a Woman, I say, which bringeth Shame and Reproach.] i. e. Better and more to your Advantage, is the rough Admonition of a sincere Friend, who means your Good, than the pretended Kindness of a Woman, who aims only at Mischief. According to *Calmet* the Sense is, It is better to have a Man for an Enemy, than a Woman, i. e. a deceitful Woman, for a Friend; the Hatred of the one is less dangerous, than the false Tenderness, and dissembled Caresses of the other. Such was *Dalilah* to *Sampson*, and *Judith* to *Holofernes*. By a courteous Woman, we are not to understand here, one that is modestly civil, and obliging, and ready to do all good and commendable Offices, who is truly ἀγαθοποιός, but one, who is engaging by deceitful Arts, and a false Fondness, and courteous only to ensnare. It is observable, that this Writer himself seems purposely to design to prevent any Mistake, by adding more explicitly, that the Woman he means, is one whose subtil and engaging Arts will in the End bring Shame, and Reproach, and Ruin, to such unhappy ones as are drawn in by her. The *Romanists* object, that *Josephus* quotes this Verse as Scripture, and links it with several Precepts and Maxims of *Moses*. *Cont. App.* L. ii. To this Objection it will be sufficient to reply, 1. That he does not quote this Passage αὐτολέγει, the Sentence which occurs there is different from this. 2. That it was not in the original Text of *Josephus*, appears from hence, that it is not in the ancient Version of *Ruffin*. 3. Supposing him to quote this, it no more proves this Book canonical, than his citing something out of *Plato de Legibus*, proves that Book to be so. 4. Γεγραμ is often used in a lax Sense, to signify any ecclesiastical Writing, and not precisely Scripture. See *Dupin's Hist. of the Can. Cofin's Scholast. Hist.* *Huet. Demonstr. Evang.* Prop. iv.

Ver. 15. I will now remember the Works of the Lord, and declare the Things that I have seen: in the Words of the Lord are his Works.] ἐν λόγοις Κυρίου τὰ ἔργα αὐτοῦ. It seems



seems, say *Mess. of Port Royal*, as if the following Verses were a sort of Song of the wise Man, who rises on a sudden, as it were by a holy Transport, which animates him through the Admiration of the greatness of God's Works. From this Place to the End of the Book, he is wholly taken up, either in praising the Lord, and enlarging upon the Excellence of his Works, or in publishing the Praises of the Jewish Worthies. He begins with a fine Thought, that his Word, or Almighty *Fiat*, was a perfect Work. 2 *Esd.* vi. 38. which greatly resembles that of *Moses*, *Gen.* i. 3. so much admired by *Longinus*, or that comprehensive one of the *Psalmist*, *Psal.* xxxiii. 9. Ἐν λόγῳ Κρείς, I think would have been more lofty, and conveyed a higher Idea of God's Power. *Philo* has the same Thought, ὁ λόγος ἔργον ἐστὶν αὐτοῦ, *De Mose*, L. i. and *Clem. Alexandr. Strom.* L. v. There is the like Plural Expression, and upon the same Occasion, in the very next Chapter, *v.* 5, 10, which our Translators have there rightly rendred in the singular. *Grotius* spoils this beautiful Thought by joining ἐν λόγοις to the foregoing Sentence, and making (by what Authority I know not) Κρείς τὰ ἔργα αὐτοῦ, to be a Gloss crept into the Text from the Margin.

Ver. 16. *The Sun that giveth Light, looketh upon all Things, and the Work thereof is full of the Glory of the Lord.* This is not accurately rendred; the Author is not here speaking professedly of the Sun, and its wonderful Creation, as may seem at first View, (that follows in the next Chapter) it is brought in here only by way of Comparison. The Sense is, the Glory of God appears in the whole Creation, as the Light of the Sun is seen upon all the Earth. Ἐργον αὐτοῦ is not rightly rendred the Work thereof, understanding it of the making of the Sun, but relates to God, God's Work, or his whole Creation, is full of his Majesty, or of the Majesty of his Glory. So *Grotius*, *Sicut sol omnia perlustrat, ita & opus hoc Dei universum plenum est ipsius maiestatis.* The Oriental Versions too take it comparatively, and some MSS have αἱ ἡλίου φάσεις.

Ver. 17. *The Lord hath not given Power to the Saints to declare all his marvellous Works, which the Almighty Lord firmly settled, that whatsoever is, might be established for his Glory.* The *Vulgate* reads with an Interrogation, *Nonne Dominus fecit Sanctos enarrare omnia mirabilia sua?* Understanding probably by the Saints, either the Angels, and Blessed in Heaven, who know, and celebrate his Power and Greatness, or in an inferior Sense, the *Israelites*, to whom God made known his Laws, and wondrous Works, while other Nations continued in Darkness and Ignorance. The Author wisely premises this, says *Calmet*, to excuse his own Attempt in undertaking so lofty a Subject, which the Angels themselves do not

comprehend, much less can explain perfectly. But the Generality of Interpreters, with our Translators, understand the Passage in a quite contrary Sense, that God hath not given such a Power, or enabled his Saints, to declare all the Wonders which he hath done; and, as Almighty Lord, hath established, beyond all Power of Alteration, or Disturbance, in such a perfect Manner, that they may continue for ever, in the Order and Manner he has fixed them, to his Glory, and the good of the whole System; which seems confirmed by a parallel Passage, ch. xviii. 4. *To whom hath he given Power to declare his Works? and who shall find out his noble Acts? who shall number the Strength of his Majesty; and who shall also tell out his Mercies?* where the Interrogation is equivalent to a Negative; and the Greek in the first Sentence so expresses it, οὐδενὶ ἐξέποισεν ἐξαγγέλλαι τὰ ἔργα αὐτοῦ.

Ver. 18. *He seeketh out the Deep, and the Heart, and considereth their crafty Devices: . . . and he beholdeth the Signs of the World.* Something seems here wanting, and is probably dropt from the Text, *Gratius* supposes it to be ἀνθρώπων, which indeed the *Vulgate* has inserted, *Abyssum, & cor hominum investigavit*; but what are we to understand by the Signs of the World, which God is said here to behold? The learned Critic above says, that the least discernible Point of Time is called *σημεῖον*, and that God knoweth every Portion and Instant of time, and what passes in it. According to *Calmet* it means, that he sees into, and understands all future Events, not by Inspection of the Stars, or the help of any Signs natural, but he knows perfectly all the Changes that happen in Nature, without having any Occasion to consult second Causes. And how indeed should he be ignorant of them, who seeth from everlasting to everlasting, to whom all Things past and future, are present, and the Events of all Times and Ages, are known from all Eternity, and as it were written in his Mind; οὐδὲ εἰς λόγος, not even one thing, for so it should be rendred, is hidden from him.

Ver. 22. *Oh how desireable are all his Works, and that a Man may see even to a Spark.* Ver. 23. *All these Things live, and remain for ever, for all Uses, and they are all obedient.* Who can refrain from praising God that sees his Glory, and how do his Works command our Wonder, and merit to be extolled and revered by all that fear him? for after representing to ourselves, in the best Manner we are able, his Excellence and Beauty, all that we can attain to is, in Comparison, but a Spark; so small a part of his Works do we see, and so imperfect is our Knowledge. Or the Sense may be, We see the Wonder of his Works even in a Spark, i. e. all his Creatures proclaim his Greatness, and there is none, how small so-



ever it be, in which we do not discern Marks of his Wisdom, and Power. By this all created Nature has subsisted through numberless successive Generations, and will subsist to the Remainder of Time, fulfilling his Will, and serving the Purposes which he has assigned them. "All Things," says a very judicious Writer, "since the Time that God did first proclaim the Edicts of his Law upon the natural World, have continued their regular Course; Heaven and Earth have hearkened unto his Voice, and their Labour hath been to do his Will. If Nature should intermit her Course, and leave, though it were but for a little while, the Observation of her own Laws; if those principal and mother Elements, whereof all Things in this lower World are made, should lose the Qualities they now have; if the Frame of that heavenly Arch erected over our Heads, should loosen and dissolve itself; if the Celestial Spheres should forget their wonted Motions, and by irregular Volubility turn themselves any other way; if the Prince of the Lights of Heaven, who now, as a Giant, doth run his unwearied Course, should as it were through a languishing Faintness begin to stand, and to rest himself; if the Moon should wander from her beaten Way; the Times and Seasons of the Year blend themselves by confused and disordered Mixture; the Winds breath out their last Gasp; the Clouds yield no more Rain; the Earth be defeated of heavenly Influence, and the Fruits of it pine away, as Children at the withered Breasts of their Mother, no longer able to yield them Relief; what would become of Man himself, whom these Things do now all serve? See we not plainly, that the Obedience of the Creatures unto the Law of Nature, is the Stay of the whole World?" *Hooker's Eccles. Pol.* p. 73.

Ver. 24. *All Things are double one against another, and he hath made nothing imperfect.* Each Thing has its contrary in Nature, and the one is opposed to the other, Night to Day, Evil to Good, Death to Life, Cold to Heat, Dry to Wet, &c. Many of the ancient Philosophers maintained the like Contrariety of Qualities in Nature; they thought the Universe subsisted by a just Temperature of these Opposites and Extremes, none of which predominated over the other, though there was a mutual Antipathy betwixt them. *Ovid*, speaking of the Creation of the World, says, that God by his Wisdom knew how to reconcile this Opposition, and to keep Things in a fixt and permanent State, notwithstanding this continual Disagreement, *Metamorph.* l. i. and so we find it; even this Diversity, instead of disturbing the Order of the Universe by any Confusion, is, like to that of different Voices in an excellent Concert of Musick, accompanied with

an Order and Regularity, Connexion and Dependence, wonderful in such a Variety of Bodies, whose Harmony, during such a Revolution of numberless Ages, composes a Hymn to the Glory of the great Creator. See Note on ch. xxxiii. 14, 15.

### CHAP. XLIII.

Ver. 1. *THE Pride of the Height, the clear Firmament, the Beauty of Heaven, with his glorious Shew.* Dr. Grabe thinks that this Chapter ought to begin at v. 15. of the last, and so indeed the Subject and Connexion seem to require, and there is the more Probability that this begins wrong, as we cannot account for the Construction of the Greek. If we do not refer *γὰρ* in the preceding Verse of the last Chapter, and put them in Apposition to *δόξαν* immediately foregoing, to the following Sense, who can be satisfied with contemplating his Glory, viz. the Immenity of Height, the vast Expanse of Clearness, *sublime candens*, as *Ennius* well expresses it, the general Face of the Heavens, exhibiting to the Sight a most glorious Shew? The Obscurity here seems to arise from a String of Hebraisms, for which we have a parallel Place, *Psal.* xxix. 2, 3. where *קדוֹת הַרְרֹת* Beauty of Holiness, means beautiful holy Place, *אֱלֹהֵי כְבוֹד* God of Glory means the glorious God, *בְּרַדְדֵי קוֹל בְּנָח* a Voice in Might, and in Glory, means a mighty and glorious Voice. So the Words here rendered by *γὰρ* might signify a most exalted Altitude, *στενωπὰ καὶ θαιόρηνος*, a most clear Sky, *expansum purum*, as *Junius* has it; and both these further represented, as being or exhibiting *εἶδος* *εἰς δόξαν*, the Face of Heaven, which is *εἶδος ἐν δόξῃ*, a glorious Sight, or View of his Glory; which answers in Nature, to what the Prophet saw in Revelation, which is called by him, *ὁ εἶδος ὁμοιωμένος δόξης* *Kvels.* *Ezek.* i. 28. I cannot here conceal from the learned Reader, an ingenious Conjecture, which aims at explaining this, by a Simile borrowed from Art, and supposes the Reading possibly might be, *ἐν ποσὶ μὲν ἡ δόξα*, i. e. that the Face of the Heavens to Appearance, is as one entire Piece of carved Work, one grand Sphere, most perfectly turned, and most beautifully engraven, the Difficulty of whose Workmanship is known to encrease, according to the Bulk of the Thing intended to be perfected. If *Phidias* then would find it difficult to turn a little Sphere, *Toruma Celi*, *Mart.* l. iv. 39. of some few Feet Diameter only, what an Idea must it raise of the great Creator of the Universe, whose Sphere is infinite in Height and Breadth, and yet smoothed to the greatest Exactness? And indeed, considering the Philosophy of those Times when our Author wrote, the Description here given of the Face of the Heavens, taken



in this Light, carries in it something sublime and noble, and even poetical too, as being the exact Picture of Nature. If to this we add, that *Tareuma* was a Term of Art frequent in Egypt, when the Greek Language was in Use there, it may seem not improbable, that the Translator of this Work, who resided there so long, might borrow it from thence.

Ver. 2. *The Sun when it appeareth, declaring at his rising a marvellous Instrument, the Work of the Most High.* [ἡλίου ἐν ἀνατολῇ διαγέλλων ἐν ἔξοχῳ, καὶ ὡς θαυμαστὸν ἔργον ὑψίστου.] The Geneva Version here is much clearer, *The Sun also a marvellous Instrument, when it appeareth, declareth at his going out the Work of the most High, i. e.* The very first Sight of the Sun, (so ἀνατολή is used ὡς 16.) in the Morning, is an Evidence of its being the Work of God; and a wonderful Instrument in his Hand, which the Sun itself is a further Evidence of, at his Noon-day Height, ἐν μεσημβρίᾳ αὐτοῦ, ὡς 3. by his powerful Effects upon the Earth. As ἀνατολή hath been thought sufficiently expressive without ἔξοχῳ, and διαγέλλων seems to require, and usually has something after it, some have been induced to attempt an Alteration here. *Drusus* seems to like ἐνδόξῳ, *sol in aspectu glorioso.* *Grotius* ἐν ἐνδοξῳ, *sol in aspectu illum gloriosum*, i. e. *Deum, annuntians*, which affords a good meaning, but does not follow from his Reading. It suggests to me, I think, the true one, ἡ ἐνδοξὸν, i. e. the beautiful Appearance of the Sun proclaimeth the glorious one; which is lofty, and truly expressive of God. *Bossuet*, *Junius*, and *Drusus*, seem to favour this Explication. The Allusion in this Verse to *Psal. xix.* is plainly discernible.

Ver. 4. *A Man blowing a Furnace is in Works of Heat, but the Sun burneth the Mountains three times more, breathing out fiery Vapours, and sending forth bright Beams, it dimmeth the Eyes.* Ver. 5. *Great is the Lord that made it, and at his Commandment it runneth hastily.* If we change the Point, there may be another Sense given of the Place besides that in our Version, viz. that the Sun himself bloweth up a Furnace, or containeth a Heat three Times more intense, than that in Iron-works, or other Works of Metals, meaning, that extreme Heat, which is in the Region or Body of the Sun itself, from whence issue those fiery Vapours here mentioned, as was the prevailing Opinion in the early Times of Science. Hence too proceed, those harmless and bright Beams, which warm and cherish the Earth, which contribute to Vision, and please and entertain the Organ of it, unless poured on it in too great Abundance. Of this great Body, this Globe of Fire, the wise Man observes, that it is as obsequious to its Maker's Will, as the meanest and most inconsiderable of his Creatures, and continues his constant daily Course, in the manner appointed, with incredible Swift-

ness, for I think καλὸν δάει, which is read by *Syr. Vulg.* and the three principal Greek Editions, means here no extraordinary Acceleration, but the constant Speed of the Sun. It might be translated, *and by his Commandment maketh his Progress speedy.* Some Copies have καλὸν αὖτε πορεύειν, *sedavit iter*, as *Junius* renders, and as the Marginal Reading is, alluding probably to the Sun's standing still in the Time of *Josua*, ch. x. 13.

Ver. 6. *He made the Moon also to serve in her Season, for a Declaration of Times, and a Sign of the World.* [καὶ σελήνην ἐποίησε ἡς σάου, εἰς καιρὸν αὐτῆς, ἀνάδειξιν χρόνων, καὶ σημεῖον αἰῶνος.] Thus the Psalmist, he appointed the Moon for certain Seasons, εἰς καιροῦς, *Psal. civ. 19.* εἰς σάου, may signify to be in her Station, to be in waiting. *Dr. Grabe* has ἐν σάου. The *Vulgate* renders, *Luna in omnibus in tempore suo*, from some Copies which have ἡ σελήνη ἐν πάσι τοῖς καιροῖς, καὶ τ. λ. which reading indeed hath more Authority than the present, but affords no good or determinate Sense. The great Difference that occurs in the first Part of the Verse I suspect is owing to the Astronomical Word φάσις, not generally understood, and here most probably made use of, and that the following, which is a reading betwixt the *Kal.* and *Alex. MSS.* and approaching to both, is the true one, καὶ ἡ σελήνη ἐν φάσει εἰς καιρὸν αὐτῆς, and then putting ἀνάδειξιν for ἀνάδειξιν, as *Grabe* has it, the whole will be clear, (viz. and the Moon is in her Phase according to her Season (i. e. has a different Phase to every different Day of her monthly Course,) a Proof of Times, and a Sign of Age, or a perpetual Sign. Her Change of Appearance marking out the lesser Portions of Time, and her Periods or Revolutions the greater. It is plain from this Place, as likewise from *Josephus* and *Philo*, says *Calmet*, that the Jews made Use of the Grecian Year, as to religious Matters and Ceremonies, after the Time of *Alexander the Great*, i. e. their Year was Solar, and their Months Lunar.

Ver. 7. *From the Moon is the Sign of Feasts, a Light that decreaseth in her Perfection.* The first Part seems wrongly translated, the Greek is ἀπὸ σελήνης σημεῖον ἑορτῆς, from the Moon is the Sign of the Feast, i. e. the Feast of the New Moon. The first Phasis or Appearance of the Moon was of great Importance in the Jewish Religion; as God commanded that the New Moon should be a Festival, and that they should offer up a particular Sacrifice to him on that Day, *Numb. xxviii.* It is no wonder that the Jews took such Care to discover this New Moon, at its very first emerging, and that even the great Sanhedrim should be concerned in declaring and fixing it, since both the civil and religious part of the Jewish Calendar depended upon it; and for their better Help herein, they had Pictures, or Similitudes, of the Moon in Tables, and upon the Walls of their upper Rooms, from which they judged



judged of the several Appearances of the New Moon. Nor is the latter Part more accurately translated; it should either be a Light that decreaseth upon her Perfection, for so it signifies here; or a Light, lessening till it is out, or to its End, and so the Geneva Version has it: *ἐνέλαμα* is used thus, Matt. xiii. for when the Moon is at the Full, and her whole Disk luminous, which may be called her Perfection, her Light, after that diminishes, and she returns through the same Figures to her first Crescent, and then she re-enters the Rays of the Sun.

Ver. 8. *The Month is called after her Name, increasing wonderfully in her changing.* This holds true with respect to the Greek Tongue, which to us now is the only Original of this Work: *μήν*, the Month, seems a Contraction from *Μήνη*, the Moon, and in our English Language, the Words *Moon* and *Month*, have as near an Affinity. But this was not so to an ancient Israelite, for the respective Words for Moon and Month in the Hebrew, have no such Affinity to each other. Without doubt, the true Reading here is *Μήνη καὶ τὸ ὄνομα αὐτῆς ἐστίν*; for not the Month, but the Moon is wonderful, and therefore *αὐξανόμενη*, which the Rom. Edition hath, is better than *αὐξανόμενος*, which Complut. and Alex. have, which Grotius absurdly refers to *φωσὴς*, tho' *αὐτῆς* comes between. It is the Moon, which according to her Name, increases wonderfully in her Change, for in what Sense can this be said of a Month? but the Hebrew Word *לַמָּנָה* *Lama*, agrees with this Sense, as being derived probably either from *לָמַד* *latari*, or *לָקַח* *protrahere*, i. e. her Orb widens, or is drawn forth wonderfully from her Birth or Appearance, for so the Moon appears from the Time she is New till she is Full, when she may be said to be at her full drawing out, or Maturity. And therefore what expresses or alludes to her manner of spreading or drawing out to that Time of Maturity, should be a very proper and most significant Name for her, she being after her Full in a kind of dying State, shrinking in, or ceasing to be continually, what she was before; from being *immensa orbe pleno*, she becomes *repente nulla*, as Pliny describes her Change, L. ii. c. 9. Horace seems to confirm this, Epist. xii. L. 1. The Astronomical Account of this is, when the Moon is before the Sun, she is as it were swallowed up in his Rays; but as soon as she begins to separate from him, her Crescent begins to shew itself, and to encrease through its different Phases insensibly, till at last her whole Disk become luminous.

Ibid. *Being an Instrument of the Armies above, shining in the Firmament of Heaven.* *ὄργανον* *παρεμβάλων ἐν ὕψει*, Syn. seems to understand it, an Instrument of the Camps or Armies of the most High, as if it had been *τῷ ἐν ὕψιστοις*. Arab. has *Lux omnium creaturarum*. Grotius understands it an In-

strument on high of Camps or Armies. And indeed Polybius makes the Knowledge of the Moon's Rising and Changes a very considerable Skill, and necessary to a General, L. ix. p. 554. Ed. Casaub. But would it not be more intelligible, and agreeable to the Nature of the Moon, if, as has been ingeniously conjectured, the reading was, *ὄργανον παρεμβάλων ἐν ὕψει*, an Orb encamping up and down in the Heavens, i. e. having more than any of the heavenly Bodies, a variable and irregular Course, as those that dwell in Tents have, and as the Children of Israel had in their several Encampments in the Wilderness. And there is the more Reason to fix this Idea of irregular wandring to *παρεμβάλλω*, as in Num. ch. 33. where the frequent Encampments of the Children of Israel are described, it occurs above forty Times in this Sense; and it is remarkable, that Psal. cvii. 40. Num. xxxii. 13. Josh. xiv. 10. this vague and unsettled Abode is called wandring; may not therefore the Moon, who is styled *Vaga Luna*, by Hor. Sat. viii. L. i. be called here *ὄργανον παρεμβάλων* in this respect? The Geneva Version seems to glance at this Sense.

Ver. 9. *The Beauty of Heaven, the Glory of the Stars, an Ornament giving Light in the highest Place of the Lord.* *κόσμος φωτίζων ἐν ὑψίστοις κύνεις*. This is generally understood of the Moon, which is called by Horace, *Lucidum cæli decus*, and according to the Vat. which has *κύνεις*, she is further the Sovereign of the Luminaries on high, as the same Poet likewise styles her, *siderum Regina*, and perhaps so termed Jer. vii. 18. but as the Moon has been sufficiently described in the three foregoing Verses, I rather incline, with Mess. of Port Royal, Junius, and others, to understand this Verse of the Stars; that their Glory is the Beauty of Heaven. And thus the Geneva Version more clearly and explicitly, *The Beauty of Heaven are the glorious Stars, and the Ornament that shineth in the high Places of the Lord.* *Κόσμος φωτίζων* is but indifferently rendred an Ornament giving Light, a World of Lights would be a more lofty Expression, or, which from on high enlighten *κόσμον*, the World, as the Vulg. renders here. Of these it is observed, in the next Verse, that they stand *κατὰ νόημα*, according to Appointment, or continue in their Order, as Gen. Vers. has it. *Prout statutum est eis, perseverant, & in cursu suo non mutantur*. Arab. As the Heb. uses the Future for what is usual, *will* might be left out there. Baruch iii. 34. finely expresses this, *The Stars shine in their Watches, and rejoice; when he calleth them, they say, Here we be, and so with Cheerfulness they shew Light unto him that made them.* Ver. 11. *Look upon the Rainbow, and praise him that made it, very beautiful it is in the Brightness thereof.* Ver. 12. *It compasseth the Heavens about with a glorious Circle, and the Hands of the most high bene-*



bended it.] The Tradition of Antiquity concerning the Rainbow is very pretty, for *Iris*, which is the Name of the Rainbow, is said to be the Daughter of *Tbaumas*, i. e. the Daughter of Wonder. *Hes. Theogon.* And very just is this Mythology; for how does that glorious Phænomenon at once fill our Eyes with Wonder, and our Hearts with joyful Assurance, not only upon account of the agreeable Variety of its mixed Colours, but as it is a natural Sign that there will not be much Rain after it appeareth; and so is an Emblem of Hope, and a significant Assurance against a second Deluge, and therefore by some properly styled the sacramental Sign of the Rainbow. *Homer* seems to have had the same Notion, that the Rainbow was at first set in the Cloud, to be a Sign unto Men, *ῥέγας μερόπων ἀνθρώπων*, *Il. λ.* The wise Man here properly observes, that the admirable Form and Composition of this glorious Bow should not only naturally excite Curiosity, but carry a Man beyond the material or natural Cause to the final, and induce him to praise the Maker of it. It may be asked, how God can be said to have made the Rainbow, since it is only the Effect of certain Reflexions and Refractions of the Rays of the Sun from a watry Cloud. But to this the Answer is obvious; for if there was no Rainbow till God entered into Covenant with *Noah*, as the Learned with great Probability think, then, when God first placed this Bow in the Clouds, and appointed it to be a Signal of that Covenant, may he very justly be said to have made it, by making it then *first* to be seen, and to be significant. And therefore, *Gen. ix. 13.* God expressly calls it *his* Bow, not only because he is the Author of all Things which have natural Causes, but because he made, or appointed it to a special End, as an Assurance of his future Mercy to Mankind; and on this Account it is called by the *Psalmist*, the faithful Witness in Heaven, *Psal. lxxxix. 36.* Or may not *γ* 12. be understood of the outward Form of the Universe, the whole of which God has included in one vast circumambient Circle, though only one half is discernible by us? *Corn. a Lapide*, with some other Interpreters, take it in this Sense.

Ver. 13. *And sendeth swiftly the Lightnings of his Judgment.* Ver. 14. *Through this the Treasures are opened, and Clouds fly forth as Fowls.* *Fulgetra pro judicio suo concitat*, i. e. according to his Will and Appointment. Or, it may mean, that he makes the Lightning the Minister of his Vengeance, or the Forerunner of his Judgments, as against the *Sodomites*, *Egyptians*, *Philistines*, *Sifera*, *Sennacherib*, &c. and for this Purpose, or for the Execution of his Judgments, he opens his Treasures, *Deut. xxviii. 12.* or prepares the great Artillery of Heaven, viz. either the Winds to raise Storms and Tempests; or he bringeth forth the Clouds from the Ends of the

World, *Psal. cxxxv. 7.* which assemble and come speedily together, like a Flight of Birds, and descend either in a Deluge of Rain, or fall in Snow, which comes down so thick as to resemble not merely Birds in their Passage, but rather a Cloud of Locusts, marching terribly from one Country to another; for so the latter Part of *γ* 17. should be rendred, which relates to the same Subject; or, by his Power he condenses the Clouds, and from thence Hail stones break, or burst forth like so many Shivers of a Rock, see *Wisd. v. 22.* as *γ* 15. should be rendred, and understood; and of these the *Psalmist* speaks, when he says, that God *casteth forth his Ice like Morsels*, *Psal. cxlvii.* See *De Muis in loc.*

Ver. 16. *At his Sight the Mountains are shaken.*] The *Vulg.* renders in *conspetu ejus*, i. e. before him, which conveys a most grand Idea. This seems to exceed that much admired Description of *Virgil*,—*Ille flagranti Aut Atho aut Rhodopen, aut alta Ceraunia telo Dejicit.* *Georg. L. i.* for what must we think of that omnipotent Being, who looks the Mountains into Fear and Astonishment? *Virgil's Jupiter* wields his Thunderbolt, and he beats down a Mountain; *Jehovah* appears only, and at the Sight of him the Foundations of the Mountains are tossed to and fro, tremble and shake like the Joints of an affrighted Man; but that sublime Description of the *Psalmist*, exceeds even this, *The Earth shall tremble at the Look of him; if he do but touch the Hills, they shall smoke*, *Psal. civ. 32.* not a single Rock only, or Mountain, trembles before him, but the whole Earth is in a Panic at his very Appearance.

Ver. 17. *The Noise of the Thunder maketh the Earth to tremble, &c.*] The Description of his Thunder here is no less magnificent and terrible than that of his Appearance in the former Verse. God sends forth this his glorious Voice, the Earth echoes, groans, falls in Labour, and feels the Pangs of one in travail, for so the *Greek* literally signifies, and the Margin well expresses it. We meet something like this in the Poet's lofty Description of a Tempest,

*Ipsæ Pater, media nimborum in nocte, corusca*

*Fulmina molitur dextra, quo maxima motu Terra tremit.* *Georg. L. i.*

Here again the Majesty of the Scripture-Language excels, for when the Highest thunders, he does but shew his Voice, and the Earth melts away, *Psal. xlvi. 6.* It is observable, that our Author here ascribes to the North wind and Hurricane, the same Effect which he does to the Thunder itself, whose Roar they imitate.

Ver. 19. *The Hoar-frost also as Salt he poureth on the Earth; and being congealed, it lieth on the Top of sharp Stakes.*] This seems not well translated, the Marginal Reading is preferable, It is as the Point of sharp Stakes,



*fit similis palorum summitatibus*, i. e. It has the Form of sharp Points. The Hoar-frost, *Pf. cxlvii. 16.* is compared to Ashes, but its Resemblance to Salt seems more expressive, as it has something sparkling in it, and its Whiteness is more conspicuous. *Calmet* says, not every Species of Salt, but Marble, or the Salt of the Earth, is here meant, to which our Saviour alludes, *Matth. v. 13.*

Ver. 20. *When the cold North-Wind bloweth, and the Water is congealed into Ice, it abideth upon every Gathering together of Water, and cloatheth the Water as with a Breast-Plate.* Ver. 21. *It devoureth the Mountains, and burneth the Wilderness, and consumeth the Grass, as Fire.* The first Part is not well rendred, it should be, The cold North-Wind bloweth, and Ice shall be crufted upon the Water, even Rivers and large Pieces of Water shall thereby become solid, and as it were dry Land, resisting any Impression. The Wiseman here ascribes the same Effects to bleak Winds and Frost, as, *ψ 3, 4.* he does to the Heat of the Sun, which, though Contraries, in this respect affect the Earth alike. The Description here is very poetical. *Virgil*, speaking of the Effect of extreme Cold, says, *Boreæ penetrabile frigus adurit.* *Georgic. Lib. i.* and Naturalists and Philosophers express themselves in like Manner. The Sublimity of Sentiments in this Chapter is truly admirable, and the Beauty of the Comparisons from *ψ. 10.* inexpressible: We cannot read them without a Sort of Rapture, nor help thinking, that one, who in Loftiness of Thought and Expression approaches so near to the inspired Writings, and soars to such an uncommon Height, must have had a more excellent Spirit in him, than is usually allowed to him, or the Times he wrote in.

Ver. 22. *A present Remedy of all is a Mist coming speedily: A Dew coming after Heat refresheth.* In *ψ 19, 20.* we have intense Frost represented terribly, as an armed Man with a Spear and Shield, the Icicles have the Appearance of the former, and the solid Ice composes the latter: And yet this Body so fortified, and secured as it were with a Coat of Mail, a gentle Rain or a warm Mist, or a mild Breeze, *Eurus caloris*, as *Chald.* renders *Pf. cxlvii. 18.* shall effectually vanquish and subdue; a Contest seemingly as unequal as that of *David* with a Sling against the *Philistine* and his Shield. Such an agreeable Change of Weather after a severe Season, is as welcome and refreshing, as a balmy Dew after a scorching Heat; it restores the decayed Verdure, and lost Beauty of Nature, and renews the Face of the Earth.

Ver. 23. *By his Counsel he appeaseth the Deep, and planteth Islands therein.* It would be better rendred, By his Word he appeaseth the Storm, and maketh the Sea calm. And thus *Calmet*, *Par sa parole la*

*mer s'est calmée.* This was remarkably evidenced under the Old Testament, *Jonah c. i.* when the tempestuous Sea, which the Mariners Cries and Prayers to their false Deities could not assuage, at the Command of the great God of Heaven, to whom at length they happily applied, instantly ceased from raging. But the divine Power over that unruly Element never appeared more signally, than when our Saviour said to it, *Peace, be still; and immediately there was a great Calm*, *Mark. iv. 39.* The Reading of the next Clause in some ancient Gr. Copies is very surprizing, *καὶ ἐφύλαξεν αὐτὴν ἰσχυρὰ*, and from thence some Latin ones have, *plantavit eam Dominus Jesus*, and *Coverdale* renders accordingly. If this Reading was true, this Author, however late, or apocryphal, saw more clearly than all the acknowledged Prophets of the Old Testament, for we have here expressly the very Name of the *Messiah*, which none of them were acquainted with, or published. But this is a gross Mistake, and such as a Jew would make Sport with; the true Reading undoubtedly is, *καὶ ἐφύλαξεν ἐν αὐτῇ νῆος*, which our Translators follow. The Sense is, that God has planted large Islands in the Bosom of the Sea, standing, as the *Antediluvian* Earth itself is described *2 Pet. iii. 5.* out of the Water, and in the Water; which, notwithstanding the Violence of Storms and Tempests, and the Force and Impetuosity of the Waves, have subsisted numberless Ages, and have escaped perishing by being overflowed with Water; which in some respects have the Advantage of the Continent, as by their Situation they have the Opportunity of a freer Commerce, and are less subject to hostile Attacks, and to be surprized on a sudden by Invasions.

Ver. 26. *By him the End of them hath prosperous Success, and by his Word all things consist.* *Δι' αὐτὸν διόδια τέλος αὐτῶν, καὶ ἐν λόγῳ αὐτοῦ σύγκειται πάντα*, i. e. God by his Wisdom and Power directs all Things to a good or their proper End; so the *Geneva* Version, for all things are subject to, and obey his Will. Or, Through him such as go to Sea have a good Voyage, and Trade and Navigation there is attended with prosperous Success. The *Alex.* and some other Greek Copies have, which *Junius* follows, *Δι' αὐτὸν ἐνοδοὶ ὁ ἀγγελὸς αὐτοῦ*, i. e. His Angel conducts those that occupy their Business in great Waters, through the Dangers of the Deep, and brings them to the Haven where they would be. *Grotius's* Explication here seems very forced, that if the Sea is calm, and in good Temper, the Ship, which is the Sea's Messenger, *ἀγγελὸς αὐτοῦ*, sails safely; but if tempestuous, at her Command all things are shattered, and go to the Bottom. Either of the other Senses I think preferable.

Ver. 27. *We may speak much, and yet come short: Wherefore in sum he is all.* *Τὸ πᾶν ἐστὶν αὐτοῦ.* Here the wise Man finishes the Thesis,



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Thesis, which he began c. xlii. 15. that God made all Things by his Word, and through him all Things consist. And having proved this Truth by a long Enumeration of Particulars, he says, in sum, that God is all, *i. e.* He is the Cause and End of all Things. *Ipse est in omnibus.* Vulg. *In him we live, and move, and have our Being.* He is the Soul of the Universe, *l'ame de tout,* as *Calmet* renders. Or his is the Universe, *אֵלֶּיָּהּ כָּל־הַיְּצִרִים*, as *Gratius* conjectures the true Reading to be, *and without him was not any Thing made, that was made;* he gave Life, Being, Motion, Power, and Perfection, suited to the several Ranks of Creatures, himself being all in all. The highest Perfections that are in Men, are so infinitely disproportionate to his, that they may be said not to be in any of his Creatures. There is some kind of communicated Goodness, and Wisdom, and Power, and Immortality in Men, and yet these Perfections are in Scripture appropriated to the divine Nature in such a Manner, as if no Creature did partake of them. Accordingly it is said, that there is none good, or wise, but he; that he is the only Potentate, and only hath Immortality. All the different Kinds of Perfections, that are to be found any where in his Creatures, are but diminutive Portions of his Fulness, and inconsiderable Emanations from the sovereign Fountain.

Ver. 30. *When you glorify the Lord, exalt him as much as you can, for even yet he will far exceed.*] The Perfections of God are infinite, and beyond the Power of Description, or Comparison, for when we have raised our Notion of this infinite Being as high as is possible for the Mind of Man to go, it will fall infinitely short of what he really is, for there is no End of his Greatness; as the great Poet and Philosopher experienced, who, the more he contemplated the Nature of the Deity, found that he waded but the more out of his Depth, and that he lost himself in the Thought, instead of finding an End of it. *St. Austin*, intent upon celebrating the Praises of God in a Manner worthy of him, acknowledges his own (and it may serve to express all human) Inability for that high Work, in a Strain peculiarly pious and sublime, *Si omnia membra nostra verterentur in linguas ad rependendum tibi debitas laudes, nequaquam sufficeret exiguitas nostra.* *Meditat. c. 15.* And a more modern Light of the Church falls not much beneath him, when he says, "The Tongues of Angels stammer in uttering of God's Goodness, and we become dumb, the more we endeavour to speak of it. The highest of our Praises is, humbly and affectionately to acknowledge, that we cannot sufficiently praise him. The furthest we can strain our Souls is to long for Eternity, wherein it may be our Employment to admire and praise him. Call upon the Armies of Angels, and with them to praise him, seeing thou canst

not do it. Say as the *Psalmist* does, *Bless the Lord, all ye Angels of his, ye Servants of his, that do his Pleasure.* Call upon all Man, and bid them praise him: With that thou couldst awaken all the World, that all Creatures might jointly praise him. And particularly call upon thine own Soul, every Day to praise him, *Pf. ciii.*" *Patrick's Mens. Myst.* "But though Words fail us in speaking of him, who is ineffable, as *Mess. of Port Royal* finely observe on the last Verse, yet as we are capable, so should we be never tired of loving him, as it is the Life of the Soul, the Source of Peace and Joy. For this reason the wise Man concludes this sublime Chapter with saying, that to the Godly he hath given Wisdom, not to those who aim at mere Knowledge to understand or comprehend Mysteries, but to those who live piously, and whose humble Faith operates by Love. For this Life is not for Speculation, but Action, and our Light should be accompanied with an active Fire. It is by the Heart that we approach, and by a pure Heart, that we must hope to see God, and not by an elevated Genius, or superior Understanding, in the way of human Wisdom."

### CHAP. XLIV.

Ver. 1. **L**ET us now praise famous Men, and our Fathers that begat us.  
Ver. 2. *The Lord hath wrought great Glory by them through his great Power from the Beginning.*] The Author having finished his Precepts of Morality and fine Reflections for the Conduct of Life, and the several Conditions of it, explained God's Works in Heaven and Earth, and set forth the Praises of the great Creator of them, the Fountain of Wisdom, and of all Perfection, in a very sublime Manner, though the most sublime cannot reach or equal them; his *Epilogus* is a Hymn to God, containing the Praises of his Saints, and of such *Jewish* Worthies in particular, as he had blessed their Nation with, Men famous in their several Generations, and Instances of those Virtues taught and recommended by him; which reaches from hence almost to the End of the fiftieth Chapter. *Serug*, mentioned *Gen. xi. 20.* was the first, according to *Suidas*, that began annually to celebrate the Memory of famous Men deceased, and commanded them to be honoured as Benefactors. The Heathens had their anniversary Festivals to commemorate their wise Men and Philosophers, to recommend, by their Example, Wisdom and Virtue. The *Jews* also had their set Times, wherein they honoured the Memories of their Progenitors, Prophets, and holy Men, and recited their Praises in the Temple and Synagogues; and this Writer here acquaints us with their *Formula*, or Manner of doing it. The *Christian Church*,



Church after, in Imitation of this Practice, appointed certain Anniversaries, which they called the Birthdays of their Martyrs, on which, from the public Rolls, or Diptycs, they rehearsed at the Altar their glorious Acts, to do Justice to departed Merit, and to excite an Emulation in others of those, by whom the Lord hath gotten, *ἐκκλησία*, as *Grotius* reads *ψ* 2. to himself great Renown.

Ver. 5. *Such as found out musical Tunes and recited Verses in Writing.* Ver. 6. *Rich Men, furnished with Ability, living peaceably in their Habitations.* Ver. 7. *All these were honoured in their Generations.* Such was *David*, whose Harp was strung, and Breast inspired by the Spirit of God, which dispersed Melancholy, and administered Comfort to him, through the various Scenes of Affliction he underwent, which he often calls upon to awaken on solemn Occasions, to chant the Praises of his mighty Deliverer. Such were the Bards and Poets of old, who sang in tuneful Numbers, and with the Voice of Melody, whatever Philosophy dictated of God, of Nature, of the Creation of the World, the Motion of the Stars, and the great and illustrious Actions of Heroes, and Benefactors. Such also were the Inventors and Promoters of useful Arts, and Sciences, and the religious Founders of Schools and Synagogues, whose Fortunes and Power were employed in publick Acts of Beneficence and to serve the Cause of Virtue; these were deservedly esteemed, emphatically *viri nominis*, ἀνδρες ὀνόματος, *ψ* 3. On the contrary, those who were of no Service in Life, only merely existed, were *sine nomine turba*, Men of no Name, as the *Heb.* terms them, *Job xxx. 8.* As they were of no Account, they were overlooked and disregarded; and for this reason probably it was, that the Scripture makes no Mention of the Time that *Cain*, or either of his Sons, lived, as it does of the Godly.

Ver. 8. *There be of them that have left a Name behind them, that their Praises might be reported.* Ver. 9. *And some there be which have no Memorial, who are perished, as though they had never been.* The Glory of such was not confined to their single Persons, but their Posterity treading in their Steps (see *ὄνομα* used in this Sense, *Deut. xxv. 7.*) by their Actions renewed the Memory, and added to the Glory of their Fathers. *Abraham* was not less distinguished by the Merit of *Isaac* and *Jacob*, than by his own: The Patriarchs too had a numerous and illustrious Posterity; in them their Name survived, and their Praise flourished with them. But others, as well in early as later Times, either being evil themselves, or for want of Posterity, or through Descendants tainted as it were with hereditary Wickedness, have been insensibly forgot, or remembered with Disgrace.

Ver. 11. *With their Seed shall continually remain a good Inheritance, and their Children are within the Covenant.* Some Copies have *διὰ τὴν*. And so the *Vulg.* *Cum semine eorum permanent bona.* As applied to the *Israelites*, the Sense is, Their Posterity enjoy a rich Inheritance, they are Sons of the Covenant, and Heirs of the Promises made to the Fathers, and by Virtue thereof have possessed the Land of *Canaan* for numberless Ages: This Covenant shall be perpetuated to their Children, and their Seed shall never be extinct, nor their Glory be blotted out. It may also be understood in a general Sense, that the Generation of the Righteous shall be blessed, as being ever mindful of God's Covenant; Riches and Plenteousness shall be in his House, and his Seed shall be mighty upon Earth, and continue long in Glory therein, *Pf. cxii.*

Ver. 16. *Enoch pleased the Lord, and was translated, being an Example of Repentance to all Generations.* When, or to what Place, he was translated, is not said, but, according to the *Vulg.* it was into Paradise. See Note on *Wisd. iv. 10.* It is probable he was translated in some such visible extraordinary Manner as *Elijah* afterwards was, and that God, besides bestowing a Reward on his Righteousness, did this to comfort Mankind in their State of Mortality, with the Hopes of a better Life, and made him a living Testimony of the Immortality of Souls and Bodies. The Tradition of *Jews* and *Christians* is, that *Enoch* is still alive, and that he shall come with *Elias* before the last Judgment to encounter *Antichrist*; and in this Sense *Apoc. xi. 3.* is generally understood. *Bossuet*, accordingly understands the latter Clause of his personal Appearance with that Prophet in the last Times, to turn the Hearts of the Disobedient, and to give Repentance unto the Nations, as the *Vulg.* has it, or *ταῖς γενεαῖς*, to the Generations then in Being; for [all] is neither in the *Gr.* nor *Vulg.* As we meet with no Account in Scripture of *Enoch's* sinning or Repentance, it seems better to understand *πρόδρομος μετάνοιας* of his exhorting the People, that shall then be alive, by his Words and Example to a speedy Repentance, to prepare for the approaching Judgment, and to resist the Power of *Antichrist*.

Ver. 17. *Noah was found perfect and righteous in the Time of Wrath; he was taken in Exchange for the World: Therefore was he left as a Remnant unto the Earth, when the Flood came.* He is said to be perfect in his Generation, *Genesis vi. 9.* i. e. with respect to all others of his Time. The first Sentence seems wrongly pointed; it should run thus, *Noah was found perfect and righteous, in the Time of Wrath he was taken in Exchange [for the World.]* The Words in the Parenthesis are not in the *Greek*. It looks, according to our Version, as if *Noah* was the Sufferer, and the rest of the



the World excused; as was indeed the Case of the holy *Jesus*, who might properly be said to be taken in Exchange for the World; but the Case was otherwise with *Noah*. *Ἀντάλλαγμα* is here to be understood in the Sense of *ἐξίλασμα*, by which the *ο* mean a Ransom or Propitiation, *pretium redemptionis*. At the Time of the Deluge, *ἐγένετο ἀντάλλαγμα*, there was a Redemption, *Noah* and his Family were preserved from the general Destruction, and he himself was the *ἀντάλλαγμα*. This seems to be the Meaning of the *Vulg.* *in tempore Iracundiae factus est reconciliatio*. But how was *Noah* a Propitiation or a Reconciliation? His Goodness probably was the Cause or Motive of God's delivering his Family, his Righteousness was the Means, or Reason of a Remnant being saved, *διὰ τὸ ἐγενήθη καὶ ἀλείμμα τῇ γῆ. i. e.* Upon the Score or Account of his being accepted, there was a Remnant left or preserved to the Earth, *viz.* Eight Souls were saved by Water, *1 Pet. iii. 20. διεσώθησαν δι' ὕδατος*, escaped out of the Water, *ὅτε ἐγένετο ὁ κατακλυσμός*, for so the *Vulg.* and *Alex.* Copy, and a MS. mentioned by *Drusus* have, with which our Version agrees, and not *διὰ τὸ*, which perplexes the Sense.

Ver. 18. *An everlasting Covenant was made with him, that all Flesh should perish no more by the Flood.] by a Flood.* To secure Mankind from the Danger of another Deluge, God promised that there should not be any more a like Flood to destroy the Earth, and the Rainbow was the visible Token of the Covenant between him and all Flesh, *Gen. ix. 11*. What our Translators render an everlasting Covenant, in the Gr. is *διαθήκαι αἰώνου*, *Testamenta seculi*. *Vulg. i. e.* The Covenant of the Age was given him; for *Noah* was the Father of the Age, and had the Covenant of the Age after the Flood, in like Manner as *Christ* was the Father, and brought in the new Covenant of the succeeding Age. See Bishop *Sherlock* on *Prophecy*, Disc. iv. This Covenant with *Noah* and his Seed, and with every living Creature, was, *That while the Earth remaineth, Seed-time and Harvest, and Cold and Heat, Summer and Winter, Day and Night shall not cease*; and it is expressly called his Covenant of Day and Night, *Jer. xxxiii. 20, 21.* and to this Covenant the *Psalmist* is thought to allude, *Pf. xxxvi. 5, 6.*

Ver. 19. *Abraham was a great Father of many People, in Glory was there none like unto him.]* The Succession in the House of *Abraham* was preserved in single Persons till *Jacob's* Time; but *Abraham* then first began to be the Father of many Nations, when *Jacob*, being near his End, appointed twelve Rulers to govern the House of *Israel*, whose Tribes were called Nations, and their Heads Princes. This was implied in the Change of his Name from *Abram*, i. e. A high

Father, to *Abraham*, which imports the Father of a Multitude. In Glory there was none like him, as he had the singular Honour, for the Excellency of his Faith, to be called the Friend of God, and of becoming the Head of the chosen Seed, the spiritual Parent of all Families, or Members of God's Church, with whom he entred into an everlasting Covenant, in and by him, the Father of the *Messiah*, and a Pattern to all Believers. And to his personal Faith, and that of his immediate Descendants, God had such a Regard, that he is not ashamed to call himself often in Scripture by the Name of the God of *Abraham*, the God of *Isaac*, and the God of *Jacob*. With this Patriarch God was pleased to discourse familiarly. See *Gen. xviii*. And all Antiquity has believed, that it was the *Logos* himself, who, appearing under a Human Shape, did, as it were, give him a Specimen of his Incarnation. The *Word*, I say, is generally supposed to be one of the three Angels, which appeared to *Abraham* in the Plains of *Mamre*, and promised him, that he would one Day be born of his Posterity. *Abraham* worshipped him, and acknowledged him to be the Almighty God, and this Discourse transported him with Joy. And perhaps it is to this famous Appearance of his, that *Jesus Christ* alludes in the Gospel, when he says, *your Father Abraham rejoiced to see my Day, and he saw it, and was glad*, *John viii. 56.*

Ver. 20. *Who kept the Law of the Most High, and was in Covenant with him: He established the Covenant in his Flesh, and when he was proved he was found faithful.* Ver. 21. *Therefore he assured him by an Oath, that he would bless the Nations in his Seed, and multiply him as the Dust of the Earth.]* The Covenant on God's Part was, that he would multiply his Seed, and make it great, and give him the Land of *Canaan*, from the River in *Egypt*, to the great River *Euphrates*, and that the Nations, or all Families of the Earth, should be blessed in his Seed: And the Token or Seal of this Covenant was, the Rite of Circumcision, the Mark of which was to be in the Flesh of his Family, and Descendants. This distinguished the *Hebrews* from other Nations, and they gloried in this Sign, calling other People, the Uncircumcised, by way of Contempt. Covenants, or Alliances were usually engraven on Tables of Marble, or Stone; sometimes public Monuments were erected in Memory of them, or they were transacted before Witnesses, who were to transmit them down to Posterity: But with respect to the *Jews*, God was pleased that the Mark of his Covenant with them should remain for ever, not on Brass or Stone, but on the Body of him, with whom the Covenant was made, and on those of his Descendants; and that no one might be dispensed with in this Point, he threatens to cut off the uncircum-



cised Person, as a Violator of his Covenant. It was customary among the *Eastern Nations*, to mark or stigmatize themselves, as a Token of their being devoted to some particular Deity; this Usage was in Practice before *Abraham's* Time, or, which seems more probable, was done in Imitation of him. See *Calmet's Dissert. on Circumcision*. Most certain it is, their Design in so doing was the same with his, viz. as a solemn and indelible Mark of their being dedicated to some particular God. Hence they who were consecrated to *Bacchus*, were distinguished by an Ivy-Leaf wrought in their Flesh, 2 *Maccab.* vi. 7. 3 *Maccab.* 2. and hence the Votaries of the *Syrian Goddess* were burnt, some on the Wrists, and others in the Neck. *Lucian de Dea Syria*. From this Procedure of God with his favourite People, this useful Reflection offers itself, that as our Knowledge and Obedience to him encreases, so does likewise his Favour, and the Testimonies of that Favour. At the Beginning of the Friendship between God and *Abraham*, he only made him a Promise, *Gen.* xii. 1, 2, 3. But in Process of Time, when Love was encreased between them, this Promise became a Covenant, when he and his received the Token of Circumcision, *Gen.* xvii. But when he had walked longer with God, and had perfected his Obedience, by offering up his only Son, then God confirmed the Covenant by an Oath, and swore by himself, that he would do what he had promised, and sealed, *Gen.* xxii. And thus God deals with his Servants now; at their first Entrance into his Family, he gives them many Promises, which depend upon Conditions, and afterwards he renews the Covenant with them, and does further ascertain them of his Favour, but still on Terms of Perseverance; and at length he swears unalterably, when they have given repeated Proof of their Obedience to him, that he will not take away his Mercies, nor his loving Kindness from them.

Ver. 22. *With Isaac did he likewise establish [for Abraham his Father's sake] the Blessing of all Men, and the Covenant.* *Isaac* was the Heir of his Father, and of the Blessings promised to him; for God renewed the same Promise to *Isaac*, which he had made before to his Father *Abraham*. By the *Blessing of all Men* we are to understand the Promise made to *Abraham*, that in his Seed, i. e. the *Messiah*, all the Nations of the Earth should be blessed, *Gen.* xii. 3. xvii. 19. The other Part of the Blessing, which is here rightly distinguished into two Parts, this Writer calls the Covenant, intimating hereby the Covenant made with *Abraham*, to give him the Land of *Canaan*, *Gen.* xv. 18. And both these Parts of the Blessing were given to *Isaac* for *Abraham's* sake. These

two Promises went inseparably together from the Beginning, and were continued in some Degree to the End. See Bishop *Sherlock, Dissert.* iii. This Covenant, or rather God's Oath, *δεξιμὸς*, as the *ῥ* render, with the Promises made by successive Prophets, was the Ground of Hope of the Blessings expected by the *Jews*, both before, and in, our Saviour's Time.

Ver. 23. *And made it rest upon the Head of Jacob. He acknowledged him in his Blessing, and gave him an Heritage, and divided his Portions, among the twelve Tribes did he part them.* As God designed that *Jacob* should be an Inheritor of the Promise, and as he had obtained the Blessing from his Father, through his Permission, so God himself confirmed it, and renewed the Promise to him, which before he had made to his Grandfather *Abraham*, and his Father *Isaac*, and rested the whole Blessing entire upon *Jacob* also, and, as the *Greek* should be rendred, gave it to him in Heritage, *ἔδωκεν αὐτῷ ἐν κληρονομίᾳ*. Thus far the entire Blessing, and all the Parts of it were vested in single Persons only; but the next Words contain an Alteration, for God divided *Jacob's* Portions among the twelve Tribes, *διέσπειρε μερίδας αὐτῷ*, i. e. He separated, as it should be rendred, the Parts of the Blessing. When the Blessing came to descend to *Jacob's* Children, it did not go entire according to Birthright, nor to any one Person, who had deserved it better than the rest; but as God at first made the Promise and Covenant to *Abraham*, not to *Lot*, and gave the Title to it afterwards to *Isaac*, not to *Ishmael*; then to *Jacob*, not to *Esau*; so in the next Generation, he conveyed it entire to no one single Person, but divided it, and gave the Blessing of all Men to *Judah*, who was *Jacob's* fourth Son, and parted the Covenant about *Canaan* amongst all of them, giving to *Joseph*, in his two Sons *Ephraim* and *Manasseh*, two Parts of it. See *Shuckford's Connect.* Vol. ii. A very learned Writer observes on this Passage, that it undoubtedly relates to the Settlement, and the Blessing of the Tribes of *Jacob*, in the xlviii<sup>th</sup> and xlix<sup>th</sup> ch. of *Genesis*; and it shews us, that the several Blessings, given to the several Tribes, are but Parts or Portions of the Blessing, which *Jacob* received from *Isaac*, *Isaac* from *Abraham*, and *Abraham* immediately from God. And in this View the several Blessings, mentioned. *Gen.* ch. xlix<sup>th</sup> and limited to the several Tribes, may be considered as an Exposition of the original Blessing given to *Abraham*. And indeed *Gen.* ch. xlix<sup>th</sup> which is commonly called *Jacob's* Blessing of his Sons, might as well be called *Jacob's* Appointment of twelve Rulers, or Princes, to govern the House of *Israel*. Bishop *Sherlock, Dissert.* iii.



## C H A P. XLV.

Ver. 1. **M**OSESES, beloved of God and Men, whose Memorial is blessed.] The Jews, when they make Mention of any of their deceased Worthies, do it with this Encomium, Let his Memory be blessed! or, Be his Memory blessed to Eternity! See c. lxvi. 11. 1 Maccab. iii. 7. *ἕως τῆς αἰῶνος τὸ μνημόσυνον αὐτῷ εἰς εὐλογίαν.* Let his [Judas Maccabæus] Memorial be blessed for ever. But what is the Meaning of this Form? In what Sense is the Memory of the Righteous *εἰς εὐλογίαν*, or with Blessing? The LXX Translation of Prov. x. 7. from whence this Form of honourable Remembrance seems to be taken, will explain it, for they, instead of the Words, The Memory of the Righteous is blessed, or with Blessing, have *μνήμη δικαίων μετ' ἐγκωμίων*, The Memory of the Righteous is with Praises. To make Mention therefore of the Righteous by way of Benediction, or with Blessing, is to praise them. See Mede's Works, L. i. Disc. 22. Instances of this Sort of Blessing, are the anniversary Remembrances of the Martyrs, and Saints departed, in the primitive Times, the appointing of Festival Days for their Memorial, the assembling at their Sepulchres, and making Panegyric Orations in Honour of them; and above all, that ancient, and so long continued, Custom, to commemorate at the holy Table, when the Eucharist was celebrated, the Patriarchs, Prophets, Apostles, Evangelists, Martyrs, and Confessors; all which Commemorations tended to this, that the Memory of the Righteous might be with Blessing.

Ver. 2. He made him like to the glorious Saints, and magnified him; so that his Enemies stood in Fear of him.] The whole of what is said of Moses in this and the following Verses is to this Effect, that he was eminent by the wonderful Appearance of God to him in the Bush, and by that singular Privilege of seeing the Glory of God pass before him, Exod. xxxiii. and the Revelation which God made of himself then to him; by his immediate Conversation with God apparently, and without dark Speeches, and the Largeness, as well as Intimacy of the Divine Communications, without the Medium of Dreams and Visions; and by being called up to him into the dark Cloud, and hearing his Voice in a more particular Manner, on the Top of the Mount, at the Delivery of the Law; and constituted by him Legislator to his People, and made the Type of the great Prophet that should come, Deut. xviii. 15. He was further eminent for his own personal Conduct, for his Faithfulness and Meekness; by the former, acquainting God's People with all his Will, delivering to them Laws, both religious and civil, and executing

punctually all his Commands; by the latter, gently leading a stubborn and refractory People through a barren Wilderness forty Years, and conducting them happily out of Egypt; and for the extraordinary Success of his Arms, warring without Money, according to Philo de Præm. and lastly, for the Power of his Miracles, and the Number, and Strangeness of them, controuling thereby the Wonders, i. e. the false Miracles of the Magicians before Pharaoh and his Nobles. These are the Characters by which Moses stands distinguished among the Jewish Prophets; and was any, that succeeded him, like unto him, in all, or any of these respects? The Prophets that sealed the Canon of the Old Testament, and probably Esdras at the Head of them, in their Additions, which close the Book of Deuteronomy, have acknowledged, that none to their Days, soon after which Prophecy itself ceased, had come up to him in the abovenamed Particulars, Deut. xxxiv. 10. Some have exalted Moses not only above the Patriarchs, but even above all Creatures in Heaven and Earth, placing the very Angels at the Feet of this Prophet. St. Cyril mentions *Μωσῆν ὡς καλεσμένον Θεόν.* Cont. Jul. L. i. and Eusebius, that he was honoured among the Egyptians, *τιμῆς ἰσοθέου.* Præp. Evang. L. ix.

Ver. 7. An everlasting Covenant he made with him, and gave him the Priesthood among the People; he beautified him with comely Ornaments, and clothed him with a Robe of Glory, &c.] The Lord established Aaron to be his High-Priest in Israel, and appointed the same Dignity to his Children, in Succession for a Perpetuity, preferring his Family above all the rest of the Tribe of Levi: He endowed him for his Inheritance with the Tythes, and First-fruits of holy Things, and with choice Portions of the Sacrifices, which were offered to him in the Tabernacle, and Temple, besides other Privileges and Prerogatives among his People. This was God's Part of the Covenant in their Favour. Aaron and his Family on their Part engaged, to serve the Lord faithfully, and to observe his Laws and Statutes, as well those given in common to his People, as those which concerned them in particular, and delivered by Moses for the right Discharge of their holy Office. The principal Obligations upon Aaron and his Successors are set down v. 15, 16, 17. following. God clothed, or blessed, as the Margin has it, his High-Priest, to procure the greater Reverence to him, with all the Decorations and Ornaments, which the Priests of other Religions wore only single, or in part, but his Habit at once contained all their Beauties. See Spencer de Leg. Hebr. p. 987. Lamy, App. Bibl. Vol. i. c. 8. Hence they are called comely Ornaments, the Robe of Honour, the Perfection of Glory, &c. by this Writer. The Beauty of Holiness, displayed in the Garments of the High-Priest,



Priest, struck even Heathen Princes with Reverence and Awe, and if the High-Priest and his Company had met *Alexander*, when he came with full Purpose to destroy *Jerusalem*, in common Attire, he would probably have been far from that Respect and Reverence, which he shewed to them, when adorned with their Priestly Robes, and glorious Garments. A very judicious Writer observes, "That the wise Son of *Sirach*, who feared God from his Heart, and honoured the Service that was done unto him, could not mention so much as the Garment of Holiness, but in Terms of most singular Reverence and Esteem; and infers, that the Love, which Men bear to God, should make the least things, which are employed in his Service, amiable, rather than that the overscrupulous Dislike of so mean a Thing, as a Vestment, should withdraw Mens Hearts and Affections from the Service of God." *Hooker's Eccles. Pol. L. v.* And in another Place he adds this further Reason, why this Writer here, speaking of *Aaron*, dwells so much upon the Circumstance of his priestly Attire, and urges it as an Argument of much Dignity and Greatness in him, viz. "That the good Government, either of the Church or Commonwealth, dependeth scarcely on any one external Thing so much, as on those public Marks, and honourable Tokens, whereby the Estimation, that Governors are in, is made manifest to the Eyes of Men. Hence Princes and Judges are distinguished by external Honours, and Marks of their Excellency; the former by the Ornaments of Sovereignty, the latter by Garments of judicial Authority, tho' the Robes of either do not add to their Virtue, whose chiefest Ornament is Justice. Hence likewise Bishops, thro' their very Attire, are marked and manifested to be such, as God hath poured his Blessing upon, by advancing them above others, and placing them where they may do him principal Service; but are more distinguished by Holiness and Purity of Conversation, than by the peculiar Form of clothing, which adorns them. *Ibid. L. vii.*

Ver. 10. *With a Breast-Plate of Judgment, and with Urim and Thummim.*] These two Words signify Light and Perfection, but what this *Urim* and *Thummim* was, is not determined; all agree, that they were something in the High-Priest's Breast-Plate, whereby God was pleased to reveal himself, when he was consulted in difficult and weighty Cases, that concerned the Public, and were therefore a sort of Oracle; but all differ about the Matter of them, and the Manner of God's giving Answer by them: Nor does the Scripture any where acquaint us what this *Urim* and *Thummim* was, neither

is there any Mention of them *Exod. xxxix.* where the making of all *Aaron's* Garments is related. Most Writers seem to mistake in confounding them together, and making them one and the same thing, whereas in Reality they were two different Oracles. Some think by *Urim* and *Thummim* is meant only that Divine Power and Virtue, given to the Breast-Plate of Judgment in its Consecration, of obtaining an oracular Answer from God; and that *δῆλωσις καὶ ἀλήθεια*, by which the *ῥ* translate these, or the Light and the Truth, are said to be in the Ephod, because the High-Priest having this Ornament on him, received from God the Light and the Truth which he declared to Men. See *Pocock on Hof. iii. 4.* *Dupin's Hist. of the Can. L. i.* Whatever they were, God was pleased to signify his Will thereby to his People, when they consulted him. But how this was done is uncertain: whether by an extraordinary Shining of the Stones, or by inspiring the High-Priest being arrayed with the Ephod, to give an Answer to what was desired, or by a Voice, or some other way unknown. There are some Passages of Holy Writ, wherein, when Counsel was asked by the Priest, having his Ephod on him, and standing with his Face towards the Ark, the Answer is introduced with *And the Lord said*, which seems to confirm the Opinion of those, who suppose the Answer was given by an audible Voice from the Mercy Seat. See *Judg. i. 1, 2. xx. 18. xxiii. 18. 1 Sam. xxiii. 2, 11, 12. 2 Sam. ii. 1.*

Ver. 12. *He set a Crown of Gold upon the Mitre, wherein was engraven HOLINESS.* . . . Ver. 13. *Before him there were none such, neither did ever any Stranger put them on, but only his Children, and his Childrens Children perpetually.*] Upon *Aaron's* Triple Crown, which like a Sovereign he wore, was an Inscription of the sacred Name of God, *HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD* being engraved in the Golden Plate upon the Forehead, to intimate the high and most honourable Service he was employed in, and to remind him, and his Successors, of that superlative Degree of Holiness, which is the Duty, and Lustre of the sacred Function. The Ornaments of the High-Priest above described, which he wore on the solemn Day of Expiation, and other great Festivals, when he officiated himself in Person, were peculiar to him, and his Successors in that supreme Dignity; no other Jew, not even their King, nor any Priest of an inferior Order, presumed to be so arrayed. The High-Priest himself never put them on but in the Temple, and that only on very extraordinary and solemn Occasions. Herein was intimated, that such as officiate in holy Things should be distinguished by a solemn and peculiar Habit, as likewise that none should take this Honour to himself, but he that is called of God, as was *Aaron*.

Ver.



Ver. 15. *Moses consecrated him, and anointed him with holy Oil: this was appointed unto him by an everlasting Covenant, and to his Seed, so long as the Heavens should remain.*] ἐπλήρωσε Μωϋσῆς τὰς χεῖρας αὐτοῦ. To fill the Hands of the Priest, in Scripture signifies to consecrate, as it is here rightly rendered, see *Exod.* xxviii. 41. *Num.* iii. 3. *Judg.* xvii. 5. It is a Periphrasis, expressing the Manner of *Moses* consecrating him and his Sons, which he did by the following Ceremonies, 1. By clothing them with a proper and particular Garb and Habit, *Lev.* viii. 6, 7, 13. 2. By putting into their Hands Parts of the Victims and Offerings which belonged to them, *Exod.* xxix. 24. *Lev.* viii. 27. and thereby giving them Possession as it were of their Rights. 3. By anointing them upon the Head with the holy Oil, and with the Blood of the Ram of Consecration, tinging particular Parts of their Bodies with it, *ψ* 23, 24. This Consecration, and anointing of *Aaron*, was as a Mark or Seal of the Alliance, or Covenant which God made with him and his Sons, and by which he assured them of the Priesthood for ever. But the Priesthood of *Aaron* must be considered rather as a Type of that of *Jesus Christ*, in whom, what is here said of a perpetual Priesthood, was literally accomplished, *Heb.* vii. 11, 12, 13. but it is not true of the legal Priesthood, which is abrogated, and long since ceased.

Ver. 23. *The third in Glory is Phinees, the Son of Eleazar, because he had Zeal in the Fear of the Lord.* . . . Ver. 24. *Therefore was there a Covenant of Peace with him.*] The meaning may either be, that *Phinees* was the third in Glory after *Moses* and *Aaron*, or, as *Bossuet* understands it, the third in pontifical Glory after his Father *Eleazar*, and his Grandfather *Aaron*. God commendeth him for his great Forwardness and Heat of Zeal, *Numb.* xxv. 11. for whereas *Moses* and all the Congregation sat weeping, or lay groveling upon the Earth, sorrowing for their Sin and the Plague, to whose Grief, especially the Righteous among them, the bold Lewdness of *Zimri* must greatly add, only *Phineas*, burning with a holy Indignation, thought it was no longer Time to sit still, and weep; but rousing himself with a very fervent Zeal, made haste to execute immediate Judgment upon the daring Offenders: As a Reward for this Instance of Justice and Courage, a Covenant of Peace was made with him, which does not contain any Promise to him, or his Family in particular, to make them prosperous, but rather extends to, and includes the People: and the Meaning is, that God made *Phineas* the Instrument of obtaining Pardon for the Sin, upon account of which the People were under his Displeasure. See *Shuckford's Conn.* Vol. iii. p. 340. From whence it appears, that this Covenant of Peace, and of the Priesthood, which is mentioned in the

next Sentence, were two distinct Things; and so *Philo* understands it, God, says he, crowned his Piety, διπλαῖς δωρεαῖς, εἰρήνῃ καὶ ἱερωσύνῃ.

*Ibid.* That he should be the Chief of the Sanctuary, and of his People, and that he and his Posterity should have the Dignity of the Priesthood for ever.] Dr. *Grave* with great Probability conjectures, that the true reading of the Greek, is προσάγειν ἀγίων καὶ λαῶν αὐτοῦ. *Prolog.* Tom. iii. c. 4. The Jews before, and about our Saviour's Time, had a Notion that *Phineas* had by God's Appointment a Grant of an everlasting Priesthood to him and his Posterity; the Author of this Book seems to be of the same Opinion, and so do *Philo*, *De Vit. Mos.* L. i. and the Compiler of the first Book of *Maccabees* ii. 54: but in Fact there was not such a Perpetuity of the Possession of the Priesthood in this Family. The Notion of such a Promise seems founded on *Num.* xxv. 13. which runs thus, *He shall have it and his Seed after him, even the Covenant of an everlasting Priesthood.* The Term *everlasting* here joined to the Priesthood, has been generally thought to express a Design of a perpetual Continuance of it to *Phineas's* Descendants, without being at any time translated into any other Branch of *Aaron's* Family, which is not true, particularly with respect to *Eli*, who was High-Priest in the Days of *Samuel*, for he was of the Family of *Ithamar*, the Brother of *Eleazar*; and therefore the Priesthood went out of the Hands of the Descendants of *Phineas*, when it came to *Eli*, and did not return again to them, until, after some Successions, it came to *Zadoc*, in the Days of *David*. The Term *everlasting* is rather to be annexed to the Priesthood, in its Limitation to the Family of *Aaron*, and suggests no more than that the Priesthood of *Aaron* should descend to them. God made to *Phineas*, and to his Seed after him, not an *everlasting Grant* of the Priesthood, as some have explained it, nor a Grant of an *everlasting Priesthood*, as our Version renders it; but rather a Grant of the *everlasting Priesthood*; of the Priesthood limited to *Aaron*, and his Descendants by that Appellation. See *Shuckford's Conn.* Vol. iii. p. 342, 3, 4.

Ver. 25. *According to the Covenant made with David, Son of Jesse, of the Tribe of Judah, that the Inheritance of the King should be to his Posterity alone; so the Inheritance of Aaron should also be unto his Seed.*] It is certain from *Maimonides*, and other Jewish Writers, that, upon the Demise of the King, the High-Priest, or any other superior Dignitary, whose Function was perpetuated, the Son, or the Person that was next in an hereditary Line, was substituted in his Place; for whoever could make out a Priority of Blood was acknowledged thereby to have the best Title to the Office, Rights, and Privileges of the Deceased, provided he could discharge his Trust with Wisdom, at least with



a just Sense and Fear of God; if his Wisdom was not altogether equal to his Station. This they observed in pursuance of what is written *Deut. xvii. 20. To the End that he may prolong his Days in his Kingdom, he, and his Children in the midst of Israel.* From hence they inferred a successive Right in that Family, to which God chose to give the Kingdom, if they continued in a constant Observance of his Laws. The same hereditary Right likewise held in all high Dignities which were in the midst of *Israel*, so that whoever was promoted to any such Dignity, enjoyed it not only for his Life-natural, but also for the Lives of his Posterity. *Selden* confirms this with respect to the immediate hereditary Succession of the Priesthood, and that this, like the other Posts of Honour which were continued among them, observed the same Rule of Descent. *Josephus* remarks, that the first who broke in upon the successive Right in the Priesthood, was *Antiochus Epiphanes*, who removed *Jason* to make way for his Brother *Onias*. *Aristobulus* was the second, who supplanted *Hyrchanus*, and *Herod* was the third, who deposed *Ananel* to make room for a Boy High-Priest. *Antiq. L. xv. c. 3.* We have in this Verse a manifest Comparison between the *Regale*, and the *Pontificat*; the *Regal* and *Sacerdotal* Family agreed both in this Point, that the Inheritance was fixed in the Male Line, and went according to Proximity, or rather Priority of Blood, and in both the Succession was endangered by Disobedience to God's Commands. The reading of the *Greek* here is perplexed and obscure in all the Editions, nor do the Versions give much Light to it, *Καὶ διαθήκην τῷ Δαυὶδ ἣς ἐν Φυλῆς Ἰσραὴλ κληρονομία βασιλείας ἣς ἐξ ἣς μόνον, κληρονομία Ααρὼν καὶ τῷ σπέρματι αὐτοῦ.* I would either read with *Dr. Grabe*, *Καὶ διαθήκην τῷ Δαυὶδ, ἣς Ἰεσσαὶ ἐν Φυλῆς Ἰσραὴλ, κληρονομίας βασιλείας ἣς ἐξ ἣς μόνον, κ. τ. λ.* Or rather thus, as many Copies omit *Ἰεσσαὶ*, *Καὶ διαθήκην τῷ Δαυὶδ, ἣς ἐν Φυλῆς Ἰσραὴλ κληρονομία βασιλείας, ἣς ἐξ ἣς μόνον κληρονομία Ααρὼν, καὶ τῷ σπέρματι αὐτοῦ, i. e.* according to the Covenant made with *David*, that as the Inheritance of the Kingdom (in the *LXX*, βασιλείας is very frequently put for βασιλείας) should remain to his Son of the Tribe of *Judah*, so the Inheritance of *Aaron* should be to the only Son of his Son, *i. e.* *Phinehas*, the Son of *Eleazar*, the Son of *Aaron*, and to his Seed for ever. This last Sense a very judicious Writer prefers, See *Jackson's Works*, Tom. I. p. 455. and indeed it is more agreeable to this Author's Opinion of *Phinehas's* everlasting Priesthood in the foregoing Verse.

Ver. 26. *God give you Wisdom in your Heart to judge his People in Righteousness, that their good Things be not abolished, and that their Glory may endure for ever.* *δὴν ὑμῖν σοφίαν ἐν καρδίᾳ ὑμῶν, κείναι τὸ λαὸν αὐτῷ ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ, ἵνα μὴ ἀφανισθῇ τὰ*

*ἀγαθὰ, καὶ τὴν δόξαν αὐτῶν εἰς γενεὰς αὐτῶν.* The wise Man concludes this Chapter with a pious Wish or Prayer, the Sense of which seems to be, May God give to all who are the Seed and Successors of *Aaron*, Wisdom to instruct and guide his People in Righteousness, and to preserve them in Prosperity and Peace; and may they so conscientiously discharge their high Calling, that their good Deeds may still be remembered, and their Glory perpetuated through all Generations. *Grotius* points the *Greek* thus, *Δὴν ὑμῖν σοφίαν ἐν καρδίᾳ ὑμῶν κείναι τὸν λαὸν αὐτῷ ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ, ἵνα μὴ ἀφανισθῇ τὰ ἀγαθὰ αὐτῶν, καὶ τὴν δόξαν αὐτῶν εἰς γενεὰς αὐτῶν, i. e.* May God give to you, the present Sons and Successors of *Aaron*, Wisdom to conduct and judge his People, that they may be happy and prosperous; and continue to such as succeed you the Inheritance and Glory of their Predecessors, to the latest Generations.

## CHAP. XLVI.

Ver. 1. **J**ESUS the Son of Nave. . . was the Successor of Moses in Prophecies.] The Jews distinguish *Moses* as having immediate Communication with God from all other Prophets, and the highest Degree of Inspiration is styled by them, *gradus Mosaicus*. He could prophesy at all Times, whereas others prophesied only on particular Occasions, when the Word of God came to them. Immediately from the Death of *Moses* they had a Succession of Prophets, of whom *Joshua* was the first. See *Bishop Sherlock on Prophecy*, Disc. vi. God commanded *Moses* before his Death to lay his Hands upon him, and to put some of his Honour upon him, *Num. xxvii. 20.* whereby he committed to him the supreme Authority after his Departure. And as upon this Ceremony usually followed a more abundant Measure of the Spirit, so *Deut. xxxiv. 9.* it is said of *Joshua*, that he was full of the Spirit of Wisdom, *i. e.* of all the Gifts necessary in an excellent Governor, and the Successor of *Moses*, among which was reckoned the Spirit of Prophecy. And perhaps the Reason why little or no Mention is made throughout the whole Book of *Joshua*, of his consulting the Lord after the Judgment of *Urim*, may be, as some have concluded from *Judg. i. 1.* because the Spirit of Prophecy rested upon him, and conducted him without this Oracle. Or these Words, *the Successor of Moses in Prophecy*, may refer to ch. i. 1. of the Book of *Joshua*, or to his being the Author of that Book, as most modern Writers conclude, from the 26<sup>th</sup> Verse of the last Chapter, and some learned Men have inferred it from this Place. See *Dupin's Prelim. Dissert.* And then the Sense is, that *Joshua* was the next Writer of inspired Scripture after *Moses*; though others, it must be confessed, have concluded from *Acts iii.*



24. that Samuel was the first after Moses that wrote his Prophecy. See *Lightfoot in Loc.*

Ibid. *Who according to his Name was made great for the saving of the Elect of God, and taking Vengeance of the Enemies that rose up against them.*] ἐγένετο μέγας διὰ σωτηρίαν ἐκλεκτῶν αὐτοῦ. Probably the true Rendering is, Who according to his Name was, or became great, upon account of his saving the Elect, or God's People. The Geneva Version is much clearer, *Who, according to his Name, was a great Saviour of the Elect of God.* Joshua, or Jesus, signifies a Saviour, or Deliverer, and in such Places of the Old Testament, where Saviours are mentioned, as *Obad. ii. 21.* we are to understand such as were sent, or raised up by God to fight the Battles of God's People against their Enemies. In this Sense the Word Saviour is taken *Judg. iii. 9.* *Isai. xix. 20.* and upon these two Respects of avenging them on, or delivering them from, their Enemies, the Title of Saviours and Judges was at first bestowed.

Ver. 3. *For the Lord himself brought his Enemies unto him.*] Various are the Readings of this Place. Some Copies have τὰς γὰρ πολεμίους Κύριος αὐτὸς ἐπήγαγεν, For he fought the Lord's Battles; which Grotius and Badwell prefer, and is the Reading of the Syr. and Geneva Versions. In others it is, τὰς γὰρ πολεμίους Κύριος αὐτὸς ἐπήγαγεν, for the Lord himself afflicted his Enemies. Drusus has τὰς γὰρ πολεμίους Κύριος αὐτὸς ἐπήγαγεν, For he afflicted or destroyed the Enemies of the Lord. Camerarius conjectures the true reading might be, τὰς γὰρ πολεμίους Κύριος αὐτὸς ἐπάταξεν. The Vulg. only agrees with our Version here, the Sense of which, it must be confessed, is low and obscure.

Ver. 4. *Did not the Sun go back by his means?*] A very learned Writer observes how pertinent this Miracle was to the Circumstances of the Persons concerned: As the Sun, Moon, and Lights of Heaven were the Deities worshipped at this Time by the Inhabitants of Canaan, a greater Demonstration could not be given of the Power of the true God, to support the Israelites his Servants, or of the Inability of the false Deities of the Canaanites, to assist their Worshipers, than to see that the God of Israel could controul the Course of the Sun, and cause these their Deities to contribute to, instead of preventing the Ruin, that was coming upon those that served them. *Shuckford's Connex.* Vol. III. p. 451. Some have been so idle, to say no worse of their Attempt, as to invent Solutions of this Miracle; they pretend, either that God placed in the Heavens some extraordinary light Body, representing the Sun, or that he kept up the Light thereof only by Refraction: in some such Manner, Mr. Le Clerc endeavours to naturalize and explain away this Miracle; to depreciate it, he says, *Quod fieri potuit inso-*

*litis refractionibus, quibus, ut notum est, sol nobis supra horizontem esse videtur, cum nondum ortus sit, & jam occiderit.* Annot. in Josh. x. 12. 'Tis usual indeed for Refraction to make the Sun appear higher than it is, but this will not make such an Object as the Sun, in a very swift and oblique Motion, to appear to the Eye as quiescent, or to stand still for one Moment, much less to make a Winter's Day as long, or longer than a Summer's. See *Reeve's Prelim. Disc. to Vincent. Lirin.* p. 177. where this is fully and ingeniously discussed. Even the great Grotius in this Instance shews no more of the Philosopher, than Believer, when he says on this Occasion, *Fortē post occasum sol diutius lucere visus est, repercussu nubis existentis supra horizontem.* See also Annot. in Josh. x. 12. The Scripture it is certain mentions it as a Miracle, and in particular the Prophet Habakkuk, represents it as such, ch. iii. 11. Our Author so esteemed it, and such was the concurrent Sense of the Jewish Rabbins. Such as disbelieve this History, or would receive Satisfaction in the Point, would do well to consult Huetius, *Quæst. Alnet.* L. ii. c. 12. See Note on c. xlviii. § 23.

Ver. 6. *And with Hailstones of mighty Power he made the Battle to fall violently upon the Nations. . . . that the Nations might know all their Strength, because he fought in the Sight of the Lord.*] ἐν λίθοις χαλάζης δυνάμεως ἐκείλαιας. Most of the Greek Copies, with Coverdale's and the Geneva Version, join this Sentence to the foregoing Verse, and all of them make the full Point at ἐκείλαιας, as if the Sense was, The Lord heard, i. e. answered him with, or by Hailstones of mighty Power. But the Connection of our Translators seems better, and the Sense rather is, that God was pleased by a Storm of mighty Hailstones to destroy more of the Enemy, than fell by the Sword of the Israelites, Josh. x. 11. that the Nations might know πανοπλίαν αὐτοῦ, *Potentiam ejus*, Vulg. All his [Joshua's] Strength, i. e. might be convinced from these Hailstones, that the Lord was his Helper and Strength, and that this War of Joshua was with God's Approbation, and under his Direction, *Deo favente*, for so ἐναντίον Κυρίου, ἐνώπιον Κυρίου, and הוֹנִי' לִפְנֵי, signify. The Geneva Version does not render it amiss, *The Lord favoured his Battell.* Some Copies read, ἐναντίον Κυρίου ὁ πόλεμος αὐτῶν, *contra Dominum bellum ipsorum*; which furnishes a Reason for God's assisting Joshua.

Ver. 11. *And concerning the Judges, every one by Name, whose Heart went not a whoring, nor departed from the Lord, let their Memory be blessed.* Ver. 12. *Let their Bones flourish out of their Place.*] Honourable Mention should likewise be made of the Judges of Israel, the last of which was Samuel; who prostituted, or defiled not themselves by idolatrous Worship, among which Abimelech, the natural Son of Gideon, is not worthy



worthy to be mentioned, whose Name is justly odious for his Crimes, particularly his Cruelty in slaying his threescore and ten Brethren, that he might obtain the Power. But of such as subdued Kingdoms, and wrought Righteousness, let their Bones flourish out of their Place. This is a Form of well-wishing to the Dead, or blessing the Bodies of those that departed in Peace and Honour. The Phrase occurs again ch. xlix. 10. and means, Let their Memory flourish, or may their Bodies, like some hopeful and blessed Seed, put forth and germinate from the Bottom of their Tombs, and their Virtue revive, and flourish on the Earth, and those that are alive revere their Ashes. 'Tis an Allusion to the Custom of placing Sepulchres in Gardens, and such other verdant Places, 2 Kings xxi. 18, 26. John xix. 41. which were probably chosen to intimate, as well the Freshness and Perpetuity of their Memory, as the Hope and Expectation of good Men of a joyful Resurrection; for their Bones then seemed to flourish out of their Place, or to revive, and live again from their Sepulchres, when these Coemeteries were in their greatest Beauty and Verdure, as if they partook of the Richness of the Soil, and germinated by its Fruitfulness. As this Phrase shews the Jews firm Assurance of a future Resurrection, so the Prophets represent the Return of that People from the *Babylonish* Captivity, by a like Expression, viz. that their Bones shall flourish like an Herb, *Isai.* lxvi. 14. *Ezek.* xxxvii. 3.

Ver. 18. *He destroyed the Rulers of the Tyrians, and all the Princes of the Philistines.* The Ancients frequently confound the *Phanicians* with the *Philistines*, but the sacred Writers, as well as our Author, plainly distinguish one from the other. The *Phanicians* oppressed the *Israelites* in the Time of the Judges, *Jud.* x. 11. And in the beginning of the Government of *Samuel* they entered into Alliance with the *Philistines* against the People of the Lord; but the *Philistines* being worsted, the *Phanicians* after that never undertook any thing against the *Hebrews*.

Ver. 19. *And before his long Sleep he made Protestations in the Sight of the Lord and his Anointed, I have not taken any Man's Goods.* *πρὸ καὶ τοῦ κοιμήσεως αἰώνου.* In the next Verse Death is expressed by *ἕπν*, and in Scripture it is often called a Sleep. The *Old Testament* Phrase, for such as are departed is, that they slept with their Fathers. *St. Stephen* is said, after stoning to fall asleep, *Acts* vii. 60. Hence Burying-Places are called *κοιμητήρια*. *Homer* has the same Metaphor, *τὸ δ' αὖτε δὲ ὑπνώοντος ἐγείρει.* The solemn Protestation here made by *Samuel* of his Integrity, was not out of Ostentation, but partly for his own Vindication, that they might not reproach his Government, and partly that being publicly acquitted from all Faults

in it, he might more freely reprove the Sins of the People, and particularly that of desiring a King, despising thereby the Theocracy they were honoured with.

Ver. 20. *After his Death he prophesied.* Learned Men are of very different Opinions in relation to the Reality of *Samuel's* Appearance, some imagining that it was an evil Spirit in his Form that appeared unto *Saul*, and others that it was *Samuel* himself, who, on this Occasion, foretels his impending Death. A late very learned Writer says, "The Opinion that it was really *Samuel* is very ancient, the most ancient of any, and seems to have been the Persuasion of the *Jewish Church*, long before the coming of *Christ*. Not only the Author of this Book, who lived within an hundred Years or less of the Prophet *Malachi*, supposes that it was *Samuel* himself that appeared in Person, (he was a considerable Man in his Time, and likely to know the true Sense of Scripture, and to give the general Sentiments of the *Jewish Church*, as any Man of that Age,) but the *Greek Translators of the Old Testament*, who lived not long after that Time, were in the same Persuasion, as appears by an additional Note which they inserted 1 *Chron.* x. 13. where the LXX read very expressly, that *Samuel* the Prophet gave the Answer to King *Saul*, when he enquired of the Sorcerers, ἀπεκρίναντο αὐτῷ Σαμουὴλ ὁ προφῆτης, which it is strange that our Version should wholly omit. In the same Sentiment was *Josephus*, the *Jewish Historian*, who lived in the Apostles Time; and thus thought many of the *Christian Fathers*. This Interpretation is plain and natural, and least forced of any, agreeing with the Words of the Text, for the Story is there told in such a way, as one would expect to find upon Supposition that it really was *Samuel*. It is said, that the Woman saw *Samuel*, 1 *Sam.* xxviii. 12. and that *Saul* perceived that it was *Samuel*, 14. The Words in the LXX seem stronger, ἔγνω Σαὺλ ὅτι ἔτος Σαμουὴλ, i. e. that this was *Samuel* himself. How could he know this if it was not so, or why is it said, that he perceived and knew it, rather than that he imagined, or supposed it so? In the Sequel of the Narrative it is added, *Samuel* said unto *Saul*, 15. and again, *Then said Samuel*, 16. which would not be true, if it was only a personated *Samuel*, a Familiar in *Samuel's* Shape; and it is strange that the Text should thus word it, if *Samuel* was not really there. It is as plainly said that *Samuel* appeared and talked, as it is elsewhere said that *Moses* and *Elias* appeared and talked with our Blessed Saviour, *Matt.* xvii. 3. And good Reason was there that it should be the real *Samuel*, because God thereby was pleased to disappoint both the Sorcerers and him, by sending

— *Samuel*



“ Samuel himself with a true and faithful  
 “ Prefage quite contrary to what the Wo-  
 “ man, or *Saul* expected. Add to this,  
 “ that *Samuel* was the same Prophet that  
 “ predicted this Event, and God now raised  
 “ him up from the Dead to confirm the  
 “ Sentence. For 'tis to be observed, that  
 “ before the *Pythonefs*, to whom *Saul*, anxi-  
 “ ous about the great Event, applies to as-  
 “ sist him by her Incantations, and to call  
 “ up the Spirit of *Samuel*, begins one Word  
 “ of her Spells, or makes any Attempt by  
 “ her Charms: the Prophet interposes,  
 “ frightens her, and pronounces, or rather  
 “ repeats *Saul's* Doom, and she herself wit-  
 “ nesseth the Truth of his Appearance.”  
*Waterland's Postb. Serm.* Vol. ii. It seems  
 probable from this Account, that the *Jews*  
 at least did believe, that this was the true  
 Soul of *Samuel*, which is recorded thus to  
 have spoken to *Saul*; and from this Suppo-  
 sition we may infer, 1. That the *Jews* did  
 believe a separate Existence of human Souls;  
 and perhaps the establishing this Truth upon  
 the Foot of sensible Evidence, was not the  
 lowest End of *Samuel's* Appearance upon this  
 Occasion. 2. This is a pregnant Instance of  
 the Evocation of the Dead, and the Anti-  
 quity of Necromancy; this Opinion pre-  
 vailed long among the *Jews*, for *Isaiab* al-  
 ludes to it, ch. xxix. 4. and it is evident  
 likewise from ch. lxxv. 4. that they were wont  
 to go to the Sepulchres of the Dead, there  
 to consult them. *Aeschylus* has a Tragedy,  
 entitled *Perse*, in which the Shade of *Da-*  
*rius* is called up, like that of *Samuel*, and  
 foretels Queen *Atossa* all her Misfortunes.  
 And to that Book of *Homer's*, viz. *Odyss.* xi.  
 containing the Interview between *Ulysses*, and  
 the Shades of the Dead, the Ancients have  
 given the Name of *νεκρομαντεία*; but this  
 Notion was not of *Homer's* Invention, it  
 prevailed long before his Days among the  
*Chaldeans*, and spread over all the Oriental  
 World.

*Ibid.* And lift up his Voice from the Earth  
 in Prophecy.] It has been objected by some  
 learned Men, that if it had been real *Samuel*  
 himself that appeared, she should rather  
 have been represented as coming down from  
 Heaven, instead of bringing him up as it  
 were out of the Ground, or lifting up his  
 Voice from thence. But this Objection is  
 no more against the Supposition of its being  
*Samuel's* Ghost, than against the supposing  
 it to be any other Spirit whatsoever; for we  
 have Reason to believe, that even evil Spi-  
 rits have not their Dwelling under Ground,  
 but in the Air rather; hence the Devil is  
 styled in the *New Testament*, the Prince of  
 the Power of the Air. But the true Reason  
 why *Samuel* is represented as being brought  
 up, as the Expression is in the Book of *Sam-*  
*uel*, and here said to lift up his Voice from  
 the Earth, is because his Body was under  
 Ground, to which the Soul was still con-  
 ceived to bear a relation; and it was upon  
 this chiefly, that the popular prevailing No-

tion of all separate Souls being in the Heart  
 of the Earth was founded; which popular  
 Notion, as it obtained among the *Jews*, and  
 is often alluded to in the Language of Scrip-  
 ture, and, adapting itself to vulgar Capa-  
 cities, it is no wonder that the Relation of  
 this Apparition of *Samuel* should be accom-  
 modated thereto; so that nothing can be  
 concluded in this Case, merely from the man-  
 ner in which *Samuel* is said to come. See  
*Waterland's Serm. ibid.* In the last Sentence  
 we have a further Reason of his appearing  
 at this Time, besides shewing the King his  
 End, viz. that *Israel* might be admonished,  
 and moved to a speedy Repentance by such  
 a Warning, or, as others understand it, to  
 acquaint the People, that they also should  
 be delivered into the Hands of the *Philistines*,  
 and be destroyed with him: or, as the *Ge-*  
*neva* Version has it, more agreeably to the  
*Greek*, That the Wickedness of the People  
 should perish.

## C H A P. XLVII.

Ver. 1. **A**ND after him rose up *Nathan*  
 to prophesy in the Time of *Da-*  
*vid*.] Nothing is here said of *Nathan*, but  
 that he prophesied in the Time of *David*,  
 which may seem strange, as in all other In-  
 stances the Author expatiates on the Praises  
 of the *Jewish* Worthies, which he produces,  
 and his Design in this Hymn is to bestow a  
 Panegyric on each. But this single Cir-  
 cumstance is itself a sufficient Commenda-  
 tion of him, as he contributed so much by  
 his fine Artifice and Address to that Prince's  
 Repentance and Conversion. The *Oriental*  
 Versions seems to glance at this, making  
 him to prophesy *coram Davide*, in his hear-  
 ing or Presence, or, which will come nearer  
 to the Case, to his Face. *Nathan* was not  
 the only Prophet in *David's* Time, but he  
 chose to instance in him, as being most emi-  
 nent in other Respects likewise, as being  
 appointed to assure *David* of the Continu-  
 ance of the Kingdom to his Posterity, and  
 that his Son should build the House, or  
 Temple of the Lord, and at length he an-  
 ointed *Solomon* to be King over *Israel* and  
*Judah*.

Ver. 2. As is the Fat taken away from the  
 Peace-Offering, so was *David* chosen out of  
 the Children of *Israel*.] The Meaning brief-  
 ly is, that *David* was preferred before others  
 for his great and extraordinary Merit, and  
 was separated to his high Office and Digni-  
 ty, as the Fat of the Peace-Offering was set  
 apart for the Altar. That the Cauls and  
 the choicest Fat of the Victim were select-  
 ed, as the best Part of it, to be offered to  
 the Gods, See *II. L. i.* This Comparison  
 is so far from being mean and despicable, as  
 it may seem, that it has been used and ap-  
 plauded by the best Writers, and looked  
 upon with Veneration by Antiquity. The  
 same Allusion which is here used to display  
 the Worth and Excellence of *David*, we



find applied by *Homer* to *Ulysses*. *Odyss.* xx. the Justness of which *M. Dacier* defends, and even extols.

Ver. 3. *He played with Lions as with Kids, and with Bears as with Lambs.*] The ingenious Writer of *King David's* Life, p. 42. takes Notice of his Modesty. As the Account is recorded in Scripture, he describes his Combat with the Lion in the simplest and shortest Narration, that ever was made of such a Combat, *I caught him by his Beard, and smote him, and slew him.* And to avoid dwelling upon his own Exploits, he says no more of his Fight with the Bear, but only that he slew him; so far were these savage Creatures from being a Match for him, that, according to our Author, they afforded him only Sport and Pastime, the most terrible, was as inoffensive as a Kid, and the most furly, as good-natured and harmless as a Lamb.

Ver. 4. *Slew he not a Giant when he was yet but young; and did he not take away Reproach from the People when he lifted up his Hand with the Stone in the Sling, and beat down the boasting of Goliath?* Ver. 5. *For he called upon the most High Lord, and he gave him Strength in his Right Hand, to slay that mighty Warrior, and set up the Horn of his People.*] The Giant *Goliath* is described in Scripture, as being six Cubits, and a Span in Height, i. e. nine Feet and nine Inches. His Coat of Mail is said to weigh five Thousands Shekels of Brass, i. e. about one hundred and fifty Pounds; the Head of his Spear alone weighed six hundred Shekels of Iron, i. e. about eighteen or nineteen Pounds. Against one so formidable, and compleatly armed, goes forth *David* with the Apparatus only of a simple Shepherd. The Difference between the Threats of the Combatants is likewise very remarkable: *Goliath*, in full Confidence of his own Strength, bids *David* come up, and *he would give his Flesh unto the Fowls of the Air*: *David*, confiding only in the Protection of the Almighty, which he had often experienced, retorts, *This Day will the Lord deliver thee into my Hand*, and then tells him what he is to expect, that he will deal with him, as a Warrior, and not as an inhuman Savage. That a young Man disarmed, should, only with a Sling and a Stone, slay so mighty a Champion, whose very Appearance made Armies flee before him, is indeed surprizing; but what is most to be admired is, that after having slain such an experienced Champion, in so unequal a Combat, he should be able to suppress all Sentiments of Pride, which must necessarily spring up, after an Action, which raised him above the King himself, and was accompanied with such Acclamations, and Songs of Triumph.

Ver. 6. *So the People honoured him with Ten thousands, and praised him in the Blessings of the Lord, in that he gave him a Crown of Glory.*] If this be applied to the

People, it will be clearer to read *εἰς ἑκατὸν, καὶ ἡνέσαν*, as some Copies have it, which our Translators follow, and then by *δύλας* *Κυρίου* may either be meant, that they bestowed on him the highest Commendations, as the *Geneva* Version understands it; or that, whilst they praised him, they blessed and praised the Lord at the same Time, for the Benefits received through him by the Success of that Day. But there is another Reading, which applies the whole to God, viz. that God honoured *David* by the Slaughter of his Ten thousands; the *Syriac* has, with the Praises of Ten thousands, and by his own Blessings added to his Praises, in giving him the Kingdom of his People.

Ver. 8. *In all his Works he praised the holy one Most High, with Words of Glory.*] In all the Editions the Reading is, *ἐν παντί ἔργῳ αὐτοῦ ἰδωνεν ἱερομολόγησιν*, with a full Point there; but the other Reading which is followed by our Translators, *Junius*, and the *Vulg.* and is confirmed by the *Alex.* MS. is preferable, i. e. in all his Victories he gave God the Praise, in Terms of the highest Respect, and composed solemn Hymns on the Occasion. There is also another good Sense may be given of this Passage, viz. that he sung Hymns to the Holy One most High with his whole Heart, in the most dutiful Manner, in Words full of his Glory. Thus *Mess.* of *Port Royal*, *Il a beni le Tres-haut par des paroles pleines de sa gloire.* He made the Praises of God glorious, whenever he awaked his Lute and Harp, by the most exalted Strains of Praise and Thanksgiving, *Carminibus honorificis, ac voce gratiarum actionis, ac laudis, plena.* Arab. He was inspired to sanctify Poetry and Musick, and employed them upon the noblest Subjects, to celebrate the Glory of God, and to excite a grateful Acknowledgment in all Men for his Mercies, and deservedly is styled the sweet *Psalmist* of *Israel*, 2 *Sam.* xxiii. 1. *Josephus* says, that *David* added Songs and Hymns to the Harmony of his Harp, when he played before King *Saul*, and that the Energy of both was such, as repressed the Suggestions of the evil Spirit.

Ver. 11. *The Lord took away his Sins, and exalted his Horn for ever, he gave him a Covenant of Kings, and a Throne of Glory in Israel.*] Upon *David's* Confession of Guilt and Humiliation before God, and a long succeeding Repentance, God pronounced the Sentence of Pardon by *Nathan* the Prophet. But is this Change of his own Condition all we are to understand by the Words, *He exalted his Horn for ever*? *Horn* is an *Eastern* Figure for a King, and by it is meant the future budding forth or future Kingdom of the *Messiah*: and this Idea being joined with the Covenant of Kings, or rather of a Kingdom, as the Margin, more agreeably to the *Greek*, has it, the Sense will be briefly this, that God engaged to make the *Horn of David*



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David to flourish, i. e. to make a glorious King to bud, like a Branch in the House of David, and would ordain, and had decreed a Lanthorn, or Kingdom for his anointed, as is expressed Ps. cxxxii. 18. See the like Metaphor, 1 Kings xi. 36. The Words for ever incline me to think, that besides the Promises made to David, and his Posterity, according to the Flesh, the Kings of Judah, that they should continue long beyond any other regal Race, in the known World, in earthly Splendor and Authority, the Author refers to that Promise, 1 Chron. xvii. 12. that his House, and the Throne of his Kingdom, should be established for ever before him, which includes an everlasting Dominion over the Church, and People of God, and is more fully expressed in the Supplement to this Account, & 13, 14. I will be his Father, and he shall be my Son, and I will not take away my Mercy from him, but I will settle him in my House, and in my Kingdom for ever, and his Throne shall be established for evermore; which contains a Promise, that can only respect that Son of David, who was at the same Time strictly, and immediately the Son. And to him many Passages in the Psalmist refer, which are otherwise unintelligible. See Ps. xxi. 4, 5, 6. His Kingdom shall stand fast for ever, and his Throne shall be like as the Sun before me, and Luke i. 32, 33. where this Promise is accordingly applied to our Saviour by an Angel from Heaven. The Completion of the Promise made to David, that the Messiah, or Branch, should come out of the Stem of Jesse, which was renewed by Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Zachariah, was still looked for by this Writer in the Beginning of the Greek Monarchy. And that Solomon was not meant by the Horn, or Branch, appears from hence, because Isaiah, and Jeremiah, long after Solomon's Death, promise his Coming, to whom these Titles do belong; And at the Conception of Jesus Christ, Zachary, the Father of John the Baptist, and a Prophet also, declared, that God had raised up the Horn of Salvation, in the House of his Servant David, Luke i. 68, 69.

Ver. 12. After him rose up a wise Son, and for his sake he dwelt at large. Δι' αὐτὸν κατέλυσεν ἐν πλάτυσμῳ, i. e. Through the Blessing of the Lord he dwelt at large. The Meaning of which either is, that he lived quietly and in Peace, or that he reigned far and near, and had a very extensive Dominion, 1 Kings iv. 21. Drusus understands it of his Subjects under his Reign, or through his Means, living happily. The Vulg. has, Propter illum dejecit omnem potentiam inimicorum, i. e. says Calmet, for his sake the Lord subdued, or quieted all his Enemies round about, & 24, 25. A cause de lui, le Seigneur détruisit toute la puissance de ses ennemis. Junius renders most unaccountably, Per quem in lato habitabit Deus. Grotius approves of none of these Senses, and con-  
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tures the true Reading to be, δι' αὐτὸ κατέλυσεν ἐν πλάτυσμῳ, i. e. Upon Account of his superior Wisdom, neighbouring Nations willingly submitted to his Sway.

Ver. 14. How wise wast thou in thy Youth, and as a Flood filled with Understanding? Ver. 15. Thy Soul covered the whole Earth, and thou filledst it with dark Parables.] This is according to a Mode of Speech, frequently made use of in Scripture, wherein the same Word that denotes to flow, as out of a Fountain, is often used for speaking, or haranguing: And by the same Metaphor Words are sometimes resembled to Waters. Thus Prov. xviii. 4. The Words of a Man's Mouth are as deep Waters, and the Well-Spring of Wisdom as a flowing Brook. See also ch. i. 23. xv. 28. In Allusion to this, we meet with Torrens ingenii, Flumen eloquentiæ in approved Classic Writers. The Extensiveness of Solomon's Knowledge is here said to be so great, as like a Deluge to cover the whole Earth, for he excelled in all Sorts of Wisdom, which as he asked of God preferably to Riches, or Honour, so he gave it to him without Measure. He delivered most admirable Maxims and Precepts for the Service and Conduct of Life, called here Parables, or Proverbs, so many in Number, even Three thousand, 1 Kings iv. 32. as comparatively to fill the Earth: Herein his Wisdom excelled that of all the Children of the East Country, and all the Wisdom of Egypt, & 30.

Ver. 18. By the Name of the Lord God, which is called the Lord God of Israel.] This Sentence, though seemingly very easy, and generally admitted as it stands in our Version, gives me some Suspicion. I think it is by no Means to be connected to the latter Part of this Verse, but hath immediate Reference to the foregoing Verse. The Commentators indeed all agree in expounding it of Solomon's great Riches through God's Blessing, but is there any need of such a formal Preamble, such a solemn Seal as it were of Authority, not unlike that, 1 Cor. v. 4. to introduce only that Solomon was very rich? I would rather refer this Sentence to the former Subject, and explain it, Foreign Nations, and Persons of the greatest Note in them, admired thee for thy Wisdom in all the Branches of it, for thy Songs, ἐν ᾧδαις, Proverbs, Parables, and Interpretations, ἐν ἐνόμαϊ for the Name, i. e. the Power and Blessing of God accompanying thee (the God of all the Earth, but of Israel in a more particular Manner) visible in the Gift of Wisdom to thee in such Profusion and Abundance. But we shall come still nearer the Meaning, if we understand ἐν ᾧδαις as an Hebraism, and render it Praise, Honour, or the like. No Doubt can be made, but the Heb. had it עָשָׂה, and in the Sense in which it occurs, Deuteron. xxvi. 19. And to make thee high above all Nations that be hath made in Praise, in Name,  
T



Name, *עֲשֵׂה*, and in Honour. Where the LXX render *עֲשֵׂה* by *δοξασον*, which is to the same Sense. We may therefore render this Passage thus, The Countries marvelled at thee for thy Songs, and Proverbs, and Parables, and Interpretations, to the Glory of the Lord God, which is called the Lord God of Israel. This Sense seems easy and natural, and is further so confirmed by the Syr. and Arab. Versions, which mention *Majestas & Honor* here, as to leave but little Room to doubt, but that it is the true one. I once indeed conjectured that *עֲשֵׂה* might possibly have been the true Reading, referring to the particular Honour vouchsafed to Solomon in the Lord's appearing to him twice, *1 Kings* iii. 5. and ch. ix. 2. but where the present Reading can tolerably well be accounted for, I am the more backward to attempt an Emendation.

Ibid. *Thou didst gather Gold as Tin, and didst multiply Silver as Lead.*] Vast Sums of Money are mentioned in the History of the Jews, as belonging to David, and Solomon. When the former conquered the Kingdom of Edom, he thereby became Master of two Sea-Ports on the Red Sea, or Arabian Gulph, viz. *Eloth* and *Esiogebor*. *2 Sam.* viii. 14. compared with *1 Kings* ix. 26. from whence Solomon maintained a great Traffick for Gold to *Ophir* (which *Josephus* says is since called the Golden Land, *Antiq.* L. viii.) supposed to be the *Aurea Chersonesus* of the Ancients: And that by the Assistance of skilful Tyrian Pilots and Mariners, whom *Hiram* King of Tyre, being a Friend and an Ally, had sent, in one Voyage there were brought to Jerusalem Four hundred and twenty Talents of Gold. A most immense Sum however computed, *1 Kings* x. 27. in so much that it made Money in Jerusalem to be as Stones for Plenty, *1 Kings* x. 27.

Ver. 19. *Thou didst bow thy Loins unto Women, and by thy Body thou wast brought into Subjection.* Ver. 20. *Thou didst stain thy Honour and pollute thy Seed, so that thou broughtest Wrath upon thy Children.*] Every transient Act of Sin, as it is called, leaves a lasting Stain behind it, see *Job* xxii. 17. *Jer.* ii. 22. But that of Lust is of a deeper Dye, as being generally more complex. Solomon's Lust was the more aggravated from its Consequence, as being the Means of seducing him to Idolatry, for into this he fell through the Charms and Softnesses of his many Heathen Mistresses, *Moabites*, *Ammonites*, and other strange Women. So fatal an Evil is Lust to the best Understanding. This Impiety was manifest in him about the Thirtieth Year of his Reign, according to Chronologers, but the more secret Beginning of his Defection is by *Josephus*, and other Jews, dated from the Images of Oxen, made by his Command, as Supporters of the Brazen Sea. It is observable, that in this whole Catalogue of famous Men, whom this

Author purposely celebrates from the xlvth to the End of the 1<sup>st</sup> Chap. Solomon is the Chief, if not the only Person, that he casts any Reflexion upon. There is not one Word mentioned of the Sins of David, of the Murder and Adultery he was guilty of, but every thing is enlarged upon that can any way tend to the Honour of that Prince: What Reason then can be assigned for this Difference? This Silence with respect to David's Sins seems to intimate his Repentance and Forgiveness; but of Solomon we may say with *St. Austin*, that nothing is more certain than Solomon's Idolatry and Sin, and nothing more uncertain than his true Repentance. *Contr. Faust.* It is the Opinion of many Writers that Solomon died in this Sin without Repentance; it is more certain, that before he died he persisted in it, notwithstanding the repeated Appearance of God's *Schechinah*, *1 Kings* xi. 9, 10. And from that Chapter it appears, that the Divine Protection visibly departed from him. After the Mention of Solomon's Glory, Wisdom, Wealth, &c. we have in this Account a sad Instance of human Frailty. As this wise and great Man had forsook the Lord his God, the Lord stirred up an Adversary to him, *Jeroboam* his Servant, the Effect of which was, the rending ten Tribes from the House and Family of David, so that the Kingdom came to be divided into two Kingdoms, or rather Factions, those of *Judab*, and *Israel*.

Ver. 21. *So the Kingdom was divided, and out of Ephraim ruled a Rebellious Kingdom.*] When the Kingdom was divided, Ten Tribes went over to *Jeroboam*, and Two Tribes, those of *Judab* and *Benjamin*, still adhered to *Reboboam*, Solomon's Son, *1 Kings* xi. 12. The Part which adhered to *Reboboam*, or the House and Family of David, was called the Kingdom of *Judab*, the other the Kingdom of *Israel*. The Capital or chief City of *Judab*, was *Jerusalem*, and that of *Israel*, was at first *Schechem*, *1 Kings* xii. 25. and then *Tirzah*, *1 Kings* xiv. 17. xvi. 8. Afterwards the Royal City was by King *Omri* removed to *Samaria*, being the Head City of the Tribe of *Ephraim*, *1 Kings* xvi. 23, 29. This continued to be the Regal City of *Israel*, till a Period was put to that Kingdom. Whence the Prophets by *Samaria* and *Ephraim* often mean the Kingdom of *Israel*; as by *Judab* and the House of *David*, and *Jerusalem*, and *Sion*, they mean the Kingdom of *Judab*. And in this Sense we are to understand *Ephraim* here, and in *1 Kings* x. 23. But since the Return from the *Babylonian* Captivity, *Israel* and *Judab* are taken promiscuously for the same People, and are all, without any Distinction, sometimes called *Israel*, and sometimes *Judab*. In reading the History of the Kings of *Judab* and *Israel*, it is observable, that many of the Kings of *Israel* came to the Throne by Violence, and not by rightful Succession, whereas the Kings



of *Judah*, being the Posterity of *David*, all reigned by Right of Inheritance, each King succeeding his Father in the Throne, according to God's Promise to *David*, that he would set up his Seed after him, 2 *Sam.* vii. 12. *Pf.* lxxxix. 29, 30.

Ver. 22. *But the Lord will never leave off his Mercy.*] And though for *Solomon's* Idolatry the Kingdom was divided, yet God's Covenant with *David* still comforted them, *Pf.* lxxxix. 29. they still depended upon, and pleased themselves with the Expectation of the sure Mercies of *David*. But why is the *Messias* termed the *Mercies of David*? Because designed in God's Promise to *David* by *Nathan*, which Promise is there called *God's Mercy*, that should not depart from him. He is called the *sure Mercies of David*, from the Certainty of the Performance of this Promise, because God had sworn by his Holiness, that he would not fail *David*. Accordingly the sacred Writers of the New Testament with good Reason say, that the sure Mercies of *David* were fulfilled in *Christ's* Kingdom, *Acts* xiii. 34. See *Bishop Chandler's* Def. p. 224.

Ibid. *Wherefore he gave a Remnant unto Jacob, and out of him a Root unto David.*] See ch. xlv. 21, 22. and ch. xxxvi. 8. This most probably should be read in the Future, as the Words before are, *Wherefore he shall give a Remnant unto Jacob, and a Root, or chief Stem, unto David, out of his Loins*; because it refers to the fulfilling of *Esay's* Prophecy, still to be completed. And thus the *Syr.* and *Arab.* Versions read. Very remarkable is the Gloss of those Interpreters upon this Passage, which probably was the Exposition of the *Jews*, among whom those Translators lived, *Dabit Jacobo salutem, & Davidi regnum maximum*, i. e. He shall give Salvation to *Jacob*, and a great Kingdom to *David*. Which Words imply, that the Covenant of the Kingdom related not so much to *Solomon*, and his Race, as to the Saviour of *Jacob*, whose Kingdom should far exceed *Solomon's*, or *David's*, and who should, as *Isaiab* foretold, derive from *David*, as the Branch, or Stem from his Root. Ibid. p. 228.

C H A P. XLVIII.

Ver. 6. **W**HO broughtest Kings to Destruction, and honourable Men from their Bed.] *Elias* foretold the Death of *Abab*, *Jezebel*, *Abaziah*, *Joram*, &c. and is therefore said here to have brought them to Destruction. This is according to the Scripture Phrase, which represents the Prophets often as doing what they only foretold, to mark and intimate the Certainty and Infallibility of their Predictions. He was commissioned to oppose evil Kings, and to reprove and check their Wickedness, and none ever supported that Character with more Resolution, or corrected Wickedness

in high Places with more Freedom and Liberty. His Zeal was so great that it is well compared to Fire, *Y* 1. What is here mentioned of his bringing honourable Men from their Bed to their Grave, relates particularly to *Abaziah*, who died on his sick Bed, not long after this Prophet foretold his Death; and to *Jezebel*, according to the Writing or Letters of *Elijah* to him, 2 *Chron.* xxi. 15.

Ver. 7. *Who heardest the Rebuke of the Lord in Sinai, and in Horeb the Judgment of Vengeance.*] *Elias* fleeing from the Persecution of *Jezebel*, came at length to Mount *Sina*, and from thence to *Horeb*, the Mount of God; here it was he learnt God's intended Judgments against the House of *Abab*, and the whole Kingdom of *Israel*. This seems to be the Author's Meaning here, but this Text hath been seriously alledged by some *Jews*, for the *πρόπαισις*, or Pre-existence of Souls. The *Rabbins* will have it, that *Elias*, and all the Prophets were present at the giving of the Law, and from *Deut.* xxix. 14, 15. have insinuated, that God making his Covenant with the absent as well as the present, the Souls of the Posterity of the *Jews* were then in Being, though not there present at the Publication of the Law. And some have gone so far as to suppose, that at the general Judgment, not only the whole Creation will be summon'd into one grand solemn Assembly, but those also, who never actually came into their Bodies, shall appear in their ideal Personalities, as they term it. See *More's Mystery of Godliness*, p. 22. These are *Jewish* Conceits, which are almost infinite. The next Verse will shew, that the Rebuke of the Lord, and the Judgment of Vengeance, here referred to, relate to Threats against *Abab*, and his Posterity. As to *Elias's* personal Presence at the Giving of the Law, founded chiefly on this Passage, it is a groundless Whim, invented chiefly to serve an Opinion.

Ver. 8. *Who anointedst Kings to take Revenge, and Prophets to succeed after him.*] This relates to *Hazael*, King of *Syria*, and *Jehu*, King of *Israel*, whom *Elias* anointed by God's Order, to execute his Judgment of Vengeance upon such *Israelites*, as had fallen into Idolatry, 1 *Kings* xix. 17. By Prophets the Author seems principally here to allude to the calling of *Elisba* to that Office. Though *Elias* had a great Number of Disciples, or holy Catechumens, whom he trained up, and instructed, to stem the Torrent of Wickedness and Idolatry, which spread more and more in *Israel*, and there were whole Societies, or Schools of the Sons of the Prophets, of which *Elias* had the Direction and Superintendency; yet *Elisba* was thought the properest Person to assist, and at length succeed him, and *Elias*, by God's Order, formally anointed and consecrated him.

Ver. 10. *Who wast ordained for Reproofs in their Times.*] *Ὁ καλεσθεὶς ἐν ἡμερίαις*



εἰς ταῦτα, i. e. *Elias* was ordained or appointed to appear again to denounce Reproofs, and by Threats of the greatest impending Evils to reform the World, reconcile the *Israelites*, prevent God's Judgments, and to prepare all for the great and terrible Day of the Lord approaching. And so the *Orient*. Versions have it, *Idemque venturus es, antequam veniat dies Domini*. It was the unanimous Sense of the *Jews*, that *Elias* should first come himself in Person before the *Messiah*, and restore all Things. See Note on c. xlv. § 16. and here the Author of this Book, speaking of the true *Elias*, and his personal Appearance, makes one Reason of it to be, for Reproofs in After-times, i. e. in the appointed Times, or in due Season, according to the *Geneva* Version. A very learned Writer observes, that the Translation of this Passage should be, He was described to be, or written of, as the Margin has it, viz. in *Malachi's* Prophecy, a Type for Times to come. i. e. *Elias* was a Type or Exemplar, εἰκονή, for so the *Alex. MS.* reads, of what the Forerunner of the *Messias* should be, or do. *Mede's Works*, Disc. xxv. See also Bishop *Candler's* Def. p. 252.

*Ibid.* And to turn the Heart of the Father to the Son.] This alludes plainly to the last Verse of the Prophet *Malachi*, where the Expression is the same. The Meaning is, that *Elias* at his Appearance should put an End to those religious Differences, which divided the nearest Relations from each other, and make them all join in the same Faith, and in the Duties of Repentance and Reformation, and thereby prepare themselves for the Reception of the *Messias*. But another, and more easy Sense, may be given to this Passage, if we translate by not to, but with, see *Exod.* xxxv. 22. and then the Meaning will be, that this Prophet's Office will be, to turn the Heart of the Father with the Son's, i. e. His Reproof and Preaching shall produce a general Reformation in the Minds and Manners of all Sorts of Persons, as before he was a great Reformer of the Law, under its greatest Degeneracy and Corruption.

*Ibid.* And to restore the Tribes of Israel.] i. e. deliver, and redeem *Israel*, or restore the Kingdom to *Israel*, through the *Messiah's* Advent, which was Part of his Office. See *Is.* xlix. 6. Or the Meaning may be, to preach, and accomplish the Restoring of the Tribes of *Jacob*, whose Gathering this Writer prays for, ch. xxxvi. 11. These Words may also be referred to the Coming of *Elias*, at the End of the World, or at the Time of the Restitution of all Things, ἀποκατάστασις πάντων, i. e. the Consummation of all things, which God has spoken by the Mouth of all his Prophets, since the World began, *Acts* iii. 21. A Notion entertained by very many of the Fathers, and seems to have its Foundation in our Saviour's own Words, *Matth.* xvii. 10, 11. And this

Conjecture I am the more encouraged to offer, as I find it countenanced by a most learned Writer, who enforces it with many cogent Reasons, and applies this very Passage to support the Opinion, explaining it of an *Elias*, which shall be the Harbinger of *Christ's* second Coming, the εἰκονή, or Type for the Times to come. The foregoing Passage likewise of *Malachi*, of turning the Hearts of the Children to their Fathers, he refers to *Christ's* second Advent, and to an *Elias*, which shall precede that, and the great and dreadful Day of Judgment; who shall labour to bring the unbelieving Posterity of the *Jewish* Nation, to have the same Heart and Mind their holy Fathers and Progenitors had, i. e. to convert them to the Faith of *Christ*, whom their Forefathers, the Patriarchs, hoped in, and looked for, lest continuing obstinate in their Unbelief to that great Day, they should be smitten with a Curse, and perish among the rest of the Enemies of *Christ's* Kingdom. See *Mede's Works*, L. i. Disc. xxv. In this and the five foregoing Verses we have a beautiful Specimen of the Figure *Anaphora*, like that admired one, *Catil. Orat.* i. or that in *Pf.* xv.

Ver. 11. Blessed are they that saw thee and slept in Love.] The rendring would be better, *Blessed are they that see thee, or shall see thee, at thy Return, and shall be honoured with thy Love, and Friendship*, κακοιμῆται, as some Copies have it, and so the *Vulg.* *Beati sunt qui . . . in amicitia tua decorati sunt*. The Margin also is to the same Effect. Which may be understood either as a Wish, or to be spoken more prophetico. Such he pronounces will be happy, because immediately after him they will see the *Messiah*. This is exactly agreeable to the Notions of the then *Jews*, for in the *Talmud*, *Targum*, and their later Comments, the Coming of *Elias*, and the *Messiah*, usually go together: And this is the Reason why the *Jews* pray so heartily for the Coming of *Elias*, even without the Mention of the *Messiah*, because the Coming of the one, according to the Prophet *Malachi*, infers the other. See Bishop *Candler's* Def. p. 81. If we read κακοιμῆται, which our Translators follow, the Sense then will be, Blessed are the Dead, those good *Israelites*, which died in the Lord, not merely those that slept in Love, as our Version has it, but such as departed in his Favour and Love, they shall obtain a better Resurrection, i. e. shall be preferred to have a Part in the first, and with his other Saints shall reign gloriously with him.

*Ibid.* For we shall surely live.] Ζωὴ ζωοποιῶν. We may observe here, that the Conversion of the *Jews* at the Return of *Elias*, is represented by a new Life. And indeed, the Restoration of the Church is sometimes represented as a Resurrection of it from the Dead; and her Return from a low afflicted State,



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State, under the Metaphor of a new Life, a Reviviscence of God's Church and People from the Dead. This Figure is no where more strongly or frequently used than in *Ezek.* ch. xxxvii. where God is introduced enquiring of the *Jews* in *Babylon*, *εἰ ζήσονται, Can these Bones live?* *ῥ 3.* and promising to put into them *πνεῦμα ζωῆς, the Breath of Life,* *ῥ 5.* *Καὶ ζήσονται, and ye shall live.* And bidding the Prophet blow on them, *καὶ ζήσονται, that they may live,* *ῥ 9.* and declaring, that when he had done so, Breath entred into them, *καὶ ἐζήσαν, and they lived again,* *ῥ 10.* In all which Places *ζωή* is used to express the Return of the Church from her Obscurity and Thralldom, to a glorious State. Mr. Mede understands this Place in like Manner of the *Jews* Conversion, and observes, that this is agreeable to the ancient and general Doctrine, both of *Jew* and *Christian*, that they shall have an *Elias* sent to instruct them, a Deliverer *ἐν ἐκείνῃ Σιών, for the Sake of Sion,* as the LXX well express it, *Isai.* lix. 20. For it may be fit to conceive magnificently of so great a Work of God, towards a People for whom he hath formerly shewn so many Wonders, especially this being the greatest Work of Mercy, ever done for them, far beyond the bringing them out of *Egypt*. The common Interpretation of this Passage, either respects the Hopes of a general Resurrection, or that of the Saints in particular, supposed to be previous to it. And in this last Sense St. *John* uses *ἐζήσαν, Rev.* xx. 4. to express the early Resurrection of the Martyrs, slain for the Testimony of the Truth.

Ver. 12. *Elias it was who was covered with a Whirlwind, and Eliseus was filled with his Spirit; while he lived he was not moved with the Presence of any Prince, neither could any bring him into Subjection.* Instead of *Ἡλίας, ὃς ἐν λαίλαπι ἐσχεπάθη, which is the Reading in all the Edit. Græcæ* prefers *ὡς ἐν λαίλαπι, κ. τ. λ. Prolog.* Tom. iii. c. iv. And so do *Badwell* and *Beza*, which the *Geneva* Version follows, *i. e.* As soon as *Elias* was taken up in a Whirlwind, *Elisha* was filled with his Spirit, and succeeded him immediately in the Prophetic Office. And he shewed on all Occasions a Courage, worthy of the Successor of *Elias*. Neither Fear nor Caresses, Promises nor Threats could overcome him; he respected not the Persons of the Mighty, and was indifferent about their Frowns or Smiles, *2 Kings* iii. 14. Some understand *πᾶς λόγος ὃν ὑπέβην αὐτὸν, in the Beginning of the next Verse, of his great Penetration, and Knowledge of Things done at a Distance, as his presignifying the Coming of Benbadad's Messengers to slay him, 2 Kings* ch. vi. 32. and detecting the Villany of his own Servant *Gebazi, 2 Kings* v. 26. but the former Sense seems preferable.

*Ibid.* And after his Death his Body prophesied.] To prophesy is a Term of large Signification, and besides the Foretelling of future Events, which is the ordinary Notion of it, it signifies to work Miracles, in which Sense it is taken here, for the Author refers to what happened, when a dead Corpse being cast into the Sepulchre, where *Elisha's* Body lay, it revived upon touching his Bones, *2 Kings* xiii. 21. Hence it was conceived that the Spirit of God in some Sort accompanied even the dead Body of that holy Prophet, and that he continued to work Miracles in his Grave. The Sense here is somewhat different from that in the latter Part of the next Verse, *viz. At his Death were his Works marvellous, i. e.* when he was just a dying, he foretold the Downfall of the *Syrians*, after smiting them three Times, an Event of great Consequence to God's distressed People, whom he comforted with his last Breath.

Ver. 15. *For all this the People repented not, neither departed they from their Sins till they were spoiled and carried out of their Land, and were scattered through all the Earth: Yet there remained a small People, and a Ruler in the House of David.]* The *Jews* were a People remarkably distinguished by the Favour of God; the exemplary Piety and Faith of their first Fathers procured the Blessing of a numerous Posterity, and they became a flourishing and potent State. But as Sin is the Ruin of any People, the Degeneracy of their Descendants forfeited by Degrees God's Favour, and brought down his Judgments. For when neither Miracles nor Commands, Promises nor Threats, nor the Instructions and Examples of holy Men and Prophets among them, had any Effect upon them, but they continued obstinate in their evil Courses, God determined to remove *Israel* out of his Sight, and the ten Tribes were at length carried away captive by *Salmanassar*, beyond the *Euphrates*, the small Kingdom of *Judah* with its Sceptre still subsisting. God had threatened by his Prophet upon their Disobedience to scatter them among all People, from the one End of the Earth even unto the other, *Deut.* xxviii. 64. and hereby in some Measure it had its Completion. But the *Jews* themselves acknowledge this Prophecy to be fulfilled at their last general Dispersion, after the Destruction of *Jerusalem* by the *Romans*, which those emphatical Words of *Josephus, The Jews are dispersed over all the Earth,* confirm. *De Bell. Jud.* L. vii. c. 3. which indeed appears from their present State and Circumstances, for they are Vagabonds and Exiles from their native Country, and straggle through all the World, neither God nor Man being their King, and they are debarred the Privilege of setting their Foot on their own Country, though merely as *Foreigners*.

Ver.



Ver. 23. *In his Time the Sun went backward, and he lengthened the King's Life.*] When *Hezekiah* was sick unto Death, *Isaiab* foretold his Recovery, and as an Assurance of the Truth of his Prophecy, told him that the Sun should return backward, ch. xxxviii. i. e. says the learned *Usher*, *Tantum nocti detractum, quantum diei fuit additum.* Ann. ad A. M. 3291. As much was deducted from the [next] Night, as was added to this Day, the Divine Providence so ordering this miraculous Retrogradation, that it was no Hindrance to the Regularity of the Motions of the other heavenly Bodies, as appears from the Calculation of the same Eclipses, by the ancient *Chaldeans*, and modern Astronomers: Nor was it discerned, or taken Notice of, in other Countries, which occasioned an Embassage from *Babylon*, to enquire about the Truth of it, 2 *Chron.* xxxii. 31. Hence some have thought this a particular Miracle, manifested only by the Shadow on the Sun-dial of *Abaz*.

Ver. 24. *He saw by an excellent Spirit what should come to pass at the last.*] *Πνεύματι μεγάλῳ.* *Isaiab* was filled with the Holy Spirit in a greater Degree than the other Prophets. Hence *Greg. Nazianzen* calls him *μεγαλοφρονότατον ἢ προφητῶν.* By his seeing *τὰ ἔσχατα* we may understand the last, or latter Times, which Phrase is frequently used in Scripture, to signify the Days of the *Messiah*. One certain Time had been prefixed by God, for bestowing a great Blessing on the World; this was known to all in the Age of the Prophets, and therefore when the Prophets speak of things to be done then, they often, by way of Eminence, call that Time the last Time, the last Days, the latter Days, the End of Days, and sometimes the End of the Age, *τὸ αἰὼν* as in the following Verse. It is particularly true of *Isaiab*, above all the other Prophets, that he saw what regarded these Times, for he foretold the Coming, the Character, Offices, Life, and Death of the *Messiah*, the future Glories of the Church, the Enlargement and flourishing of it under the Gospel, and the bringing the Fulness of the Gentiles into it, more clearly and frequently, than any of them. Accordingly he is often cited in the Writings of the New Testament, and obtained the Character of the *Evangelical* Prophet.

*Ibid.* *And he comforted them that mourned in Sion.*] *Isaiab* foresaw not only the Evils coming upon *Sion*, but likewise their Period and End. He foretold the *Babylonian* Captivity long before it happened, and he revived the *Jews* with the comfortable Prospect of a Restoration from it, and a Return into their own Land. The learned *Vitringa* observes, that the Prophecy of *Isaiab* is more in a consolatory Way, than the Generality of the other Prophets, and instances in many Particulars, in which this Prophet foretells comfortable Things, as to

the Future State and Condition of the Church. On this Account some of the ancient *Jews* said, *Liber Jesaiæ est totus consolatorius.* Prolegom. in *Jesai.* *Calmet* thinks our Author particularly alludes to *Is.* ch. lxi. 1. Or if we understand the Phrase [*at the last*] of the Days of the *Messiah*, then his Coming, so clearly mentioned in his Prophecy, may be here referred to, who was spoken of, and expected by the *Jews*, as the Comforter and Consolation of *Israel*, *Luke* ii. 25.

## C H A P. XLIX.

Ver. 1. **T**HE Remembrance of *Josias* is like the Composition of the Perfume that is made by the Art of the Apothecary. . . Ver. 2. *He behaved himself uprightly in the Conversion of the People, and took away the Abominations of Iniquity.*] *Josias* of all the Princes mentioned in Holy Writ, has the most unfulfilled Character; his Life was so pure, and his Conduct so unblamable, that the Scripture represents him without Fault, and as having no Equal, 2 *Kings* xxiii. 25. He began to reign at Eight Years old, and was as early in his Duty to God. Though he always expressed a great Regard and Attachment to the true Religion, it was at Eighteen that he zealously set about the Work of Reformation, and correcting the idolatrous Abuses, which former Reigns had either introduced, or allowed. Instead of the Lukewarmness and Indifference of many of his Predecessors, who, though religious and well-disposed Princes, attempted not to take away the High Places, *Josias* exerted a laudable and disinterested Courage: he demolished the High Places, overthrew the Altars, burnt the Groves, and even the Bones, which he caused to be dug up, of the false Prophets. And in the midst of a corrupt Age, and perverse Nation, he successfully made Use of his Authority, for the Service and Establishment of the true Religion. The Assemblage of so many good Qualities, and uncommon Virtues in one Prince, the Author here compares to a refreshing Perfume, composed with the nicest Art of the most precious and exquisite Spices. But the Beauty of this Comparison is lost, without observing that his very Name signifies Perfume, or *Thymiama*. See *Pagnin.* *Heb. Lex.* *Mess.* of *Port-Royal* have a good Reflexion here: "Kings generally pride themselves in Victories gained in Battle, " and Trophies from conquered Provinces; " but God has taught us, by the Praises " bestowed on King *Josias*, that the truest " Honour is to serve him, by whom Princes " reign, and that their Glory shall be eternized after Death, who in their Life labour to promote his: That as *Josias* contented not himself with his own personal " Goodness, or Instances of private Piety, " nor was easy till he had brought off his " People from great Wickedness and Idolatry,



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“latry, to the Service of the true God, so  
“Princes should be reminded from so cele-  
“brated an Example, not only to be good  
“and religious themselves, but, as Persons  
“invested with the supreme Authority,  
“should labour with all their Power to  
“maintain a true Faith, and keep up a  
“public Spirit of Religion in their Domi-  
“nions, and firmly establish in the Hearts  
“of all their Subjects, his pure Worship,  
“who put, and continues, the Crown on  
“their Heads.”

Ver. 4. *All except David, and Ezekias, and Josias were defective.* i. e. Fell into Idolatry, or however tolerated it by not destroying the High Places, or acted in some Way, or Manner, contrary to the Purity of God's Worship, or against his Will. The Scripture commends *Jehosaphat* in most Instances, but blames him for making an Alliance with the Kings, *Abab* and *Abaziah*, and not taking away the High Places. Of *Aha* too it is mentioned, whose Heart in other respects was perfect, that in his Time the High Places were not removed, 1 Kings xv. 14. and if *David*, here instanced in as a Pattern of Perfection, sinned with *Bathsheba*, and by the Murder of *Uriah*, he expiated these Crimes, says *Calmet*, by a signal and unfeigned Repentance: And if *Hezekiah* offended God by putting too much Confidence in the Friendship and Alliance of foreign Princes, and in the Splendor and Multitude of his own Riches, he atoned for these Faults, by a firm Attachment to the true Worship of God all his Life, and a perfect Resignation to his Will at the Approach of Death.

Ibid. *Even the Kings of Juda failed.* This was true of all of them from the first to the last, except the few here mentioned. We read, 2 Chron. xii. 1. that when *Reboam* had established the Kingdom, he forsook the Law of the Lord, and all his People with him, and *Manasseh*, one of the later Kings of *Judah*, before their Captivity, seems to have taken up a Resolution to destroy even the very Name of the true God, and his Service from off the Earth, and to establish Idolatry, though he repented before his Death, 2 Kings xxi. 2. And whoever reads the several Instances of Abomination, 2 Kings xxiii. 4 to v. 15. would suspect, that the People had even received the Idols of all Nations to worship them; and therefore no wonder God was so incensed with them, whose Offences were aggravated by his Favours to, and Fondness of *Judah*. That *Judah* obtained the Royal Dignity, which *Reuben* by Transgression forfeited, and *Levi* was prevented from, was an Instance of God's Love, and particular Affection, and therefore that *Judah* should fall into Idolatry, must heighten his Displeasure. With what a tender Regard and particular Emphasis is *Judah* spoken of by God *Hos. iv. 15. Though Israel play*

*the Harlot, yet let not Judah offend.* As if God expected a more ready and willing Obedience from a People so highly favoured.

Ver. 5. *Therefore he gave their Power unto others, and their Glory unto a strange Nation.* The Kingdom of *Judah*, consisting of the Tribes of *Judah* and *Benjamin*, though they were often oppressed by God's Permission for their Sins, yet continued in some Measure an hundred and fifteen Years after the Destruction of the former Kingdom of *Israel* by *Shalmanassar*; at length, God being more and more provoked, notwithstanding the many Warnings of his Prophets, by the Idolatry and other Wickednesses both of Kings and People, decreed to remove *Judah* also out of his Sight, or, as it is expressed 2 Kings xxi. 13. *To stretch over Jerusalem the Line of Samaria, and the Plummits of the House of Abab, i. e.* (dealing with them by the same Measure) utterly to destroy *Jerusalem*, and the whole Kingdom of *Judah*, as he had done that of *Israel*, and *Samaria* the chief City of it, and as he had threatened to do, from their first settling in *Canaan*, Deut. xxviii. 32, 33. which great Calamity God was pleased at length to bring to pass by the *Babylonians*. Many Gr. Copies have *idonan yag to kiegis autan itepois*, which Reading is confirmed by the *Orient. Versions*, and the *Vulg. Dederunt enim regnum suum aliis*. This, says *Calmet*, literally happened, for the Kings of *Judah* in some Sort delivered up their Kingdom to Strangers, when *Abaz* called to his Assistance *Tiglat-Pileser*, King of *Assyria*, 2 Kings xvi. 7. After that Time, the Kings of *Assyria* and *Babylon* pretended that the Kingdom of *Judah* was tributary to them, and held of them: It was on this Pretext, that *Sennacherib* came up to attack *Hezekiah*, pretending that he had failed in some Articles of the Treaty, agreed upon between the Kings of *Judah*, and his Predecessors, 2 Kings xviii. 7, 14. *Nebuchadnezzar* had the same Pretence for his Attack, that the Kings of *Judah*, contrary to their Agreement, and to withdraw themselves from their Obedience to him, had made an Alliance with *Egypt*, 2 Kings xxiv. 1, 2, 3. where it is expressly said, that all these Evils came upon *Judah*, at the Commandment of the Lord, to remove them out of his Sight.

Ver. 6. *They burnt the chosen City of the Sanctuary, and made the Streets desolate, according to the Prophecy of Jeremiah.* Chap. xxxiv. 22. ch. xxxvii. 8. xxxix. 8, 9. Upon King *Zedekiah*'s revolting from, or rebelling against, *Nebuchadnezzar*, and giving a fresh Provocation unto the *Babylonians*, *Nebuchadnezzar* with his Army once more came up against *Jerusalem*, the head City of the Kingdom of *Judah*, and besieged it, where the People suffered a most miserable Famine. At length, after a Year and



a half Siege, the City was broken up, and burnt, and with it the King's Houses, and the famous Temple of Solomon were all laid in Ashes, and the Walls of the City broken down by *Nebuzaradan*; and the Remnant of the People, who escaped the Sword, were all carried captive into *Babylon*. All these Evils, says the Scripture, came to pass in Jerusalem, and Judah, through the Anger of the Lord, until he had cast them out from his Presence, 2 Kings xxiv. 20.

Ver. 7. For they entreated him evil, who nevertheless was a Prophet sanctified in his Mother's Womb.] This is agreeable to what God says of him, Jer. i. 5. That he was set apart for the Prophetical Office by a particular Decree of God, and the Infusion of his sanctifying Grace, even before his coming into the World. The same Phrase is used of *John the Baptist*, and our Saviour, John x. 36. before they entered on their public Ministry. In the Character which this Writer draws of the Prophet *Jeremiah*, he seems to dwell chiefly upon the Persecutions which he endured; and indeed he was all his Life-time exposed to the ill Treatment of the Jews, whose Irregularities and Apostasy he was always reproving, and reminding them of their approaching Ruin on that Account. It is mentioned here, as one principal Cause of the Destruction of their State, that they had contemptuously and unjustly persecuted and afflicted God's Prophet, whom he raised up on purpose to declare his Will, and denounce his Judgments. For there is nothing that fills up the Measure of Mens Iniquities sooner, or draws down God's Displeasure upon them more severely, than when they not only despise, and trample on his Laws, but evil entreat, and injure those whom he has appointed his Messengers, and the Ministers of Reconciliation, and who affectionately endeavour, wish, and pray for their Good and Conversion.

Ver. 8. It was *Ezekiel* who saw the glorious Vision, which was shewed him upon the Chariot of the Cherubims. Ver. 9. For he made Mention of the Enemies under the Figure of the Rain, and directed them that went right.] i. e. He also mentioned the Judgments on the Enemies of God under the Figure of Rain, and that it would go well with them that went right. It has been objected by learned Men, that *Daniel* is here omitted, where it seems proper to have inserted him, as a Jewish Prophet and Author, whom *Josephus* calls one of the greatest of the Prophets, and describes as a particular Foreteller of good Things. *Antiq. L. x.* On this Account Mr. *Whiston* inclines to think, that *Daniel* is meant and spoken of in v. 9. For, says he, where does *Ezekiel* make mention of the Enemies under the Figure of Rain, or what Sense is there in that Assertion, or how

is it peculiar to *Ezekiel* that he foretold good Things to those that walked uprightly? But *Daniel* made mention of the Enemies in that famous Dream or Vision, wherein he foretold what the Enemies of God's People would attempt against them, as also what Happiness God would at length bestow on his Chosen: He conjectures therefore that *Ev. ovigw* is the true Reading, though *Ev. ovigw* obtains in all the present Gr. Copies. *Addenda to Histor. Memoirs*, p. 183. But I cannot altogether approve of this Conjecture; for as to the first Enquiry, how the Prophet *Daniel* comes to be omitted by the Writer of this Book, many probable Reasons may be assigned; he might, says a learned Prelate, forget *Daniel*, as he did *Abel*, *Melchisedeck*, *Job*, *Ezra*, and other Scripture Worthies, the latter of whom was as famous in his Generation, as *Nebemiah*, whom he praises. It may be, he reserved speaking of *Daniel* to another Place in his Book, (for he observes no Order of Time) which he lived not to finish. Or *Daniel* might at first be numbred with the other Prophets by the first Composer of *Ecclesiasticus*; and yet by reason of the Author's imperfect Work, or Loss of one of his Volumes in Egypt, or the Translator's Unskilfulness, or the Transcriber's Carelessness, the Name of *Daniel* might be wanting in all the Copies. Bishop *Chandler's Def.* Vol. i. p. 81—85. To these Reasons I must add one, which seems to me to carry great Weight with it, viz. That *Daniel* being not reputed and placed among the Prophets in the Hebrew Code, but among the *Hagiographi*, if our Author had intended any where to have mentioned him, yet it was not to be expected that he should do it in this very Place, because here he follows the Order of the Books in the Heb. Division, — *Jeremiah*, *Ezekiel*, and the Twelve Minor Prophets, — whereas *Daniel* is placed between *Job* and *Ezra*, of whom, as is before observed, he takes no Notice. As to the second Enquiry, where does *Ezekiel* make Mention of the Enemies under the Figure of Rain, the Margin will answer this, referring us to ch. xiii. 11. and xxxviii. 9, 16, 22. which are sufficiently clear and express. And it is remarkable, that the Margin there refers us back to this Passage of *Ecclesiasticus*, as explanatory of each other. Nor is it a forced or unusual Metaphor, to express God's Judgments either against *Gog*, or his other Enemies, by an overflowing Rain, or Shower. The Psalmist, it is certain, uses this Figure, when he says of God, that upon the Ungodly he shall rain Snares, Fire and Brimstone, Storm and Tempest, this shall be their Portion to drink, Ps. xi. 7. As to the last Reason alledged, for adjudging this 9th Verse to *Daniel*, viz. His foretelling good Things to come to those who walked uprightly, it may be replied, this is not peculiar to *Daniel*; for which of the Prophets did not



not foretell the same, though perhaps not so eminently, or at so great a Distance? On the contrary with regard to *Ezekiel*, it may be said, that he stands single in the two following Respects, which are both mentioned by our Author: 1. That he saw the Vision of the *Cherubim*. And 2. Declared and published the Security of the Righteous, and the Safety of them that went right in the perilous Time, when God should visit, by introducing three of the most eminent for Righteousness, who should deliver themselves by their Righteousness under the severest of his Judgments, ch. xiv. 14, 20. This Verse, therefore, I presume, may very consistently be referred to *Ezekiel*, as our Translators seem to understand it. It may not be amiss to observe, that instead of *be made Mention of the Enemies under the Figure of Rain*; the *Syr.* and *Arab.* have it, *be made Mention of Job*; which I do not imagine to have arisen from a different Reading, but to be another Translation of the same Reading, because *יֹב*, or with the *Vau* quiescent *יֹב* (like as *יֹבִל* sometimes wrote *יֹב*) is either the proper Name *Job*, or Hebrew Word for *inimicus*. Hence Mr. *Hutchinson's* Observation, that *Job* signifies, *persecuted*; for *יֹב*, *Job*, is the Participle passive of the Root *יָבַח*, *inimicitias agere*. Therefore *Job* signifies one evil treated by Enemies, &c. Then as to the other Words *בְּיָמֵינוּ* I suppose the *Heb.* gave it *יָמֵינוּ*, which either signifies *Rain*, and is rendred by *יָמֵינוּ*, *Deut.* xxxii. 2. or a *Storm*, and is so rendred *Isai.* xxviii. 2. where it has the Signification of *procella*, and by our Translators called a *destroying Storm*. If therefore the *Hebrew* was *יָמֵינוּ יֹב*, it might either be rendred *τῶν ἐχθρῶν*, or *τῶν ἐχθρῶν ἐν ὕμῳ*, the *Enemies in Rain*, or *Job in a Whirlwind*, out of which God answered him, ch. xxxviii. or *Job under a Storm*, viz. of Afflictions. And it is remarkable, that *Ezekiel* is the only Prophet that does make Mention of *Job*; in this he is singular, as likewise in the Vision of the *Cherubim*, which are the two Points here mentioned. Perhaps the *Storm* means the Judgments of God, spoken of in the Places where *Job* is mentioned, as one who should deliver his own Soul, &c. So that *יָמֵינוּ* is not unlike *Νῶε ἐν καὶρῷ ὀργῆς*, c. xlv. 17. and both are joined together by the Prophet, as worthy to be delivered in the Time of Wrath. But how comes *Job* to be mentioned in this Place, and not also *Noah* and *Daniel*, who are joined with him in the same Passages of *Ezekiel*? I answer, if the *Syr.* and *Arab.* would bear me out in guessing at a Mistake in rendring the Original, as well in these two Names, as they do in *Job's* Name, I would venture to conjecture, that *ἀγαθῶν* is the rendring of the Original *Heb.* *Noah*, and *Daniel*; for in both these Places of *Ezekiel*, *Daniel* is written without the *Job*, *Dan el*, and being mistaken,

if so transcribed, for two Words, would give another Sense; so that *נח דן*, might signify either the two proper Names, and so the *Greek* might by Mistake be, *ἀγαθῶν τῶν δούλων ὁδῶν*, instead of *ἀγ. τῶν Νῶε, καὶ τῶν Δανιήλ, τῶν δούλων ὁδῶν*; or as *דן* signifies *requies*, the rendring might be, as is the Sense of our Version, *Et requiem adjudicabit ad dirigentes vias suas*. Could this be admitted, how apt it would be in this Place, I need not say. I shall only add, that if this Conjecture, for as such only it is proposed, might be allowed, the Passage would be pretty clear; whereas, as it now stands, it is indeterminate, and liable to many Objections.

Ver. 10. *And of the twelve Prophets let the Memorial be blessed, and let their Bones flourish again out of their Place, for they comforted Jacob, and delivered them by assured Hope.* See Note on ch. xlv. 12. The Author, having mentioned *Isaiah*, *Jeremiah*, and *Ezekiel*, speaks here of the Twelve Minor Prophets, as they are called, who completed the *Old Testament Canon*. These too in their respective Times promised the *Jews* with great Assurance, that Deliverance which they looked, and prayed daily for, at the Temple; and successively comforted them, that God would perform, or confirm his Mercy with them, and deliver them at his own good Time. This Comfort, expressed in the Twelve Prophets, could be no other than the Redemption by the *Messias*, because Three of the Twelve that promised it, lived after the Return from *Babylon*, to which some would apply this, and the like Passages, and yet after that Return, they foretold it as a Thing still future. The *Jews* expected it as a happy Event yet to come, and prayed for it in the Days of *Simon the High-Priest*, i. e. near the Days of *Alexander the Great*, and the Writer of this Book renews the Petition, that God would make the Time short, for the Accomplishment of their Deliverance, ch. xxxvi. 8. See *Bishop Chandler's Def.* p. 44. From the mention of the Twelve Prophets here, it seems manifest, that the Canon of the sacred Books was already made, when this Tract of *Ecclesiasticus* was composed, and their Prophecies collected, and digested into one Body, or small Volume, and that the *Old Testament* was in the same Order that now it is, with respect to the prophetic Writings at least. See *Dupin's Hist. of the Old and New Testament*.

Ver. 11. *How shall we magnify Zorobabel? Even he was as a Signet on the Right Hand.* Ver. 12. *So was Jesus the Son of Josedec, who in their Time builded the House, and set up an holy Temple to the Lord, which was prepared for everlasting Glory.* The former of these was Governor of *Judah*, or Viceroy of the Province of *Judea*, and the latter High-Priest, at the Time of the *Jews* Return from the *Babylonish Captivity*. To these was recommended the Direction, and Super-







*Jewish Church* was in its flourishing and settled State, *Solomon* enlarged it to be a brazen Sea, or Cistern, *1 Kings vii. 23.* It is affirmed by many Writers too hastily, that in the second Temple there was no proper Ark, no Throne encompassed by Cherubims, no visible Glory, no molten Sea. However the Learned may determine the three former Particulars, there seems great Reason to conclude from the Words of this Writer, that there was a molten Sea. See *2 Chron. v. 12.* In the Catholick Church of *Christ*, as represented in the *Book of Revelations*, there is a Sea of Glass, like Crystal, infinitely more precious and beautiful, than either of those in the *Jewish Temple*, or any thing made of Metal. See *Daubuz on Apoc. c. iv.*

Ver. 7. *And as the Rainbow giving Light in the bright Clouds.*] *ὡς τόξον φωτίζων νεφέλας δόξης.* I would rather render, As the glorious Bow shining in the Clouds, or, As the Rainbow enlightning the Clouds with Glory. One cannot help observing, what Pains this Writer takes from *ψ 5,* to *ψ 12.* to set forth the graceful Presence, and august Appearance of this favourite High Priest; he searches Heaven and Earth for Comparisons to illustrate the Piece; whatever is either grand, magnificent, beautiful, precious, or lovely, is introduced upon the Occasion. The Sun, Moon, and Stars, in their greatest Lustre and Perfection, are all made to assist in their Turns. The glorious Bow on high, as well as the variegated Flowers beneath, lend their Colours. The Gold, and superb Ornaments of the Temple, the odoriferous Incense, and holy Fire on the Altar, the rich Vases, &c. meet to reflect Honour on him. In short, the Works both of Nature and Art, the most curious and valuable in their kinds, are borrowed, either to express the superior Dignity of his Person, amidst his surrounding Brethren, like a tall Cedar; or the Perfection and Glory of his pontifical Apparel, as if, when he put on the Robe of Honour, in his long Garment was the whole World, as the *Book of Wisdom* expresses it, *ch. xviii. 24.*

Ver. 15. *He stretched out his Hand to the Cup, and poured of the Blood of the Grape; he poured out at the Foot of the Altar a sweet smelling Savour unto the most high King of all.* Ver. 16. *Then shouted the Sons of Aaron, and sounded the Silver Trumpets, and made a great Noise to be heard for a Remembrance before the Most High.* Ver. 17. *Then all the People together hasted, and fell down to the Earth upon their Faces to worship their Lord God Almighty, the Most High.* Ver. 18. *The Sinners also sang Praises with their Voices, with great Variety of Sounds was there made sweet Melody.* Ver. 19. *And the People besought the Lord by Prayer, before him that is merciful, till the Solemnity of the Lord was ended, and they had finished his Service.*] The 18<sup>th</sup> Verse seems out of Place here, it should follow the 16<sup>th</sup>, and the

whole will be better connected. While the Sacrifices were offering, which was the first Part of the Temple Service, the Priests with Trumpets, and the Levites with Musical Instruments, and the Singers, together with the People, joined their Voices and sang Psalms to compleat the Harmony. We find that *David* and *Solomon* appointed Singing and Trumpets at the Time of sacrificing, *1 Chron. vi. 31. xvi. 7.* and that *Ezra* restored this Custom after the Return from the *Babylonish Captivity*, *Ezra iii. 10, 11.* and the same continued in After-ages. But at the Time of Incense there was kept Silence, the People praying to themselves, *Luke i. 10.* We have here a distinct and clear Description of the Manner of the People's praying without, whilst the Priest offered the sweet smelling Savour of Incense within: For at the Time when the Priest offered Incense in the Sanctuary, the People were left without in the *Atrium Judæorum*, praying for the Pardon of their Sins, every Man silently apart for himself. This seems likewise to be referred to by the half Hour's Silence in Heaven, *Rev. viii. 1.* which is set down there, to point to the Time of the Priest's being gone in, to offer Incense, or the Odour of sweet Smell. I see no Necessity, with *Calmet*, *Bossuet*, and others, to apply the Description here particularly to the High-Priest's officiating at *Ptolemy Philopator's* solemn Sacrifice in the Temple: it is as applicable to the High-Priest officiating upon any other solemn Occasion; nor can a true Synchronism be preserved according to that Interpretation.

Ver. 20. *Then he went down, and lifted up his Hands over the whole Congregation of the Children of Israel, to give the Blessing of the Lord with his Lips, and to rejoice in his Name.* Ver. 21. *And they bowed themselves down to worship the second Time, that they might receive a Blessing from the Most High.*] When the Solemnity of the Lord was ended by the Incense being offered, the High-Priest came back, and pronounced the *Εὐλογία*, or Benediction. The Form of the solemn Blessing with which the Priests dismissed the People by God's especial Order, was this, *The Lord bless thee, and keep thee, the Lord make his Face to shine upon thee, and give thee Peace*, *Num. vi. 22.* And lest any one should think too slightly of this Blessing, because pronounced by a Mortal like himself; it is added, *Num. vi. 23. The Lord will bless him*, and therefore properly called here, *the Blessing of the Lord*, by the Priest's Lips; shewing, that the Effect of this Blessing does not depend upon Man, but upon the Ordinance of God, from the Mouth of his own Minister, whom he hath appointed to bless in his Name, *Deut. xxi. 5.* and whose Blessing he hath promised to confirm. We see from this Passage, that, when the *Jews* received the Blessing from the Priest, they received it kneeling, or bowing down



down their Heads. In the primitive Times it was customary for the Deacon (to prepare the People the better for it) to call out immediately before the Time of the Blessings, in such Words as these, *Bow down to the Blessing*. Chrysost. Liturg. The Blessing of the Bishop, or Priest, was so highly esteemed in the primitive Times, that none durst go out of the Church, till they had received it, according to the Councils of *Agatha*, Can. 31. and that of *Orleans*, Can. 22.

Ver. 22. *Now therefore bless ye the God of all, which only doth wondrous Things every where, which exalteth our Days from the Womb, and dealeth with us according to his Mercy.* Ver. 23. *He grant us Joyfulness of Heart, and that Peace may be in our Days in Israel for ever.* Ver. 24. *That he would confirm his Mercy with us, and deliver us at his Time.*] We may learn from this short Prayer of the wise Man, how to compose and regulate our own; we should acknowledge God therein, to be Omnipresent and Almighty; that ever since we were born, we have been preserved by his good Providence, every Day, Hour, and Moment; that it is an Instance of his great Mercy to us, thus to be mindful of our Preservation and Being, having nothing in us but Sin, and nothing due to us but Punishment. The Conclusion of this Prayer seems to contain more than a Request for Peace and temporal Blessings, it relates to, and manifests this Writer's and his Countrymen's Impatience for the *Messiah*, and their earnest Wish, that God would speedily send the Blessing of all Men, to perform the Mercy promised to their Forefathers, and remember his holy Covenant, Luke i. 72. For it was the constant Prayer of the *Jews*, both before and under the *Messias*, that God would hasten the Blessings hoped for, and expected by them, and that he would make the Time short; and it is still their Form in the Synagogue to say, *in our Days*, i. e. quickly; when they pray for the Blessing of the *Messias*.

Ver. 25. *There be two Manner of Nations which my Heart abhorreth, and the third is no Nation.*] It is to be observed, that the two Nations here referred to, are not to be taken exclusively, and in Opposition to the *Jews*; but as *Gens* among the *Latins* is sometimes taken in a very limited Sense, to signify no more than a Family or Kindred, so here *ἑθνη*, two Nations, may signify two Parts or Cities of *Palestine*, as it had several Divisions; and *Samaria* is probably one of them. Our Translators, by rendering *ἑθνη*, two manner of Nations, seem to guard against understanding them strictly as such. The Author will not allow the third to be any Nation, because of the great Mixture of all Sorts of People among them: he means the *Cuthites*, or *Samaritans*, who dwelt at *Sicchem*, whose Ancestors the King of *Assyria* sent thither; for when the *Assy-*

*rians* carried away captive the Ten Tribes, 2 Kings xvii. 24. they placed Strangers in the chiefest part of the Country, viz. *Samaria*.

Ibid. *Which my Heart abhorreth.*] The Schism of the Ten Tribes was the first Rise of the extreme Aversion the *Jews* had for the *Samaritans*, *Samaria* being the Metropolis of the Kingdom of *Israel*, and set up in a manner as a Rival to *Jerusalem*, as the Temple on Mount *Gerizim* was to that of *Solomon*. The Hatred of the *Jews* against the *Samaritans*, was likewise much encreased by the Opposition these last made against the former on the Return from the *Babylonish* Captivity, both in the rebuilding of the Temple, and the repairing the Walls of *Jerusalem*, Ezra ch. iv. On these Accounts the Disputes and Animosities between them rose to the greatest Degree imaginable. See *Joseph. Antiq.* L. xiii. 6, 18. The Scriptures, and the *Jewish* Records, acquaint us, that the Jealousy and Averseness between the two was so great, that they would have no Converse together, nor shew any Act of Kindness to each other: And that this Hatred was very ancient, appears from hence, that when the *Jews* would express their utmost Aversion to our blessed Saviour, they said, *Thou art a Samaritan, and hast a Devil*, John viii. 48. as if to be a *Samaritan*, and have a Devil, were Things of equal Reproach. If the *Jews* hated the *Samaritans*, the *Samaritans* were equally fierce in shewing their Resentment against the *Jews* upon all Occasions, as is plain from *Luke ix. 53.* *Jesus* going one Day to a Village of *Samaria*, the Inhabitants would not receive him, because his Face was as though he would go to *Jerusalem*. *Josephus* instances in many Affronts and Injuries offered to the *Jews*, as they passed through the Country of the *Samaritans* to their solemn Feasts at *Jerusalem*, *Antiq.* L. xviii. and L. xx. c. 5. The same is also evident from what the Woman of *Samaria*, or rather from what St. *John* in a *Parentthesis* says, viz. that the *Jews* have no Dealings with the *Samaritans*, ch. iv. 9. which some have extended so far, as to exclude all manner of civil Intercourse, even the asking, or giving one another a Glass of Water, and that the Answer of this Woman was an Insult upon our Saviour, out of an ill-natured Joy and Satisfaction, to find a *Jew* forced to beg a little Water of her. It may seem somewhat strange, that this Writer, who has delivered such excellent Precepts of Morality and Instruction in this Book, should be so uncharitable and ill-natured at the Conclusion of it, as to declare, that he hates such and such Nations from his Heart. *Calmet*, in answer to this, says, that the Author does not here declare that he himself hates any in particular, but that he judged these People, from their inveterate Malice against the *Jews*, to be their greatest and most dangerous Enemies, and



as such to be disliked, and shunned by every true *Israelite*.

Ver. 26. *They that sit upon the Mountain of Samaria, and they that dwell among the Philistines, and that foolish People that dwell in Sichem.*] Some have fancied that the *Samaritans* are spoken of in the first and last Part of this Verse. And indeed one would be apt to think, by what *Josephus* says, that *Samaria* and *Sichem* were one and the same City, since that Historian places *Sichem* on Mount *Gerizim*, and calls it the Capital of the *Samaritans*, *Antiq. L. ii.* But the most exact Geographers make *Samaria* and *Sichem* to have been two different Cities. However this be, it is not probable that our Author should mean the same People in both Places, or that mentioning three Nations whom he disliked, he should name the *Samaritans* twice in so short a Compass, tho' we should suppose him tinctured with the national Hatred to that People. I rather therefore incline to *Drusus's* learned Conjecture, that the true reading here is, ἐν ὄρεσι Σειρ, those that inhabit Mount *Seir*, i. e. the *Idumæans*, *Qui sedent in monte Seir*; so that the three Nations, or rather the three particular Sorts of People, that he is offended at, are now clear and distinct, viz. the *Idumæans*, who inhabit Mount *Seir*; the *Philistines*, who were continually at War with the *Israelites*; and lastly, the Inhabitants of *Sichem*, i. e. the *Samaritans*, whom he undervalues, and scarce allows them worthy of the Name of a People, either because they were a mixed Multitude, or were Apostates, and held many erroneous Tenets, and particularly favoured *Sadducism*.

## C H A P. LI.

Ver. 1. **J**ESUS Son of *Sirach the Elder*,] The Author of this Book, finishes his Work with a Prayer, or Hymn (see *first Prologue*) from which we learn many Particulars relating to his Life; as the Dangers he met with, the Favour of God in delivering him, his Travels for the Acquisition of Wisdom, his Application to, and Success in it, and his earnest Exhortation to the Study of it, which we meet with likewise in the Body of the Work, which is no improbable Reason that this Prayer also belongs to him: it appears from it, that he was brought in Danger of his Life before the King on an unjust Accusation, probably a Charge of some Offence against the State; but whether it was before a King of *Syria*, or *Egypt*, that he was accused, is uncertain. Such as understand the Accusation here referred to of the Grandfather, differ greatly in point of Time when it happened, some placing it so early as in the Reign of *Ptolemy Lagi*, others so late as that of *Ptolemy Epiphanes*: however this be, most pro-

bably this ill Usage was the Occasion of his passing into *Egypt*, where he spent the latter Part of his Life, and wrote this Work, and here it was his Grandson is said after to have found his Writings. *Grotius* contends, that this Chapter, and the three last Verses of the foregoing, were wrote by the Grandson, *Jesus the Translator*; and with him agrees *Dr. Prideaux* in both these Particulars, who assigns the Incident of the Accusation to the Reign of *Ptolemy Physcon*, whose Cruelty inclined him to bring any one, and on the slightest Occasion, into Danger of his Life, that came into his Power, *Connect. Tom. 2. B. V.*

Ver. 10. *I called upon the Lord the Father of my Lord, that he would not leave me in the Days of my Trouble, and in the Time of the Proud, when there was no Help.*] When the Proud, or Wicked, have most Power and Authority, that is said to be their Time. Thus our Saviour says to the Chief Priests and the Elders, and those that came to apprehend him, αὐτὴ ὥρα ἐστὶν ἡ ὧρα, *This is your Time, Luke xxii. 53.* Most of the Interpreters observe, that the second Person in the Trinity is here plainly distinguished from the Father. A very pious and learned *Prelate* says, that the Author speaks as plainly here of our Lord *Christ*, as *David* did when he said, *The Lord said unto my Lord*, *Psal. cx. 1.* to which probably he alludes, and plainly gives us to understand, that not only the Prophets, but all God's faithful People in those Days believed the Lord, the Almighty God, to be the Father of one, who was himself also *the Lord*, and in a peculiar Manner *their Lord* and Saviour; and that in their Prayers they had a Respect unto him, and prayed in his Name, calling upon *the Lord*, as the Father of *their Lord Christ*, *Matt. xxvi. 63. John i. 49.* and so expecting only to be heard upon his Account, and for his Sake, who was promised by the Name of *the Lord*, *Dan. ix. 17.* for *Daniel* prays in his Name, as plainly as we do now, saying, *Now therefore, O our God, hear the Prayer of thy Servant, and his Supplications, and cause thy Face to shine upon thy Sanctuary, that is desolate, for the Lord's Sake*, i. e. For the *Lord Christ's* Sake, for no other Lord can possibly be meant there. *Beverege's Serm. Vol. III. p. 205.* *Grotius* will have Κύριον to be an Interpolation from some officious *Christian* Hand, and makes the Reading only to be, ἐπεκαλεσάμην Κύριον πατέρα μου, &c. Calmet reproves him smartly for his Suspicion, and determining so magisterially in the Point; and observes, that Errors propagated under so great a Name, are the more dangerous, and that an Opinion, grounded on so little Reason as this is, ought to be exposed, and the Truth thereby vindicated. Nor is *Bossuet* more favourable to this Critic on the same Account; he allows him to have



have excelled in *Grammaticis, in Historicis, sepe etiam in Moralibus*, but thinks him not altogether orthodox, and therefore advises such as consult him, *ut cum Adjutorem, non Ducem, non Magistrum habeant*. Comm. in loc.

Ver. 28. *Get Learning with a great Sum of Money, and get much Gold by her.* Ver. 29. *Let your Soul rejoice in his Mercy, and be not ashamed of his Praise.* Ver. 30. *Work your Work betimes, and in his Time he will give you his Reward.*] The Advice is  $\gamma$  25. *Buy her for yourselves without Money*, which is not inconsistent with what the Author directs here. The Sense of both connected together seems to be, that Diligence alone will make a considerable Progress in Wisdom, and procure a large Share of it; that the Value of it is so inestimable that no Expence should be thought too great for the obtaining it, and should ever so large a Sum be laid out in the Way of Education, and for the purchasing the necessary Helps towards Learning and Improvement, whatever it may cost, is not to be repined at, for she will sufficiently repay the Charge, *for all good Things come together with her, and innumerable Riches in her Hand*, Wisd. vii. 11. The Advice is not unlike that of Solomon,

*Wisdom is the principal Thing, therefore get Wisdom, and with all thy Getting get Understanding*, Prov. iv. 7. Let the pleasing Reflexion of the many Benefits and Advantages proceeding from her, encourage your Pursuit (so Grotius expounds  $\epsilon\lambda\epsilon\theta$ , reading likewise  $\omega\tau\eta\varsigma$ ) nor be ashamed at any time, or repent of your Fondness and Affection for her. Our Translators, more agreeably to the Greek, understand it of the Mercy of the Lord; and so Calmet renders; and the Geneva Version very explicitly, *Let your Soul rejoice in the Mercy of the Lord*; which, it must be confessed, introduces the next and last Verse better; the Sense of which is, Labour to obtain true Wisdom, and to work the Work of God, and of your own Salvation, early in Life; and when the Time of Recompence shall come, wherein God will reward the Improvement of Mens Talents, you shall have the Happiness to reap the blessed Fruits of Righteousness, and to find that *your Labour will not be in vain in the Lord*. In a word, the Author finishes this Work, as Solomon does his Book of Ecclesiastes, and the Conclusion of the whole Matter is this, *Fear God, and keep his Commandments, for this is both the Glory and Happiness of Man*.

F I N I S.





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C R I T I C A L  
C O M M E N T A R Y

Upon the BOOKS of  
TOBIT, JUDITH, BARUCH,  
The History of SUSANNA,  
A N D  
BEL and the DRAGON:

To which are added,  
T W O D I S S E R T A T I O N S  
O N  
The Books of MACCABEES and ESDRAS.  
Being a CONTINUATION of  
Bishop PATRICK and Mr. LOWTH.

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By RICHARD ARNALD, B. D. Rector of  
*Thurcaston, in Leicestershire.*

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*The Authors of the Books of Tobit and Judith and the rest of that Order were no Prophets inspired by God to write his authentical Scriptures — They who first put these Deutero-canonical, or Ecclesiastical Books into the Bible, did not thereby intend to make them equal to the Books of Moses and the Prophets, but only to recommend them unto the private and public Reading of the Church; both for the many excellent Precepts and Examples of Life that be in them, and for the better Knowledge of the History and Estate of God's People, from the Time of the Prophets to the Coming of Christ. Bp. Cosins's Scholast. Hist. of the Can. of Script. c. xix.*

*Libros Tobit, Judith ad Synedrium Alexandrinum delatos fuisse plusquam probabile est. Si fuerint autem delati, tunc in examen vocati; si in examen vocati, tunc approbati, vel reprobati: si reprobati, aut rejeſti, tunc proculdubio non accepiſſent hos Chriſtiani: ſed hos acceperunt Chriſtiani; imo acceperunt etiam ex Judaismo ad Chriſtum converſi, ſeu potius hos prius receptos Chriſtiani facti non rejecerunt — rejeſtos a Synedrio iſto (cujus res hæc erat) non fuiſſe, ac damnatos, citra omnem eſt controverſiam: receptos fuiſſe ac comprobatos veriſimile eſt valde. Grabe's Prolegom. cap. i. tom. ii.*

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MDCC LII.



# CRITICAL COMMENTARY

UPON THE BOOKS OF  
TORIT, JUDITH, BARUCH,

THE HISTORY OF OSUSMAN

AND  
BEA AND THE DRAGON

THESE BOOKS ARE  
TWO OF THE LOST BOOKS

THE BOOKS OF MACCABEES AND ESTHER

BEING A CONTINUATION OF  
BISHOP PATRICK AND MR. FOWLER

BY RICHARD ARNOLD, B.D. Rector of  
Thurston in Leicestershire

THE AUTHOR OF THE BOOKS OF TORIT AND JUDITH, AND THE HISTORY OF OSUSMAN, AND BEA AND THE DRAGON, THE BOOKS OF MACCABEES AND ESTHER, HAS BEEN RECEIVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE, AND IS NOW IN THE POSSESSION OF THE LIBRARY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE.

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TO THE  
Right REVEREND FATHER in GOD

T H O M A S,

Lord Bishop of OXFORD.

The following Sheets, Part of a larger Work, which  
his LORDSHIP has been pleased to Favour with his  
ENCOURAGEMENT, and, occasionally, with his IL-  
LUSTRATIONS, are with all Gratitude, Humbly  
Inscribed,

*By His LORDSHIP'S*

*Most Dutiful*

*and Obedient Servant,*

RICHARD ARNALD.



TO THE

Right Reverend FATHER in GOD

THOMAS

Lord Bishop of OXFORD.

The following Sheets, Part of a larger Work, which  
his Lordship has been pleased to favour with his  
ENCOURAGEMENT, and, occasionally, with his IL-  
LUSTRATIONS, are with all Gratitude, Humbly  
Inscribed,

By His Lordship's

Most Dutiful

and Obedient Servant,

RICHARD ARNALD.



## P R E F A C E

T O T H E

Book of *T O B I T*.

**B**EFORE I proceed to speak to the Book itself, its Original Language, and by whom wrote, at what Time, and on what Occasion, its several Versions, and their Agreement, it seems necessary in the first Place to consider the Nature of it, and to examine, and, if possible, settle this fundamental Point, *viz.* whether it be absolutely a real History, or how far it may be considered, and allowed as such.

Many, and especially some of the Moderns, contend that this Book does not contain a true History; that there is too much of the marvellous and supernatural to be accounted for as Historical Fact; and that the Whole is a pious Fiction, wherein, under borrowed Names, is given a Pattern, or Image of a good Father, and an obedient and dutiful Son; in what Manner God rewards the Practice of good Works even in this Life, and especially the Care of burying the Dead; and the Superintendency of his ministring Angels over such as shall be Heirs of Salvation. But even considered in this Light as Fiction (an Opinion which I cannot by any means subscribe to) it should not be represented as lying Fiction, but rather like the Invention of a *Xenophon*, or a *Homer*, to which last Dr. *Prideaux* indeed compares it, and the most exceptionable Parts, as so many studied Ornaments to an instructive Narration. A Narration (for *Fable* I cannot consent to call it) founded on Historical Truth, but dressed up in some Particulars, perhaps with Improvements, to dignify and set off the Story, which have in them at least *poetic* Truth, *i. e.* what agreed with the current Notions of the Age, or was thought an allowable Embellishment (and may not the figurative and miraculous Parts be innocently considered in this Light?) to make it read with more Delight, or remembered with more Ease.

Moral Fictions are very different from Forgeries and Falshoods. *Xenophon's* Life of *Cyrus*, to which this of *Tobit* has been resembled, is one such, amongst many others, of Heathen Writers; and possibly many Pieces in the early Times of Christianity were such, which have coarser Names injuriously given them. *Telemachus* bears a distinguished Rank among those of the present Age, and neither the more ordinary Facts, nor the Miracles related in it, are considered as Lies, tho' they are not true. The *Eastern* Writers make more free with the *marvellous* in such Compositions, than we of the *West* do; and what they have at any time wrote of this sort agreeably surprizing, is rather to be excused, if not commended, for the Improvement, or at least Amusement designed us, than condemned for the Want of Veracity. Of this Sort are the *Arabian Tales*, which is really an *Arabian* Performance; and though it abounds with bold Flights according to their figurative manner of writing, yet ought it not, I conceive, to be charged with want of Truth. In like Manner, tho' we cannot perhaps vindicate the Whole of this History as real Fact, and its Embellishments have a near Conformity to the Theology then in Vogue, so as to give some Umbrage to a Reader, who will not be so candid as to acknowledge with St. *Jerom*, *Multa in Scripturis sacris dicuntur juxta opinionem illius temporis, & non juxta quod rei veritas continebat*, in *Jerem.* c. xxviii. Yet it may be sufficient for the present Purpose, that the Historical



## ii PREFACE to the Book of TOBIT.

Ground-Plot is true, whatever may be said as to particular Passages in it. Amongst the most exceptionable of these, the Continuance of Angels for several Days with particular Persons of no extraordinary Note, and seemingly on no very important Occasions, and under Disguise too, and being what we have no Instance of in genuine Scripture, has been most insisted on, and objected to. But if we consider the Stories of *Raphael* and *Asmodeus*, in an allegorical View, as Representations of the Doctrine of good and bad Angels allowed to every Person, the one as a Guardian, the other as a Tempter, the Objection will be greatly weakened, if not wholly vanish. They are both Words of *Hebrew* Original, and according to their primitive Signification might possibly be adapted by the Writers to their Characters in the History. And should any one conjecture that *Tobiah*, the *Chaldee* Name both of Father and Son, was invented to express the good Man of God טוביה, and his Wife *Anna*, his Vexation, from *אנה* *afflixit, respondit, clamavit*, it would not perhaps be any forced or unnatural Interpretation, nor altogether to be disapproved of. Not that I mean hereby to insinuate, that these are not proper Names, or to weaken the Evidence of their real Persons, or that they acted their Parts only dramatically.

What Ancient Works were designed as Dramatical, and what as Historical, must be judged partly by internal Characters, partly by the Opinions originally entertained of them. By internal Characters, I would understand such Notes, or Marks, by which the Reality of what is related may be discovered and ascertained; as personal Facts, the Time when done, where performed, and on what Occasion, and their being recorded and transmitted by the Actors themselves, all of which Circumstances declare in Favour of *Tobit's* being a true History. In it we have his Genealogy, or Pedigree, the Place of his Nativity, the Time in which he lived, his Condition of Life and Employment; his Family, his Captivity, Poverty, Blindness, his Recovery from it; his Age, Death, and Place of Burial, all which are personal Circumstances, and are expressly mentioned. We have also his Behaviour and moral Conduct set down in the different States of Life, particularly under his Misfortunes. In him we have a perfect Model of private Life, and all the Virtues and Duties of that Condition seem united together. We see in him a firm Resolution to stand upon his Guard against the Contagion of ill Example from his Infancy, an Equality of Mind in the different Situations of Life, a Generosity in the Time of his Plenty to succour the Distressed, and lend even large Sums of Money without Interest; a Patience in supporting even an extreme Poverty, not only without murmuring, but with Thanksgiving. An invincible Courage in the Exercise of Works of Mercy; a Gentleness in bearing with Contradictions at home, a firm Confidence in God under the severest Trials. A constant Care in training up his Son as well by his Example as by his Instructions in the Fear of God, in doing Justice to his Neighbour, and shewing Compassion to the Poor: And lastly, a lively and fixed Expectation of future Blessings, and an assured Hope of the Promises made to *Israel*, which supported and comforted him under the greatest Afflictions; and these he reminds his fellow *Jews* of, to excite their Trust in God, and the Belief of his Prophets, for the fulfilling of those Things which were yet behind. See *Rollin's Belles Lettres*, vol. iii. a Character resembling that of holy *Job* is almost all the Particulars, whose History, like this, has been misrepresented likewise as purely dramatical. But if where such express Circumstances of real Historical Facts appear, a strong Conceit shall be allowed wantonly to turn all into Parable, there must be an End of the Certainty and Reality of all History. By the same Right, and with as much Justice, every Author, Sacred or Profane, might be made to be or speak any thing, which Fancy invents, or Caprice dictates, and to take its Turn upon the Stage, to act a Part of some Drama. Might not the History of our first Parents be made to open the Scene? But when enigmatically represented, as some bold Spirits have of late attempted, what a forced and unnatural Appearance does it make? The Story of the Brazen Serpent, and the surprizing Cures wrought, even by the Sight of it, on those bitten by Serpents, with that of *Gideon's* Fleece, what a Scope might they give to a teeming Fancy? The like might be said of the History of *Sampson*, where one meets with a Number of Facts so extraordinary, that they might seem incredible, were they not warranted by the Testimony of the Holy Spirit. To say nothing of the Three hundred Foxes tied Tail to Tail, as it is a Mistake, I conceive of our Version, the great Number



## P R E F A C E to the Book of T O B I T. iii

slain by him, even a thousand *Philistines*, with no other Arms than the Jaw-Bone of an Ass, an Instrument very unusual and unpromising for so great a Slaughter; the surprising Flow of Water from that Jaw-Bone for his Refreshment; the ponderous Gates of a City carried away on his Shoulders to the Summit of an Hill; these, and other the like Actions, of which that History is full, are so extraordinary, that, should jealous and suspicious Persons, who cannot persuade themselves to believe any thing that surpasses the ordinary Course of Nature, but employ the like ingenious Torture, might not these too be metamorphosed into *Ænigma* and *Parable*? At this rate the History of *Esther* may become also a Tragedy: For the sudden and astonishing Revolutions, the hasty and precipitate Changes recorded there, brought about almost in a few Hours, beyond all Observations and Precedents in Story, may possibly be represented, rather to carry the Air of a Tragedy, than to contain a real historical Event, especially as it is not agreed who *Affuerus* certainly is, nor in what Time that History is to be placed. What I have urged in Defence of the History of *Tobit*, particularly the latter Instance, is equally applicable to that of *Judith*, which *Grotius*, and other learned Writers, have represented likewise as parabolical, and may serve to shew, what a warm unrestrained Fancy might attempt. But if to attempt to weaken and explain away by *Ænigma* and *Parable* the Credibility of these, or any Parts of Scripture, is Rashness and Presumption, to say no worse of it, why should a like Liberty, with regard to either of these Deutero-canonical Pieces, as they were anciently called, be thought allowable, which carry in them the strongest Marks of their being real Histories?

The other Way I mentioned, by which ancient Works design'd as historical might be distinguished, was the Opinion originally entertained of them. With respect to the Book of *Tobit*, it is certain, that the *Jews* had all along a great Regard for it, that they read it, and looked upon it, as a true History of this particular Family at least, and compiled from the Memoirs remaining with it; and though they did not receive it into their Canon, as they did none not wrote in *Hebrew*, or not extant before the Time of *Esdra*s, yet they admitted it into their *Hagiographa*, see *Grot. Præf. in Tob. & Sixt. in Senens. Bibl.* l. viii. where it stands placed in the *Alex. MS.* and the best Editions of the *LXX.* The ancient Christians, who confined themselves to those Books which the *Jews* acknowledged, for the same Reason admitted not this Book into their Canon, but still they paid a great Regard to it, as an instructive Manual. *Polycarp, Clem. Alex. Chrysostom*, and other Fathers, frequently quote and refer to it; and *St. Ambrose* has a whole Treatise on it. We may be assured, that Persons of their nice Discernment, would not have spent their learned Labours on it, nor made use of its Authority, if it had been a mere Drama, a Parable, or an entertaining Fiction only; nor have recommended the principal Person in it, as a Pattern worthy of Imitation for his many Virtues, if the Character had existed only in Imagination. Several Councils, as those of *Carthage, Florence, and Trent*, have even made this Book canonical; but though this is carrying the Matter too far, it shews however their Sentiments of its Value. They would scarcely have taken into their Canon a Romance, or a Fable, however instructive or piously designed.

I shall next consider the original Language of this Book: It is generally agreed, that it was first written either in *Hebr.* or *Chaldee*, though the Original cannot now be found. *P. Fagius* contends for the former, and that the Original was what he saw at *Constantinople*; but many learned Men are of a very different Opinion, and think that to have been only some later Version, probably made from the *Greek*. See *Huet. Demonstr. Evang. Prop. 4. Fabric. Biblioth. Græc. Tom. ii.* It is most probable that it was wrote in *Chaldee*, which was the Language of the Country where *Tobit* was a Captive. *St. Jerom* having met with a *Chaldee* Copy, employed a Person that perfectly understood that Language to render it into *Hebrew*, which himself at the same time translated into *Latin*, and his Translation is that which we have in the vulgar *Latin* Edition of the *Bible*. The Book itself is supposed to have been wrote, the former Part of it by *Tobit* himself, and the latter, almost to the Conclusion, by his Son *Tobias*; but there is no Certainty of it: At least it is thought, that they left behind them Memoirs of their Family, and such Materials as a *Chaldee* Author afterwards digested into that Form in which we now have it. A late Writer surmises it to be the Work of some *Babylonian Jew* in particular,



# iv PREFACE to the Book of TOBIT.

particular, *Whiston's Sac. Hist.* vol. I. And indeed *Calmet* observes, that the Name *Raphael*, which is found no where but in the Book of *Tobit*, is of *Babylonish* Extraction. However this be, the Design of the Book, when or by whomsoever wrote, was certainly commendable and good; it appears to be not so much to preserve the Memoirs of a single religious Family, as from the Example of so good a Man, exercised with a sad Variety of Misfortunes, and yet rising superior to them, through an assured Hope of the Promises made to *Israel*, to comfort the *Jews* under their Captivity, and by a Prospect of future Blessings, to alleviate their present afflicted Condition.

As to the several Versions of this Book, besides that of *Jerom's* above-mentioned, there is a *Greek* one much ancients, for we find it made use of by *Polycarp*, *Clemens Alex.* and other Fathers, who were before him; and from this the *Syriac* Version is supposed to have been made, and the *English* one which is at present used; for *Coverdale's* was apparently from the *Vulgate*. It is uncertain by whom the *Gr.* Version was made; that it was after that of the *LXX*, appears from c. viii. 6. which is manifestly transcribed from thence; nor can it any more belong to *Theodotion*, because *Polycarp* quotes from it long before that Translator: It seems rather the Work of some *Hellenist Jew*, probably one of *Alexandria*. The *Hebrew* Copies of this Book are thought to be comparatively of modern Composition, and to have been made by *Fagius* and *Munster*, whose Names are prefixed to them: That of *Fagius* approaches nearest to the *Greek*, and seems more pure and correct; the other, some have suspected to have been done from the *Vulgate*. The *Latin* and *Greek* Copies vary extremely, each having some Particulars which are wanting in the other. Hence some have surmised, that the History of *Tobit* was written twice; once more large and fully, which the *Vulg.* is thought to follow; and once succinctly, which the *Gr.* copied from, or in the Form which we at present have it; which, if true, may account for the Variations mentioned. Thus much however should be observed, that the Preference should be given to the *Greek*. As *Jerom* himself did not, as he acknowledges, understand *Chaldee*, the Substance of his Version was either dictated to him by some learned *Jew*, upon whose Skill and Sincerity he must depend, or, which seems not improbable, was the Translation of a Translation, and consequently, as *Huetius* observes, *Hinc alienum aliquid & adventitium huic adhaesisti par est suspicari. Demonst. Evan. Prop. 4.*

If by comparing carefully these several Versions together, and critically examining the *Gr.* Text in particular, I have been so happy as to throw a new Light upon Passages otherwise obscure, and, if I may so speak, have helped *Tobit's* Blindness; if the Solutions which I have offered of the Objections made to this History, shall in some measure contribute to clear Difficulties, remove Prejudice, and silence profane and low Raillery, and thereby to justify the Wisdom of our Church in the publick Use of it, I shall answer my Design in engaging in this Work, and think my Labour not misemployed.



# DISSERTATION

# ON THE

Demon *A S M O D Æ U S.*

Translated from CALMET.

**I**T is very surprizing that the holy Scriptures, which speak so often of good and evil Angels, their appearing, and the supernatural and miraculous Works performed by them, should mention so little of the Nature, Power, Functions, Qualities, Glory, Subordination, and the Manner of acting, of these Spirits, whom we look upon as the chief of the Works of the great Creator, the most excellent Productions of his Power. All that we find there concerning them, may probably be reduced to these Heads, *viz.* that there are both good and evil Spirits; that the former continue in a State of Glory, because they preserved their Innocence, and persevered in a dutiful Submission to their Creator; that the latter, being elated with Pride, by Rebellion forfeited their first Estate, and are *reserved in everlasting Chains under Darkness, suffering the Vengeance of eternal Fire*; that they employ themselves in exerting their Rage and Malice against Mankind, to draw them into the same Condemnation, and unhappy Condition, to which they are reduced themselves. That good Angels are God's Ministers sent on gracious Errands, and for the Purposes of Mercy and loving Kindness; and evil ones are the Executioners of his Justice and Vengeance. That among Devils, as well as among Angels, there is a certain Subordination, the Conditions of which are unknown to us; that they act upon Bodies and Spirits in a Manner yet more incomprehensible to us: That every Kingdom has its Angel, which presides over it, and every one of us a guardian Angel, which watches for our Good and Preservation, and is assisting in the great Business of our Salvation, if we ourselves do not oppose their kind Intentions, and frustrate the Mercies, and Good-will of God towards us.

But even in that which God has been pleased to discover to us, how great is the Obscurity, and how many the Difficulties? Angels and Devils are almost always represented as corporeal. Most of the Histories which make any mention of them, have rather the Air of Fiction and Romance, than of true History. Let us examine, for Instance, the Account given of the Temptation of *Eve*, and that of the Angel's Appearance to *Balaam* and his Ass, the History of the *Demon Asmodeus* before us, *Satan's* tempting of *Job*, and the blessed *Jesus* himself in the Wilderness: are not these Instances more likely to encrease our Doubts, and multiply Difficulties, than to dispel or remove them? God seems to have designed thereby to put Bounds to our Curiosity, and to turn away our Attention from such Matters, the Knowledge of which is not so necessary for us, in order to employ the whole Capacity of our Minds upon more important Subjects, and which have a nearer and more direct Regard to our true and essential Interests.

The ancient *Jews* before the Captivity of *Babylon* do not seem much to have concerned themselves in their Enquiries about Angels; we do not any where find, that they paid any Sort of Worship, either true or false, superstitious or otherwise, to them. It was not, by their own Confession, till they came into *Chaldea*, that they learned the Names of *Michael*, *Gabriel*, and *Raphael*, and that there were Seven principal Spirits before the Throne of God. Nor was their Knowledge more perfect with respect to evil Spirits; the Name *Satan*, which



we sometimes meet with, is general, and signifies an *Adversary*. *Beelzebub* is the Name of an Idol. *Isaiah*, c. xiv. 12. mentions *Lucifer*, but that means only the Morning Star, and when applied to the Devil, it must be only figuratively. *Asmodeus* seems to be the first proper Name of the Devil, that we meet with in Scripture\*, and yet there is Room to doubt, whether this be really a proper Name, as we may understand the Passage of *Tobit*, c. iii. 8. in this Manner, viz. the evil Angel, the Destroyer, killed her Seven Husbands. But indeed it must be confessed, that the natural Sense of that Place rather leads us to understand *Asmodeus* as a proper Name. The Greek reads, "*Asmodeus*, the evil Spirit;" *Prosper* styles him "the most wicked;" and *Munster's Hebr. Copy*, "*the Prince of the Devils*."

Amongst the many Etymologies of the Name of *Asmodeus*, one cannot fix upon a better than that which is derived from the Verb *Schamad*, which signifies *to ruin, to destroy, to exterminate, to make desolate, &c.* Titles which belong but too truly to the Devil, whose principal Aim is to ruin Souls, to destroy Works of Piety and Virtue, to overthrow good Intentions, and to oppose all the gracious and merciful Designs of God our Saviour towards us; in a word, who glories in Mischief, and employs his Power to make Men wicked and miserable, and to spread Discord, Confusion, and Disorder through the World. *St. John, Revel. ix.* mentions an evil Angel, whose Name in the Hebrew Tongue is *Abaddon*, but in the Greek *Apollyon*, and in Latin, *Exterminans*. It seems to be that destroying Angel which executed God's Vengeance upon the Egyptians by the Ten sore Plagues inflicted upon that People, and upon the murmuring and rebellious Israelites also, who died in the Wilderness, and on the Army of *Sennacherib*, destroyed in *Palestine*. It was he that stirred up the first Persecutors, and hath ever since raised Disturbances in the Church of Christ. It is he, finally, who continues to make war against it by Hereticks, and wicked Persons, who corrupt its Faith, and dishonour its Purity, by their evil Lives, or pernicious Doctrines.

But as the Name *Exterminator*, or Destroyer, suits equally all evil Spirits, it may be asked, which that in particular was, which tormented *Sara*, and killed her Seven Husbands; for we are assured, that there are Devils of more Sorts than one, 1 *Cor. xv. 24.* Some are Princes and Rulers, some Inferior and Subalterns; some preside over one Vice, and some over another. There are Demons of Avarice, and Demons of Impurity; Demons of Drunkenness, and Demons of Luxury. Some are concerned in foretelling future Events, and giving out pretended Oracles: some are employed in tempting and seducing People; others in tormenting those, whom they have taken Possession of: there are some who occasion certain Diseases; and it appears from the Gospel, that the Jews ascribed to the Devil, most of the Illnesses and Calamities which Men were visited with. In fine, it is thought that there are evil Spirits, who have their Habitation in the Air, others in Deserts, others in Provinces, and great Kingdoms. What is then the Employment or Rank of *Asmodeus*, of whom we are speaking? The *Hebr. Copy*, which we have already cited, gives him the Title of *King of Devils*; but there is Mention of more than one King of the Devils. The Jews accuse our Saviour for casting out Devils by *Beelzebub*, the Prince of the Devils. *Matt. ix. 34.* *St. Jerom*, upon the Authority of the Hebrews, gives the Name *Resceph* to the Prince of the Devils, in *Habac. ch. iii.* which signifies *live Coals, Sparks, Arrows, &c.* Terms suitable to the Devil, either on Account of his great Readiness to do Mischief, or the Vengeance thundered out against him by God, for his deceiving the first Woman. *St. Chrysostom* calls the Prince of the Devils, *Satbael*, i. e. one that is estranged, or disdainfully turns away from God.

*St. John* bestows on him many Epithets, as the great Dragon, the old Serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole World. *Revel. xii. 9.* *Job ch. i. 6.* And our Saviour himself, *Matt. iv. 10.* likewise calls him Satan, a Name which expresses perfectly his Hatred and Malice against Men, and his Aversion to all Goodness. The Greek Word *Διάβολος* has the same Signification, and means a false Accuser, and unjust and spiteful Enemy. *St. Peter* paints him, as a roaring Lion, going about, and seeking whom he may devour, 1 *Pe. 5. 8.* He is, as before observed, sometimes also called *Lucifer*. There are some that think him to be the chief of the Demons of *Media*, where he principally exercised his Sovereignty; in like Manner as that other Demon, mentioned *Dan. x. 13.* exercised his over *Persia*, and opposed the Archangel *Michael*, the Protector of the People of God. The Name *Asmodeus* may possibly be also derived from the *Hebr. Esch-Madai*, i. e. the Fire of *Media*, because there this evil Spirit kindled the Fire of impure Love. The Rabbins will have it, that *Asmodeus* was descended from *Naamah*, the Sister of *Tubal-Cain*, and that he is the same with him, who is called *Sammael*, in the Targum on *Job ch. xxviii.* In short, the Talmudists unanimously hold, that *Asmodeus* is the Prince of the Devils.

But the Opinion which seems most probable to us is, that *Asmodeus* was the Demon of Impurity. We see no Reason to follow the Hebrews, who give him the Rank of the Prince of the Devils. What the Scripture says of him, requires not that we should give him that Precedence amongst his Fellow-rebels and Apostates. God permitted him to punish with Death those, that approached *Sara* with a brutal and criminal Passion; he had no Power himself over the virtuous Maid, but contributed, against his Will, and without his Know-

\* *Calmet* here calls the Book of *Tobit* Scripture, from the Council of *Trent* determining it to be so.



ledge, to her Happiness, and that of *Tobias*. This young Pair was made for one another, and God, who was mercifully disposed towards them, suffered not that the Seven first Husbands should come near her, as he reserved her for one more worthy.

*Raphael* discovers to young *Tobias* the true Cause of their Death, when he says, *I will tell you whom the Devil has chief Power over; they are those, who marry without the Fear of God, who exclude him from their Affections, to indulge their Passions, and brutal Lust, like the Horse and Mule which have no Understanding*, ch. vi. 16, 17. *Sara*, in like Manner, assigns one of the Reasons, why the former Persons could not have her to Wife, *Perhaps*, says she, *I was not worthy of them, or because they were not worthy of me* <sup>b</sup>. ch. iii. 19. This last was doubtless the true Reason, but not a sufficient one to expose them to Death, if they had not drawn that Misfortune on themselves, by their criminal Excess, and evil Dispositions.

What is most difficult to conceive in *Sara's* Deliverance, is the evil Spirit being driven away by the Smoke of the Heart and Liver of the Fish. How can a Spirit receive any Impression from Smoke, or be sensible either of an agreeable or disagreeable Smell? It is certain that both Smoke and Effluvia's proceed only from Bodies, and act only on Matter, and as the Ideas of Pain or Pleasure arising from the Impressions, which sensible Qualities make on our Bodies, are not common to, or compatible with, Spirits disengaged from Matter, we cannot conceive, that such Sensations should affect them without a Sort of Miracle, and the Power of God so ordering it, that by means of certain Movements, extrinsecal and foreign to them, they shall receive the same Impressions, as if they were really corporeal: 'Tis after this Manner some have attempted to explain the Punishments in Hell, how the Devils and Souls of the Damned can be said to be tormented in material Fire, viz. that that Element does not act directly and immediately itself on them, but by an Effect proceeding from the all-powerful Will of God, its Presence causes in their Souls the same Sensations of Pain, as if they were really clothed with Flesh, and composed of Matter.

The Heathens, who supposed the Bodies of their Demons to be very subtil, and exempt from Matter, were at little Pains to explain how they could be affected with agreeable or bad Smells. Their subtil Bodies, which partook of the Nature of the purest Æther, were fattened, according to them, with the Libations, and the Odour of the Sacrifices offered in Honour of them; they were fed and refreshed with the Smoke of the Incense and Perfumes, and were invigorated with sucking the Blood of the Victims. But as *Porphyry* observes, a wise Man would be cautious, how he offered such Sacrifices, for fear of inviting such mischievous Spirits; he advises rather to purify the Soul, as they have no Power over one, that is pure, uncorrupt, and unsullied. The *Chaldeans*, among whom the Book of *Tobit* was written, and the *Jews* for whose Use it was composed, were doubtless of Opinion that the Demons were not absolutely disengaged from all Matter. They attributed to them all such Sensations and Impressions, as belong only to Beings that are corporeal. Hence *Tobias*, speaking according to the Notions and Prejudice of that People, says to *Raphael*, that the Demon *Asmodeus* loved *Sara*, and had a passionate Fondness for her Beauty, and through Jealousy kept all others from coming near her. On this Occasion we may very well apply *St. Jerom's* Observation, *That in Scripture one often finds Things mentioned rather according to the prevailing Notion of the Times, when they happened, than according to strict Truth*. In *Jerem.* ch. xxviii. The ancient Fathers of the Church were not entirely free from this Error; they represent Demons, or Spirits as having subtil Bodies, and as affected with Odours, and other fine and delicate Sensations. *Origen* mentions it as a thing incontestable, that Demons love Liquors, and the Taste of Flesh roasted. *Cont. Cels.* L. iii. He thinks that they appear in and assume the Form of holy Persons, or good Angels, to deceive the Simple; are fond of impure Love, and affected with the Sounds of Instruments, and Musick; that there are certain Charms, Verses, Herbs, and Figures, that have the Power to drive them away, and to cure the Distempers which they occasion, *ibid.* l. viii. These Opinions are very ancient, and authorized and supported as well by the Number, as the great Character, of those that maintain them. And though the Church seems entirely to have abandoned these, yet there have been in these later Times, some learned Authors, who cannot persuade themselves to give any Bodies but those of a very subtil and refined Nature, both to good and evil Angels. *Grotius* cannot help shewing his Spleen and Indignation against those, who have paid too great a Deference to *Aristotle*, who was the first, he says, that asserted Natures purely intellectual. Upon the Supposition of their being corporeal, there will be little Difficulty to explain, how Demons and Angels may appear in a bodily Shape, eat and drink, occasion and cure several Distempers; for nothing is more easy and natural, than for Bodies to act upon Matter, and to strike the Senses.

I do not very well see how those who pretend that the Smoke of the Heart and Liver of the Fish drove away the Demon by a natural Virtue and Efficacy, can maintain that Sentiment, without admitting that the unclean Spirit had a Body and Senses. Notwithstanding all the Efforts of their Philosophy, they will never persuade any, that there could be that Antipathy which they hold between *Asmodeus* and the Smoke, in a Spirit absolutely divested of Matter. Such Aversions and Antipathies being founded on a Diversity and Opposition of

<sup>b</sup> This, and the foregoing Sentence, are according to the *Vulgate*, the *Greek* omits them.



Qualities, cannot meet in Beings, which have such a Disagreement, and even Contrariety, between them, as Spirit and Body have; if they could, all other Bodies and Spirits for the like Reason must be supposed to have the same, as they equally and essentially differ in the Properties peculiar to each.

If the Efficacy of the Smoke, of which we are speaking, is supposed to consist in the Sensation, which it occasioned in the Person affected by it, which producing an Agitation and Alteration in the Blood and Humours, thereby acted indirectly upon the Demon himself, by taking from him the Means made use of to incommode and torment the Party possessed, such an Opinion seems to contain nothing but what might be admitted by the most scrupulous Divines, and the most exact and inquisitive Philosophers. If Melancholy was the Cause of *Saul's* Malady, it is no Ways strange, that the sweet Sounds of *David's* Harp, driving away that black Humour, and raising his Spirits, might at the same Time take from the evil Spirit his principal Means and Springs of Mischief; and in that Sense Musick might be said to hinder, or however to suspend, and stop his further evil Designs. One may observe the like of those Roots, of which *Josephus* speaks, *Antiq. l. viii. ch. 2.* which were applied to the Nostrils of the Possessed, the Virtue of which *Solomon* himself, he says, first discovered to those of his Nation. We are told likewise of certain Roots, Herbs, Plants, Stones, and other Things, which have the Power, as is pretended, to drive away evil Spirits, and to hinder them from entering into such and such Places, and there doing Mischief. But we may apply the Words of *St. Austin*, who speaking of the Perfumes and Odours, which Demons have been represented as fond of, says, *they are not fed or supported by such Things as these, but by the Folly and Errors of Men*, *De Civit. l. xx. c. 22.* They are neither Smoke, nor Herbs, nor Minerals that drive them away and keep them in Awe; but it is an Error, and a foolish Mistake in Men to think so. The Devil indeed amuses them with such a Notion, and leaves them there, being sufficiently indemnified, and made Amends for the small Suspension of his Malice, by the great Advantage he makes in keeping up Superstition and Error.

But with Regard to magical Effects of certain Words, Plants, and Characters, we should judge otherwise. The Devil on such Occasions seems willing to submit to Conditions, and to engage not to act contrary to the Will and Pleasure of such as are devoted to him, and are in League with him. In this consists the Devil's hard and cruel Empire, he never ceases to do Hurt, but it is in Order to do greater Mischief. He contents himself in thus attaching Men to his Service, and seducing them thro' the Errors of Magic. But we need not enlarge further on this, as it will be of no Service to explain the Matter in hand, since it is certain, that no Sort of Magic was employed in dispossessing *Sara* of the evil Spirit.

*Serrarius* thinks that a middle Opinion should be followed, one betwixt that which holds the Expulsion of *Asmodeus* to have been done purely by natural Means, and that which asserts a supernatural and miraculous Power. He observes that a thing may be done, or something brought to pass, either by a good or evil Spirit, or by the sole Will and Commandment of God, without either of them employing any Agent, or secondary Cause, outwardly concurring and cooperating with them; or God may employ some Angel or Demon, who shall make use of some natural and sensible Means, as his Instrument and Assistant, whether the Agent employed hath Need of such natural Assistance or not, or the Thing made use of has naturally a Disposition and Quality fit for the Purpose, or derives all its Virtue and Efficacy from him who applies it. In the present Case he thinks the Smoke of the Liver of the Fish had a Sort of natural Power to drive away the evil Spirit, which he proves by what the Angel, speaking as a Man, says, *if a Devil or an evil Spirit trouble any, we must make a Smoke thereof before the Man or the Woman, and the Party shall be no more vexed*, *ch. vi. 7.* Young *Tobias*, who then looked upon *Raphael* only as a mere Man, understood it in this Sense; and when he said to the Angel, to what Use is the Heart and Liver of the Fish? he thought nothing, doubtless, of any supernatural Effect; one ought to believe, therefore, that *Raphael* spoke to him according to his Sense of the Matter. The same Writer is of Opinion, that God foreseeing, in the Beginning of the World, the Evils which the Devil would bring upon Mankind, gave to certain Plants a natural Power and Virtue to oppose and hinder these bad Effects. He acknowledges however something supernatural in the Smoke before mentioned, founded principally upon what the Angel says, that the Devil never returns to make a second Attack upon those who have once proved the happy Effects of the Remedy; a thing which is altogether singular, and cannot be said of any other natural one. In short, he thinks that the Prayers and Continence of *Tobias*, his good Dispositions, and those of *Sara*, who entered into the Marriage State in the Fear of the Lord, together with the Presence of *Raphael*, contributed very much to the producing so unusual and extraordinary an Effect.

*Grotius* seems to suppose all this to be a Parable, and understands it in a figurative Sense. He neither acknowledges an evil Spirit, properly such, to be concerned, nor any thing supernatural to have happened in the Cure of *Sara*. The pretended *Asmodeus*, who killed her Seven Husbands, was only some ill Quality attending *Sara's* Body, which proved mortal to such as approached her. The *Hebrews* used to ascribe to the Devil all the Diseases which they could not account for, or assign the Cause of. They thought there were Devils, which

made



made Persons deaf and dumb, Epilepsies, and other Illnesses not well understood, and which Medicine despaired of curing, and could not effectually reach, were, according to them, inflicted by evil Spirits, as appears from several Passages in the Gospel. *Sara's* Malady, he says, was of this Sort; but *Tobias*, by using such Fumigations in the Bridal Chamber, and about his Person, as were proper in that Case, not only preserved himself from the Fate of his Predecessors, but cured his Wife likewise of a Complaint, or Indisposition, that was unknown to Physic, and therefore ascribed, (as the Custom of the *Jews* was, with every Distemper they could not cure,) to the Operation of the Devil. This is cutting the Knot, as they say, and turning to Novel and Romance an authorized and well-grounded History, received and acknowledged as a true one by the *Jews*, and the whole *Christian* Church: for I do not much regard, or lay any great Stress upon, the singular Opinion of some modern Expositors, who without, any substantial Proof, have attempted to dispute the Truth of this History.

Those who hold that the Expulsion of *Asmodæus* was by a supernatural Power, do not entirely agree among themselves. Some assert, that the Smoke of the Fish was only a Symbol of the Prayers of *Tobias* and *Sara*, to which alone they ascribe the Success of her Cure, in the same Sense that our Saviour *Jesus Christ* spread Clay upon the Eyes of the Man that was born blind, and ordered him to wash in the Pool of *Siloah*, not as the Cause, but as the Proof of the Cure. *Asmodæus* was one of those evil Spirits, which were not to be expelled but by Continence and Prayer, like those under the Gospel, which went not out but by Prayer and Fasting. Others think, that the burning of the Fish's Entrails was only as a Sign when the evil Spirit should be chased away. There are some also that maintain, that it was *Raphael* that drove away *Asmodæus*, and purposely concealed what was done by a supernatural Power, under that seemingly natural one, lest *Tobias* should discover he was an Angel, which was contrary to the Intention of God, who would have *Raphael* remain undiscovered, till the Return of *Tobias* to his Father's House. *Prosper* ascribes the whole Effect of the Smoke to *Jesus Christ*, whose mystical Name  $\text{ix}\theta\upsilon\varsigma$  means a Fish, and that it is he that drives away unclean Spirits, and heals our Infirmities; but as that Father declares he speaks figuratively, his Opinion is not to be put in the Number of literal Explications.

The principal Proofs of those who contend here for a supernatural and miraculous Power are, 1. The essential Difference which there is between any thing sensible, gross, and corporeal, and a being purely intellectual. 2. The Disproportion between the Remedy and the Disease. Bodily Illnesses are ordinarily cured either by applying Remedies correspondent to the Nature of the Disease, or by evacuating, and taking away, the Humours that occasion the Complaint, or by bringing the Blood and Humours into a right Order again; which is to be effected various Ways, either by acting directly upon the Humours and taking away the Cause of the Disorder, or by restoring Tranquillity and Chearfulness to the Mind, as the Content and Satisfaction of this necessarily influences, and has an Effect upon the Blood and Humours, and settles them in a just and due Equilibrium. Or the Indisposition may be an Atrophy, Weakness, and Faintness, and then it is helped or removed by raising the Spirits, and repairing, by good and wholsom Nourishment, the Blood and exhausted Humours.

But in the Case before us none of these Means could take place. *Sara* had no bodily Illness that one knows of; the Business to be done was to drive away the evil Spirit which molested her, without doing her any Harm, but would not suffer any to approach her with impure Dispositions. Now the burning of the Fish's Entrails could not act upon the Body of the Demon, because he was purely spiritual, nor on his Spirit, because the Smoke was wholly material; besides, the same Remedy, when applied to other Persons in the like Malady, appears to be insignificant; neither Fumigations, Perfumes, good or evil Smells have ever been able to drive away Devils from any determinate Place, or Person. If Exorcisms are sometimes accompanied with burning of Brimstone, and other things, of a quick and strong Scent, it sufficiently appears, from divers Circumstances, that one is not to ascribe the Effect which attends them to the Power of the Effluvia, but to the Efficacy of the Prayers which accompany them. In short, if the Smoke from the burnt Entrails had a natural and sufficient Efficacy to chase away the evil Spirit, to what Purpose were *Tobias* and *Sara's* Prayers, and their remarkable Continence? why does *Raphael* say to *Tobias*, that the evil Demon has no Power but against those, that abandon themselves to their impure and brutal Lusts? Does a natural Remedy depend upon the virtuous or evil Dispositions of those that apply it?

Amidst this Variety of Sentiments we think we may venture to affirm: 1. That the Smoke of the Liver could have no direct or physical Effect upon *Asmodæus*. 2. That it operated only on the Senses of *Tobias* and *Sara*, and possibly might serve to suppress in them carnal and sensual Inclinations, and contribute to their Continence and Chastity; Effects which Naturalists ascribe to some Plants, Juices, and Odours. This virtuous Disposition having disarmed the Fiend, and put it out of his Power to execute his Malice against *Tobias*, as he did against the Seven others, he retired to the upper *Egypt* for the same evil Designs, filled with Confusion and Vexation at his Disappointment; especially observing that this pious Couple joined Prayers, Watching, and Humiliation, to Temperance and Chastity, and that for Three Nights successively. 3. The Angel *Raphael*, without doubt, contributed greatly to *Tobias's* Conquest over *Asmodæus*, not only in discovering to him the Remedy we have mentioned,



and acquainting him how good and true *Israelites* should enter upon, and behave in the Marriage State, but by his Presence more especially, and invincible Power which he could not resist. The Scripture sufficiently intimates, that he had the greatest Share in the Victory, when it says, that *Raphael* bound *Asmodeus*, and sent him away into the uttermost Parts of *Egypt*, which cannot be ascribed either to the Smoke from the Entrails of the Fish, nor even to *Tobias's* wife Conduct or Prayers. So that the Miracle of *Sara's* Deliverance from her Malady consisted chiefly in these three Particulars: 1. In the Discovery of so singular and extraordinary a Remedy as we have mentioned. 2. In laying open the Cause, which gave the evil Spirit Power to kill those who approached *Sara*, and pointing out the Means to render his Malice impotent and ineffectual. Lastly, in the supernatural Assistance which *Raphael* invisibly gave *Tobias* on the occasion, and sending away the *Demon* a great way off, in a manner never heard of before.

The only thing which remains at present to be examined, is the Manner, Cause, and the Place of the Confinement of *Asmodeus*. The Scripture, without being more explicit, says, that *Raphael* seized the *Demon*, and sent him into the Deserts of the upper *Egypt*. The *Gr.* adds, that *Raphael* chained him there. The *Hebr.* says, that *Asmodeus*, smelling the Smoke of the burnt Liver, fled into the upper *Egypt*. But neither the one nor the other make mention of the Angels seizing him, as the *Vulgate* does, which insinuates, that it was done even in *Raguel's* House, and from thence conducted him to the Deserts of *Thebais*, as to a Prison. But however it happened, it is certain we ought not to understand the Account in a literal and strict Sense. For how can an evil Spirit be chained, or confined to a determinate Place, or how is it possible to seize him, and bring him as it were Prisoner to a Dungeon? We must therefore understand the Word *Bound*, here, as in other Passages of Scripture, where the Devil is spoken of almost in the same Terms. For Instance, our *Saviour* says, *No Man can enter into a strong Man's House and spoil his Goods, except he will first bind the strong Man*, Mar. iii. 27. And in the *Apocalypse*, the *Dragon*, that old *Serpent*, which is the *Devil and Satan*, is laid hold on by an Angel, and bound for a Thousand Years, ch. xx. 2. *St. Peter*, speaking of the Fall of the apostate Angels, says, that *God cast them down into Hell, and delivered them into Chains of Darkness, to be reserved unto Judgment*, 2 Pet. ii. 4. and *St. Jude*, That the Angels which kept not their first Estate are reserved in everlasting Chains under Darkness unto the Judgment of the great Day. v. 6. None of these Expressions were ever understood of a real Confinement, or material Chains, to bind, fasten, or keep Prisoners those unclean Spirits, but of a superior Force, which continued them in their Torments, and stopped the violent Effects of their Fury and Malice.

*St. Austin*, explaining the Manner how evil Spirits may be bound or loosed, says, that these Terms signify no more, when applied to these Enemies of Mankind, than that they have Liberty or Permission to do Mischief, or have not the Liberty to hurt. The Devil's Place at present is in Hell, as he does not deceive the World now, as formerly, by Idolatry. Since the Gospel of *Jesus Christ* hath been preached through the whole World; our *Saviour* has bound the strong Man, entered into his House, taken away the Arms wherein he trusted, and spoiled his Goods. *Raphael*, with respect to *Asmodeus*, was as a mighty Conquerour, who disposes of his Captive at his Pleasure, lays him in Chains, or sends him into Banishment where he pleases. That Archangel, by the Command of God, ordered him to flee away; he signified to him, that the Power hitherto indulged him, was revoked, of hurting those that approached near to *Sara*. In this Sense we are to understand binding *Asmodeus*, as he could not act without God's Will and Permission; as soon as that Permission ceased or was recalled, he then might properly be said to be bound, or confined from doing further Mischief. *St. Austin* very well compares him to a great Mastiff, tied up and chained, who growls angrily, and shews an Inclination to bite, but can hurt none, but those who are so imprudent as to come too near him. Ser. 197.

But how can the evil Spirit be properly said to be confined to a determinate Place? Is it not equally a Contradiction to say that a Spirit is confined, as to say that he is bound, or in Chains? neither the one nor the other of these can belong to, or be inflicted on, a Being purely spiritual. But it is easy to solve this Difficulty from the Principles just laid down; if the evil Spirit was bound, when God suspended or revoked the Power he had given him, it is equally clear that the same Spirit is confined or shut up, when God sets certain Bounds to the Exercise of his Power, whether it be with regard to Times, or Places, or Things, or Persons. Thus *Asmodeus* attending upon, and being attached to the Person of *Sara*, and not having any Power but against those that came to her with evil and impure Dispositions, was confined to the Place where *Sara* lived. He could not exert his Malice any where else, nor upon any other than those that were given up to him. He was sent away from thence into the Deserts of the upper *Egypt*, not to be confined or locked up there; as in a fixed Place or certain limited Bounds of Space, like a Prisoner, but to execute his Power within a certain District assigned him, or rather to continue there without any at all, as that Part was desert, wild, and uninhabited. So that to be confined to, or shut up in a Place, with respect to an evil Spirit, means only his Power to do Mischief, and to execute his wicked Intentions, within the Extent of such a Place. As when God permits any Person to be tempted, the Tempter's Power is limited to that Person, and to the Place where he is.

It



It is only God that commands the evil Spirits, and has a Right to fix the Places and Times when, and where they may exert their Power. He alone can set Bounds to their Malice, and stop its mischievous Effects when he judges proper. It is true indeed that both Angels and Men have sometimes made use of the same Power, in confining evil Spirits, and stopping the Progress of their Rage and Violence, but neither Angels nor Men could effect this by any proper Power of their own, they acted only by the Appointment of God, and in his Name. It was thus *Raphael* subdued *Asmodeus*, it was thus *Michael* the Archangel stoppt the Attempt of the Devil, to carry away the Body of *Moses*, *Jude* *ſ. 9.* He used no other arms, no other Reprimand, than *the Lord rebuke thee.* It was thus holy Martyrs and Confessors of old, and our Exorcists at this Day <sup>c</sup>, controul evil Spirits, and limit the Extent of their Power. All was done in the Name and by the Power of *Jesus Christ*.

Not so the Magicians, who boast of their Power over evil Spirits, that they can at Pleasure stop their Operations, and keep them, as they pretend, chained up and confined, some in a Circle or Chamber, and others in other Places. One cannot say that Magicians act in the Name of God, and make use of his Authority over evil Spirits; much less that they act against the Permission of God, and in Spite of him; for who can resist his Will? we cannot help thinking, therefore, either that this pretended Power of Magicians over evil Spirits, is purely chimerical and imaginary, or that God, by a secret but most terrible Judgment, permits for a Time, that those miserable and wicked Persons, who have deserted his Service, should become Slaves of the Devil, who wretchedly deceives them by an Appearance of Submission, which he obsequiously pays to them, whilst in Truth he tyrannizes over them, and treats them worse than the most abject and miserable Slaves. It is not impossible but that the Devil may exercise such a Sort of Authority over his Subjects, as to command them to execute the Will of such wicked Magicians, as have given themselves over to him. But however this be, neither Religion nor good Sense will permit us to ascribe either to the Devil himself, or any of his Subalterns, much less to Magicians, an absolute and independent Authority. All the Motions, Power, and Force of the Devil, are dependent upon, and subject to, the Father and Sovereign of all Spirits, who rules and governs them by his infinite Power and incomprehensible Wisdom.

The Place where *Asmodeus* was banished to, was the Defart of the upper *Egypt*; a Soil dry, sandy, uncultivated, and almost entirely uninhabited; as it never rains there, and the Overflowings of the *Nile* cannot reach it, by Reason of the Mountains and its high Situation, it must of course be barren. *St. Jerom* intimates, that it abounds with Serpents and venomous Creatures. This frightful Desert would for ever have continued in Abhorrence and Oblivion, if it had not been visited and as it were consecrated, by a great Number of religious Hermits, who by their Abode have made it venerable and famous, and have changed the Horror and Barrenness of it, into a delicious Paradise; a Place particularly favoured, and where *Jesus Christ* displays the greatest and most sensible Effects of his Grace and Power. The Devil who had established as it were his Empire here, being drove from other Parts by the Virtue of the Cross, found himself here vanquished and subdued, by the Penance and Austerities of these Anchorets. This was the Field of Battle where *St. Anthony*, *Pacomius*, *Macbarius*, *Paphnucius*, and many others, so often engaged with and overcame the Devil, whose Fury and Obstinacy was so weakened, that he could only maintain the Fort where he had entrenched, and fortified himself <sup>d</sup>.

The Scripture does not mention for how long Time *Asmodeus* continued bound in the upper *Egypt*, but we may be assured that he remained so all the Time of *Tobias* and *Sara's* Life, since it is before remarked of this Remedy, that the evil Spirit, once drove away by the Power of it, never returns again to the Person. One cannot say but after their Time God might permit him to exert his Malice and evil Arts afresh against other Persons, but this is a Secret which God has not been pleased to make any Discovery of. It is to be observed,

<sup>c</sup> In the Apostolical Age, and the next following, the Power of Exorcising, or casting out Devils, was a miraculous Gift of the Holy Ghost, given to many *Christians* in common. The particular Order of Exorcists was first settled in the Church, upon the withdrawing of that extraordinary and miraculous Power, probably about the latter End of the Third Century, *Bingham's Antiq.* Tom. 2. It does not appear by any good or certain Authority, that after that Time they really did eject Demons, either out of Infants, or Demoniacs. But under that Pretence, many counterfeit Miracles have been obtruded on the Credulous. *Erasmus* has wittily exposed the Pretence to this Power, in his *Speculum*, or *Exorcismus*. In the *Roman Ritual* we have the Form of Exorcising expressly set down, called *Exorcismus obessorum*, which *Calmet* probably refers to, viz. *Exorcizo te, immundissime Spiritus, omnis incurfus Adversarii, omne Phantasma, omnis Legio, in nomine Domini nostri Jesu Christi, eradicare, et effugere ab hoc Plasmate Dei. Ipse tibi imperat, qui te de supernis celorum in inferiora terræ præcepit. Ipse tibi imperat qui mari, ventis, et tempestatibus imperavit. Audi ergo et time, Satana, inimice fidei, hostis generis humani, mortis adductor, vitæ raptor, justitiæ declinator, malorum radix, fomes vitiorum, seductor hominum, &c. Recede, et da locum spiritui Sancto per hoc Signum Crucis Christi Domini nostri.*

<sup>d</sup> The *Egyptian* Hermits were doubtless very extraordinary Persons, and of great Sanctity, as appears from the Account given of them by *Jerom*, *Athanasius*, *Sozomen*, *Cassian*, *Sulpitius Severus*, *Dupin*, and others; but that they cured all Diseases, delivered those that were possessed, had personal Conflicts themselves with the Devil, attacking them sometimes in a brutal Form, at other Times tempting them in a beautiful and pleasing one, and came off more than Conquerors over that grand and subtle Adversary; these and many other as surprising things, which are recorded of them, we may suspend our Belief of, till it is certain that Miracles continued in the Church in the Third and Fourth Century. *Calmet* seems to have singled out these as the principal Devotees, and probably because they were the Institutors of the Monastic Life.



that *Jesus Christ*, in his Gospel, intimates, that the *Jews* believed, that the *unclean Spirit*, when gone out of a Man, walketh through dry Places, and seeking Rest there for a Time, and finding none, returns into the House from whence he came out, Matth. xii. 43, 44. i. e. to take Possession again of that unhappy Person, whom he before dwelt in. Thus the evil Spirit that haunted King *Saul*, returned upon him at Intervals, after it had been drove away by the Harmony of *David's Harp*. The LXX, describing the sad Estate to which *Babylon* would be reduced after its Fall, say, that *Sirens shall lie there, and Devils dance there, and Centaurs shall dwell there*, Is. xiii. 21, 22.

A late Writer mentions strange and prodigious things of a Serpent in the upper *Egypt*, one cannot help thinking almost that there was something supernatural in it. This Serpent frequented a Grot or Cave of a Mountain, over against the Village of *Saata*, about a hundred Leagues from *Grand Cairo*, upon the western Border of the *Nile*; he hurt no body, one might touch him, fondle him, kill him, cut him in Peices, and carry him several Days Journey from thence, and yet after all this he would appear again in the Cavern alive and well. It seemed to make a Distinction between Persons; some it would go before, fondle them, and wrap its Folds about them; others it would flee away from and shun. In short, if what is said to be true, we cannot help acknowledging something miraculous in the Creature. Some have thought that it might possibly be the *Demon Asmodeus*, whose Abode we mentioned to be in these Parts. One could wish it could be certainly known how long it is since it first appeared there, for the ancients say nothing of it. Or possibly the whole may be only Invention, to embellish the Travels, and to entertain and amuse credulous Readers. *Lucas's Voyage into the Levant*, Tom. i. c. 9. and 14.

AS I have already pointed out some Errors of the *Romanists*, couched in this Dissertation, it may not be amiss, at the Conclusion of it, to take notice, that in the old *Roman Missal*, and also in the *Missal of Sarum*, there is a proper Mass of *Raphael the Archangel*, with the following Rubrick, by Way of Preface to it, grounded plainly on this History:

*The following Office of Raphael the Archangel, may be celebrated for Pilgrims or Travellers; that as he conducted and brought back (in his Journey) Tobias safe and sound; so he would bring back those for whom the Mass is said. It may also be said for all sick People, and such as are possessed with the Devil; because he is a Medicinal Angel, who restored Sight to Tobias, and dispossessed a Devil out of Sara, his Son's Wife.*

Then the following Prayer to God:

*O God, who didst direct blessed Raphael the Archangel, to go before thy Servant Tobias, hastening in his Journey, and gavest him to be his Keeper, amidst the Varieties and Dangers of this Life and Way; Grant, we beseech thee, that we may be protected by his Aid, so that both we may shun the Dangers of this present Life, and may be able to come to the Joys of Heaven, through our Lord, &c.*

Then a Prayer to S. Raphael himself:

*I intreat thee also, do thou assist me, O excellent Prince Raphael, thou best Physician of Soul and Body; and thou that dost presently enlighten the bodily Eyes of Tobias by curing them, do thou also enlighten my spiritual and carnal Eyes, and do not cease by thy heavenly Prayer, to cut off all the Darknes of my Heart and Body.* Hor. Sec. us. Sarum. f. 92.

A COM-



# COMMENTARY

ON THE

## Book of *T O B I T*.

### CHAP. I.

Ver. 1. **T**HE Book of the Words of *Tobit*.] Βίβλος τῶν λόγων. Λόγος often stands for Thing; thus *Sophocles*, τοῖς κυρίοις πάντα χερὶ δηλᾶν λόγον. The Hebrew Word רַבִּי, signifies promiscuously a Word and a Thing; and is rendered both by רִמָּא, and λόγος. See *Exod.* viii. 12. 1 *Kings* xiv. 19. *Ecclef.* i. 1. *Mark* i. 45. *Luke* i. 37. ii. 15. רִמָּא תָּעִי גֵּוֹנִים, i. e. this Thing was done. The Margin rightly renders λόγος here by *Acts*. The Hebrew Versions, and Syr. and the *Alex. MS.* differ in the following Genealogy; the *Vulg.* wholly omits it. Our Translators follow the *Rom.* and *Complut.* Edit.

Ver. 2. Who in the Time of *Enemessar*, King of the *Assyrians*, was led captive, &c.] The first Book of *Chronicles* v. 26. tells us, that God stirred up *Pul* and *Tiglath-Pilezer*, Kings of *Assyria* against the impious *Israelites*, and that the latter carried them away from beyond *Jordan*, and sent them into the Countries of *Halab*, *Habor*, and *Hara*, and to the River *Gozan*: And this Book adds, that the Tribe of *Nephthali*, of which *Tobit* was, being carried away by *Enemessar*, who is the same with *Shalmaneser*, as the Margin has it, was placed in the Province of *Media*, and himself at *Ninive*. It is plain from hence, that there was a double Invasion, and a double Captivity of the *Israelites*: Of this second Captivity we must necessarily understand this Place, which was thirty Years after that by *Tiglath-Pilezer*. In the time of this last Translation *Tobit* was carried away captive with many others, being then, as is supposed about forty-four Years old, with his Wife, and young *Tobias*, A. M. 3283, before *Christ* 721 Years, or thereabouts.

Ibid. That City which is called properly *Nephthali* in *Galilee*.] Properly, *Kudias*. Where

is there such a Greek Word so used? All other Translations have it as a proper Name, *Cydios*, or some such like; the *Alex. MS.* has *Kudias*, which *Grabe* alters for *Kudias*. *Calmet* thinks the Reading might be *Kadias*. This is thought to be the same with that which was otherwise called *Kadesb-Nephthali*, and so the Margin explains it. This being the principal City in the Tribe of *Nephthali*, in the more early Times, for Brevity sake, was called *Nephthali*: It was not only a Levitical City, but also one of the three Cities of Refuge on the West of *Jordan*. It is the Opinion of the Learned, founded on *Is.* ix. 1, 2, 3. compared with *Matt.* iv. 14. that as the Land of *Galilee*, or of *Zebulun* and *Nephthali*, had the Misfortune to be first in that Calamity, which befell their Nation by the *Assyrians*, so in Recompense of that Misery which they suffered above the rest of their Brethren, they had the first and chiefest Share of the Presence and Conversation of the Messiah: Which the Prophet *Isaiab* comforts them with accordingly, and we see actually fulfilled in the Gospel. In like manner it may be presumed, and from many Passages in this Book, see ch. xiii. and xiv. it seems probable, that to *Tobit*, and others of the faithful *Israelites*, was vouchsafed in their Captivity, a distant Prospect of this glorious Appearing, and of the happy State of the Church under it.

Ver. 3. I *Tobit* have walked all the Days of my Life in the Way of Truth and Justice, and I did many Alms-deeds to my Brethren, and my Nation, who came with me to *Ninive*, into the Land of the *Assyrians*.] *Tobit*, here in Person relates his own History; and so the other Versions, the *Heb.* *Syr.* *Gr.* and the ancient *Latin*, all read in the first Person; the *Vulgate* only differs, which from hence, to the End of the third Chapter, runs in the third Person. One may observe that *Tobit's* Misfortunes never induce him to leave the Way



of Virtue; but his Charity to his Brethren under the same Captivity, is most extraordinary and amiable. Human Prudence proceeds upon Maxims very different; it is natural for a Captive, at a Distance from his Country, and reduced in his Circumstances, to manage and reserve the little Remainder to subsist himself and Family, and to think that giving to others may be the way to bring Poverty upon himself; but *Tobit's* Faith judged otherwise, and had a respect unto the Recompense of the Reward. *St. Ambrose's* Character of him is very just: "He bore with humble Patience, Absence from his own Country, and the Loss of his Goods occasioned by it, and was more sensibly affected with the Afflictions of his Brethren, than his own; he regarded not as his private Property what he had hitherto acquired, but distributed it to the Necessities of his Fellow-Captives, esteeming only what he himself suffered as his due, and the just Punishment of his Sins. He was every where, and in all things submissive to the Will of God, without listening to the Motions of Self-Love, or the Suggestions of partial and corrupt Nature." *In Tob. c. i. Tom. i. Ver. 5.* Now all the Tribes which together revolted, and the House of my Father *Nephthali*, sacrificed unto the Heifer *Baal*.] For Distinction sake *Baal* had particular Titles, and different Rites of Worship; here *Baal* the Heifer is specified, to point out to us what *Baal* is meant, viz. the Heifer, or Calf of *Bethel*, or rather *Dan*, which was near to the Tribe of *Nephthali*. The Margin renders to the Power of *Baal*, as if the reading was *τῆς Βάαλ τῆς Δυνάμει*. *Spencer*, and some other learned Men, contend, that the true Reading here is, *τῆς Βάαλ, τῆς Δυνάμει*, to *Baal*, The Strength, or The Power, which is probably the Sense of the other marginal Reading, viz. the God *Baal*, and is countenanced by many Copies, and may seem confirmed from *Hos. x. 5.* and *Mark xiv. 62.* where the Right Hand of Power, means the Right Hand of the Power, or of God, the All-powerful. And it is observable that *Aquila*, in his Version, renders *Eli, Eli*, which in the *ó* is *ὁ Θεός μου, ὁ Θεός μου*, *Pf. xxii. 1.* by *ἰσχυρὸς μου, ἰσχυρὸς μου*; that God is called the Strength, the Rock, &c. is indeed evident from many Passages in Scripture; see *Exod. xv. 11. Deut. xxxii. 37.* but then such a Title does not belong, nor was usually given, to false Gods, or Idols, who are always styled Vanities, because of their Nothingness, and Impotence. Nor is it probable that *Tobit*, when he is condemning Image Worship, should honour its Object with a Title of such Pre-eminence and Distinction. The true Reading seems rather that which is followed in our Version, *τῆς Βάαλ τῆς δαμάλει*, i. e. to the Idol or Image of *Baal*, with the Form or Resemblance of a Heifer. And so *Jer. ii. 29. Hos. xiii. 1.* where the *LXX* render *τῆς Βάαλ*, the Chaldee adds Image, or Idol. It remains only to enquire, why *Baal* is here expressed in the Feminine

Gender; besides the common one, the learned *Selden* assigns these two particular Reasons, 1. that *Baal* was ἀρσενόθυλος, Male and Female; like the Egyptian *Isis*, the Syrian *Astarte*, and others of those Images, which Antiquity worshiped, who were indifferently Gods or Goddesses, among those Nations who adopted their Figures, *Plut. de Isid. Arnob. adv. Gent. l. iii. Tertull. Apol. i. 13.* 2. The Egyptians, and other idolatrous Nations, that worshiped Beasts, preferred, according to *Herodotus*, *Feminas Boves*, before other Animals, and hence such as described their Worship, styled them δαμάλει, or *Juvencae*, *De Diis Syris, Syntag. 1.* To these I shall subjoin a third Reason, countenanced by *Bochart*, and our *Fuller, Miscell. Sacr. l. ii. c. 7.* that when *Josephus*, or the *ó*, or *St. Paul, Rom. xi. 4.* speak of *Baal* in the Feminine Gender, it is by way of Ridicule, and Contempt. The like may be observed of the Calves of *Dan* and *Bethel*, which by the inspired Writers, *2 Kings. x. 29. Hos. x. 5.* are styled αἱ δαμάλει, not that they were always of that Sex, but by way of Contempt, and to expose them the more; like that of *Virgil*,

O vere Phrygiæ, neque enim Phryges—

Æn. ix.

*Ver. 6.* But I alone went often to Jerusalem at the Feasts, as it was ordained unto all the People of Israel by an everlasting Decree.] As the whole Body of the People complied with that Idolatry which *Jeroboam* set up, and authorized as the national Religion, except a small Remnant of the Faithful in Israel, which bowed not their Knees unto *Baal*; so it is greatly to the Honour of *Tobit*, that amidst the great Number of his own Tribe, which together revolted, he kept himself undefiled, and free from the general Offence; especially as he was young, and might easily have been led away by the Power of Example. For it is a Proof of an uncommon Degree of Virtue, to live untainted in the midst of surrounding Wickedness, and to preserve the Purity of Innocence in the Time of a general Corruption. But when it is here said, that *Tobit* alone kept himself from Idolatry, and went to the regular and appointed Place of Worship at Jerusalem, at the usual and stated Feasts, it is not to be taken so strictly and exclusively, as if he alone had been thus remarkably religious, or was the only happy one that had escaped the Pollution, for the contrary appears from *Ch. v. 13.* where *Ananias* and *Jonathas* are mentioned as accompanying him to Jerusalem, and making their Offerings together, at the Temple of the Habitation of the Most High. This Expression therefore is to be understood like that concerning *Elijah*, *1 Kings xix. 14.*

*Ibid.* Having the First fruits, and Tenths of Increase, with that which was first shorn; and them gave I at the Altar, to the Priests, the Children of Aaron. *Ver. 7.* The first Tenth Part of all Increase, I gave to the Sons of Aaron, who ministered at Jerusalem: Another Tenth

Part



Part I sold away, and went, and spent it every Year at Jerusalem. Ver. 8. And the third I gave unto them to whom it was meet.] In these Verses we have the regular Method and Order for bringing unto God, or his Ministers the Priests, those things which were to be offered to him, to the Payment of which the Jews were strictly obliged; as the ἀπαρχή, or the Oblation, that was made out of the Fruits of the Earth, particularly Corn; as also the Firstlings, and Tenth of their Flocks, and of the Wool of their Sheep, which were paid in Kind to the Priests themselves at the Temple: Then the first Tythe, called here the first Tenth Part of all Increase, viz. of Wine, Oil, Figs, and other Fruits of the Earth; this was given unto the Levites, and was always paid in Kind. But the learned differ whether it was always brought up to Jerusalem, as some assert, or paid unto the Levites in the several Cities of Tillage, as others conclude from *Nehem. x. 37.* the *Decima prima*, or first Tythe being paid, the Husbandman paid out of that which remained, the second Tythe, the δευτεροεικόσιον, or the second Tenth Part, as it is here called; this they might either pay in Kind, or by way of Commutation give the Worth of it, which *Tobit* seems to have done: This, whether in Kind or in Money, was brought up to Jerusalem, and the Possessors made a kind of Love-Feast therewith, unto which were invited the Priests and Levites. The third Tythe, or as it may be rendered the Tythe of the Third Year, was called the poor Man's Tythe; this the Possessor carried not to Jerusalem, but spent it at home within his own Gates upon the Levites, the Fatherless, the Widow, and the Poor, *Deut. xiv. 28. xxvi. 12, 13.* Hence these sorts of Tythes were called *πρωτοεικόσιον*. So that the first and second Tythe was paid by the Husbandman, the first, second, fourth and fifth Years after the Sabbatical Year; but upon the third and sixth Year only the first Tythe was paid to the Levites, and the second was spent or distributed at home, and given unto them to whom it was meet, i. e. to Widows, Orphans, and Strangers, as *Munster's* Copy has it, or for the Repairs of the House of God, as that of *Fagius*. *St. Chrysostom*, speaking of the liberal Maintenance of the Levites among the Jews, has a fine Reflection on the Occasion: "Observe (says he) how much the Jews gave to their Priests and Levites, as First Fruits, Tenths, then Tenths again, then other Tenths, yet no Man at that Time envied them, or said they had, or eat too much." *Epist. ad Philip.*

Ver. 10. And when we were carried away Captives to Ninive, all my Brethren, and those that were of my Kindred, did eat of the Bread of the Gentiles. Ver. 11. But I kept myself from eating.] Many of them that were carried away by *Tiglath-Pilezer*, *Salmanassar*, and *Esharaddon*, still retained the true Worship of God, and observed, in a strange Land, the Ordinances appointed by the Law, and fell

not into the idolatrous Usages and Impieties of the Heathens, among whom they were dispersed. It is certain from the Instances of *Daniel*, and his Associates, *Eleazer*, the *Macca-bees*, and others, *Dan. i. 8. Judith xii. 2, 3.* that the Jews, from the Time of their Captivity, when they could not avoid conversing with the Gentiles, were careful to abstain, not only from things really sacrificed to Idols, but from most things that came out of Gentile Hands; because there was a Presumption, that a Part of most Kinds, by way of First Fruits, had been offered to Idols; the rest being by those First Fruits esteemed polluted, as dedicated likewise to the Idol. It appears, therefore, that they forbore, from such an Apprehension, all Meats and Drinks, that came from the Gentiles, or to eat promiscuously with them. In particular the Jews tell us, that *Nehemiah*, being Cup-Bearer to the King, was dispensed with from tasting, or drinking the Wine of the Gentiles. The like is recorded here of *Tobit*, who tho' by his Office of Purveyor he was obliged to provide Corn, and all Necessaries for the King's Use, yet kept clear of all Defilement, as *Joseph* did upon a like Occasion in *Egypt, Gen. xliii. 32.* "The Example of *Tobit's* Resolution and Constancy in this particular, makes one to reflect with Tears (say *Mess.* of *Port-Royal*) upon the Weakness of *Adam*, who being perfectly free, and the general Use of the Creatures indulged him, yet could not refrain from tasting that single Fruit, which God had forbidden him: Whilst *Tobit*, a Captive, deprived of all his Possessions, in the midst of Idolaters, and even living among Jews, who scrupled not occasionally to eat things forbidden by their Law, preserved his Innocence by a religious Abstinence." *Comm. in Loc.*

Ver. 12. Because I remembered God with all my Heart.] Our Version manifestly refers to the foregoing Verse, and assigns his great Regard to God, as the Reason for *Tobit's* not eating forbidden Meats; and indeed this Sense is a very just one, as the Ceremonial Law was strict in this respect, and had its Sanction from God, and was the Rule for every Jew's Conduct. But there is another Sense of the Place, supported by good Authority, "that because of his great Piety, God gave him Favour in the Sight of King *Salmanassar*," referring to the following Verse. And thus the *Vulgate* understands it, *quoniam memor fuit Domini in toto corde suo, Deus dedit illi gratiam in conspectu Salmanasar Regis.* And *Fagius's* Hebrew Copy is to the same Effect. The like is mentioned of *Daniel*, ch. i. 9. But *μορφή*, in the following Verse, may signify also an engaging Mien, something in his Looks and Gestures, that gave the King a Liking to him.

Ver. 14. I went into Media, and left in Trust with *Gabael*, the Brother of *Gabrias*, at *Rages* a City of Media, Ten Talents of Silver.] The *Vulg.* intimates, that *Tobit* lent this Sum to *Gabael*, and took his Note of Hand for it; but



but the *Gr.* and *Hebr.* Versions import, that he only lodged it with him, and took a Note of its being in his Possession. And indeed this seems most probable, as it is here said, that he committed such a Sum to his Trust; and c. ix. 5. that *Gabael* brought out the Money in Bags sealed up, upon *Rapbael's* producing the Hand Writing. It may seem strange that *Tobit* knowing *Gabael* to be poor, should lodge such a considerable Sum of Money with him as Ten Talents; but it is probable that he chose to deposit it at *Rages* in his Hands, rather than have it with him at *Nineveh*, where it might be in some Danger; or possibly he might permit him to traffick with it upon a promissory Note to return it when able; it being the noblest Instance of Charity thus to befriend Persons reduced.

*Ibid.* Ten Talents of Silver.] If one was sure of the original Language, whether *Hebrew* or *Chaldee*, this Book was wrote in, it would greatly help to solve many Difficulties. Thus for Instance if the *Hebr.* Word for Talent כתר was supposed to be in the Original, it would not necessarily bear the Sense of *Talentum* in *Greek*, but might only signify the largest Piece of Silver which was in Use, as Money, in those Days. And thus I would expound כתר כתר *Talentum Argentum*, 2 Kings v. 5. begged of *Naaman* by *Gebazi*. It might be, I think, more properly rendered *Massa*, or *frustum Argentum*, for so כתר signifies in its first Sense, than a Talent: Unless it be reasonable to believe, that *Gebazi* would ask in his Master's Name, for the Entertainment of two young Visitants, between 3 and 400 *l.* of our Money, or that *Naaman* would load him with between 7 and 800 *l.* of Silver in Specie. But if *Tobit* was wrote originally in *Greek*, we must then necessarily expound this Place of a Talent properly so called, the least of which amounted to a great Sum. Bishop *Cumberland* computes an *Hebrew* Talent of Silver, at 353 *l.* 11 *s.* 10  $\frac{1}{2}$  *d.* of our Money, consequently ten such Talents amount to 3535 *l.* 18 *s.* 9 *d.* But then possibly this Passage is not to be understood of the *Hebrew*, but only of the *Greek* or *Attic* Talent, which was but half the Value. And as it was nearly the same with the *Babylonian* Talent, as the Learned say, it might be nearly the same with that in use in *Affyria* and *Media* too; and this will reduce the Sum to one half of the former, viz. to 1767 *l.* 19 *s.* 4  $\frac{1}{2}$  *d.* of our Money, which was precisely the Worth of one of the *Attic* lesser Talents. For when nothing is added to specify *Talentum*, say the Antiquaries, then the common, or lesser *Attic* Talent is always meant, consisting of 6000 Drachmas of Silver. If this therefore be understood of the lesser *Attic* Talent, the Sum will not seem so improbable, especially as *Tobit* had been the King's Purveyor.

Ver. 15. When *Enemessar* was dead, *Sennacherib* his Son reigned in his stead, whose Estate was troubled that I could not go into *Media*.] From the Time of *Pul*, or *Tiglat-Pileser*, the *Medes* continued in Subjection to

the *Affyrians*, but under *Sennacherib*, the *Affyrian* Monarchy fell into Decay, either by his Imprudence, or ill Fortune, or a Mixture of both. The *Medes* taking Advantage, it is likely, of his long and distant Absence, or perhaps upon the News of the sudden and general Destruction of his Army, revolted, and were never after reduced in like manner to the *Affyrian* Yoke, tho' *Efarbaddon* in the course of his Reign seems to have been both a valourous and fortunate Prince, as well as ambitious of enlarging the Empire. These are the Troubles which prevented *Tobit* from going into *Media*, according to his Custom, or Intention. But the *Greek*, καὶ αἱ ὁδοὶ αὐτῆς ἐκείνησαν, will perhaps admit of another Rendering, viz. "and the Ways or Passes αὐτῆς" "thither were troubled, infested, or dangerous, so that there was no getting safely into *Media*." *Munster's Hebrew* Copy strongly confirms this Interpretation, *Et clauderentur propter bella itinera in Media, ut non potui venire in terram Medorum*. The Margin offers a third Reading, but it carries not so determinate a Meaning as either of the former.

Ver. 16. And in the Time of *Enemessar*.] *Fagius's Hebrew* Copy, the *Greek* and *Syriac* agree with our Version, but the *Vulg.* and *Munster* both omit these Words. And indeed it may seem a little preposterous after the Relation of *Enemessar's* Death, and *Sennacherib's* succeeding, and the Account of his Kingdom being disturbed with civil Comotions, to resume the Account of *Enemessar*. *Calmet* is expressly of Opinion, that what follows here of *Tobit's* Charity regards the Times after *Enemessar*, who had some Compassion for the *Israelites*, when there were not so many public Instances of Distress; but *Sennacherib* treated them with the utmost Cruelty and Rigour, which gave *Tobit* many Opportunities to shew his Zeal, and exercise his Charity towards his distressed Brethren.

Ver. 18. If the King *Sennacherib* had slain any when he was come and fled from *Judea*, for in his Wrath he killed many, &c.] *Sennacherib*, after his Return to *Ninive*, being inflamed with Rage for his great Misfortune, in having lost in one Night an Hundred Fourscore and five thousand of his Men, by the Angel of the Lord smiting them, as if he would revenge himself for this Accident upon his Subjects, and particularly his Captives, grew thenceforth very cruel and tyrannical in his Government; especially towards the *Jews*, Numbers of whom he caused every Day to be slain, and cast into the Streets, in Defiance of all Decency, and the common Rights of Humanity.

*Ibid.* I buried them privily . . .] *St. Ambrose*, speaking of this charitable Action of *Tobit's*, says, "that there is not a more excellent Duty than to do Good to them that cannot repay, and to rescue the Partner of our Nature from the Violence of the Fowls of the Air, and the Beasts of the Field." *Lib. de Tob.* It was always held an Act of Justice



Justice and Mercy to bury the Dead; of Justice, that Earth may be restored to Earth, the first Mother; of Mercy, that Bodies might not be exposed to savage Violence. To want the Honour of Burial was among the Ancients held one of the greatest Punishments that could be inflicted; and with this *Jehoia-kim*, the Son of *Josiah*, is threatned, *Jer. xxii. 19.* The disconsolate Mother of *Euryalus*, in the *Poet*, is not so much grieved for the Murder of her Son, as that he should be left a Prey to the Birds and Beasts, *Æn. l. ix.* And *Mezentius*, in the same Writer, does not desire *Aeneas* to spare his Life, but earnestly intreats him to give him Burial, *Æn. l. x.* *Turnus* earnestly entreats for the same Favour from *Aeneas*, *Æn. l. xii.* The Right of Sepulture hath been by all Nations reckoned so sacred, that the Violation thereof hath been counted Sacrilege; and how just a thing it is to bury the Dead is intimated by the *Latins*, when they call the Funeral Duties, *Justa exequiarum*, or *Justa Funebria*.

Ver. 21. *And there passed not five and fifty Days, before two of his Sons killed him.*] Many Copies read *πενήκοντα*, or fifty only, from *Sennacherib's* Return to *Nineveh*. *Usher* says, after forty-five Days, *ad A. M. 3294.* the Time in which he places this History. This latter Account is confirmed also by the *Vulgate*. As to *Sennacherib's* Murder by two of his own Children, the following is given by many learned Men, and occurs also in *Munster's Hebrew* Copy, as the Reason and Excuse for so wicked and barbarous a Parricide, *viz.* that *Sennacherib* demanding of some about him, what might be the Reason that the God of Heaven so favoured the *Jewish* Nation, as he had found by sad Experience, he was informed, that *Abraham*, from whom they descended, sacrificed unto him his only Son, which made him so favourable ever after to his Progeny: Upon this he resolved to sacrifice to him two of his Sons, to gain his Favour and Protection; which *Sharezar*, and *Adramelech* hearing of, prevented their own Death by his, and fled into *Armenia*, or the Mountains of *Ararath*, and his third Son reigned in his stead. *Calmet* says this Story is fabulous, and deserves little Attention.

*Ibid.* *Sarchedonus* his Son reigned in his stead, who appointed over his Father's Accounts, and over all his Affairs, *Archiacharus* my Brother's Son...] The Margin has *Esarhaddon*. He is called *Ἀσαρδάν* by the *LXX*, a Name near akin to *Assaradin*, by which he is styled in *Ptolemy's Canon*; as also *Sargon* by *Isaiah* *ch. xx.* and the same Person with *Asnapper*, *Ezra* *iv. 10.* *Ἀσαρδωνός* and *Σαρχαρδωνός*, as different Copies have them, are judged by *Usher* to be both Mistakes. Some Copies instead of *τῷ πατρὶς αὐτοῦ*, have *τῇ βασιλείᾳ αὐτοῦ*, which seems preferable. The Meaning seems only to be, that he was *διοικητὴς* ἢ *ἐκλογιστὴς* as follows in the next Verse, the latter Part of which can hardly be excused from Tautology.

In this Chapter there are several commend-

able Qualities to be observed in *Tobit*. 1. That when all the Tribes revolted to Idolatry, and eat forbidden Meat, he was careful to go up to *Jerusalem* to worship the true God, in the Place set apart by God himself. 2. That he did this when he was young, and the Example of the Generality of his Countrymen urged him to the contrary. 3. That he, out of a religious Regard to God's Appointment, observed the stated Anniversary Feasts, and holy Times of the *Jewish Church*, as the *Passover*, *Pentecost*, and the Feast of *Tabernacles*. 4. He was exact in paying the several Tythes and Oblations to the Priests, and others who were authorized to receive them. 5. His dutiful Regard to his Parents Instructions is very observable in all Matters of Moment. 6. His great Charity to those of his own Kindred and Nation, in feeding and clothing, and even burying them himself, at the Hazard of his own Life and Safety, finishes and perfects his Character.

## CHAP. II.

Ver. 1. *A Good Dinner was prepared me, in the which I sat down to eat.*] *Ἀνέπεσα τῷ Φαγεῖν.* *Syr. cumque accubuissem ad edendum*, and *Junius, accumbens ad edendum*. From this, and part of ver. 4. which the *Vulgate* renders, *statimque exiliens de accubitu suo*, we may conjecture that in *Tobit's* Time the Posture of lying at Meals prevailed: That Custom we know was common in the *East*, and after that the *Jews* had Acquaintance and Dealings with the *Babylonians*, *Persians*, and *Syrians*, little or no mention is made of sitting at Meals. See Note on *Judith* *c. xii. 15.*

Ver. 2. *And when I saw abundance of Meat, I said to my Son, Go, and bring what poor Man soever thou shalt find out of our Brethren, who is mindful of the Lord, and lo, I tarry for thee...*] Thus *1 Esdr. ix. 51.* *Go then, and eat the Fat, and drink the Sweet, and send Part to them that have nothing, for this Day is holy unto the Lord.* And *Ecclus ix. 16.* the wise Man's Advice is to the same Purpose, *Let just Men eat and drink with thee.* Agreeably to what our Saviour says, *When thou makest a Feast call the Poor*, *Luke xiv. 13.* *Plutarch* gives this extraordinary Character of *Cymon the Athenian*, *ἀνελάμβανε τὰς πένητας, δᾶπνον καθ' ἡμέραν τῷ δεομένῳ παρέχων*, in *Vit. Pericl.* which is confirmed by *Lactantius, Egentibus stipem dedit, & pauperes invitavit*, *l. vi. 9.* And every good Man, says he in another Place, should do so, *Justi & sapientis viri domus non illustribus debet patere, sed humilibus & abjectis*, *l. vi. 12.* Charity sets all Persons, both Rich and Poor, upon an equal Footing, acknowledging the same God, as the common Parent and Father of all. This influenced *Tobit's* Conduct on the Occasion; and on the same generous Principle, and noble Motive, were the *Agapæ*, or Love Feasts among the primitive Christians founded, in which the Rich fed and relieved the Poor. One sees from this Example of *Tobit*, that



the *Jews* observed certain Festival Days, especially those of most Note and Distinction, which were recommended to them either by some temporal, or spiritual Mercy, and accounted them holy; *Festi dies Domini*, the *Vulgate* calls them. 2<sup>dly</sup>, That on these they had set Feasts and Entertainments, and fared better than at other Times, and this in Compliance with the Appointment of the Law, which on certain Occasions ordered these religious Repasts, *Exod. xii.* 3<sup>dly</sup>, That on these solemn Anniversary Days, it was the constant Custom to invite the Poor and Orphans, Widows and Strangers, or, if hindered, to send Portions to them.

Ver. 3. *One of our Nation is strangled, and is cast out in the Market-place.*] It seems from this Instance, as if the *Israelites* were evil-treated, and escaped little better in the Time of *Esarhaddon*, than in the former Reign. *Josephus* mentions the like Barbarity, as practised by the *Zealots* on their Countrymen; and all that the Friends of the deceased could dare to do, was now and then in the Dark, to cast a little Dust with their Hands upon the Bodies that were exposed, *de Bell. Jud. l. iv.* No Wonder that such an Instance of Cruelty affected young *Tobias*, who possessed his Father's Tenderness of Spirit. 'Tis a Sight, indeed, shocking to human Nature, and not only affronts Man, but God himself, in whose Image Man is made. *Homer* informs us, how angry *Jupiter* and *Apollo* were with *Achilles*, for abusing and neglecting to bury the Body of *Hector*; that *Achilles*, by such an Act of Inhumanity, had lost all Mercy and Modesty.

— ἐλεων μὲν ἀπώλεσεν ὃ δὲ οἱ αἰδώς.

The very Heathens counted this the greatest Calamity, and such as hindred the deceased from entering into a State of Happiness: Hence probably it was that *Patroclus*, in the same Poet, does so earnestly solicit the same stern Hero to bury him. The like earnest Suit does *Palinurus* in *Virgil*, put up to *Aeneas* for the same Favour. *Horace* brings in a dead Corpse promising a Reward from *Jupiter* to him that should cast some Earth upon it; but if he should refuse to do this good Work of Humanity, that no Sacrifice should be able to expiate the Crime.—And because Want of Burial was counted one of the greatest Disgraces and Punishments that could be inflicted on the Dead, hence Self-murderers were debarred the Privilege of Interrment, See *St. Austin de Cura pro mortuis gerenda*, and *Spelman de Sepultura*, 2 *Ezdr. ii. 23.*

Ver. 4. *Then before I had tasted any Meat, I start up, and took him into a Room until the going down of the Sun.* Ver. 5. *Then I returned and washed my self, and ate my Meat in Heaviness.*] “He rose immediately upon his Son's Relation (says *St. Ambrose*) from the Entertainment to which he had invited many *Israelites*, the Children of his People; his Piety would not permit him to feed and refresh his own Body, as long as

“the Corpse of a deceased Countryman and Brother lay publickly exposed and unburi-  
“ed. *Non putabat pium, ut ipse cibum sumeret, cum in publico corpus jaceret exanime,*” *Lib. de Tobia.* It has been matter of Enquiry, especially among the Commentators, whether *Tobit* himself removed the dead Body, and whether he carried it to his own House, or to one in the Neighbourhood. His Readiness indeed to do such an Act of Kindness appears from ch. i. 18. But if *Tobit* was really the Person that took up the dead Corpse, tho' he might use the Ceremony of washing himself before he returned to Meat, as is here affirmed of him, yet how could he escape notwithstanding being legally polluted by the Touch, or forget what is mentioned *Num. xix. 11. that he that toucheth a dead Body, shall be unclean seven Days*; it has therefore been thought more reasonable to suppose, both on account of the Pollution attending such an Act, and from the Consideration of his own Safety, which would have been endangered hereby, that he did not in Person do this, but ordered the dead Body to be removed out of Sight by others; or if he did do this, says *Calmet*, we must suppose that he eat his Meat at his Return separate, and by himself; and perhaps by eating his Bread in *Heaviness*, the Text may seem to intimate, his being thus lonely and apart. And for the like Reasons they have concluded that it was carried to another's, and not his own house. Our Version indeed leaves it at large, but the *Rom.* and some other *Greek* Copies expressly read εἰς τὴν οἰκίαν, in domum quandam, as *Junius* renders.

Ver. 6. *Remembering that Prophecy of Amos, as he said, Your Feasts shall be turned into Mourning, and all your Mirth into Lamentation. Therefore I wept.*] *Amos* prophesied under the Reign of *Oziab*, King of *Judah*, and *Jeroboam* King of *Israel*, about fourscore Years before the Event here mentioned. It appears from hence, that *Tobit* read the Scriptures with great Attention, and that he occasionally applied what he read. *Amos* in the Place referred to either foretells the Misery of the Captivity, in which *Tobit* and his Countrymen were involved under the *Assyrians*, which *Tobit* then saw, and bewailed the Accomplishment of; or he accommodates the Words of the Prophet to their present unhappy State and Circumstances, when, instead of celebrating their Feasts with Joy and Gladness, as usual in their own Country, they groaned under the Yoke and Tyranny of their Oppressors, being denied even the innocent Liberty, and commendable Right of burying their murdered Countrymen, without manifestly incurring the Danger of their Lives. A Spirit full of Tenderness and Sympathy like *Tobit's*, could not be insensible at such a melancholy Juncture; the Reflection on his own Danger, and the continual Injuries his Brethren were exposed to, called forth his Tears; but more especially was he grieved, when he considered the Sins and



and Idolatry, which had provoked God to deliver his Chosen into Captivity, and to inflict such heavy Judgments upon them.

Ver. 7. *After the going down of the Sun, I went and made a Grave, and buried him,* Ver. viii. *but my Neighbours mocked me, and said, This Man is not yet afraid to be put to Death for this Matter; who fled away, and yet, lo, he burieth the Dead again.]* To let a Corpse lie exposed, putrifying in the Face of the Sun, seem'd so inhuman, that Tobit chose rather to hazard his own Life, than to endure such an offensive Spectacle; and for this the Angel commends him, c. xii. 12. and no wonder that he thought himself concerned to render the last kind Office to an unfortunate strangled Brother, when even the High-Priest among the Jews, though he was not to be present in Person at any Funeral, yet if by Chance he found a dead Corpse, was obliged to bury it himself. The primitive Christians were remarkable for the like pious Zeal; no Danger or Threatenings could affright them from doing this charitable Office to their deceased Brethren, especially such who died Martyrs for the Faith. The Roman Clergy, in an Epistle to them of Carthage (*Epist. ii. int. Epist. Cypr.*) reckon it as one of the greatest Instances of Charity, above that of relieving the Poor, or ministering to the Sick; and that Fidelity in this Matter would be highly acceptable to God, and rewarded by him: *Dionysius*, Bishop of *Alexandria*, speaking of the Plague that reigned there, commends the Christians for carrying out their dead Brethren, which they cheerfully did, notwithstanding the great Danger that attended it. *St. Ambrose's* Sentiments on this Occasion are very fine and moving; *Si viventes operire nudos precipimur, quanto magis debemus operire defunctorum corpora? Si viantes ad longiora deducere solemus, quanto magis in illam æternam domum profectos, unde jam non revertentur? nihil hoc officio præstantius, ei conferre, qui tibi jam non potuit reddere, vindicare a volatilibus, vindicare a bestiis consortem naturæ. Feræ hanc humanitatem defunctis corporibus dedisse produntur, homines negabunt?* c. i. & ii.

Ver. 9. *The same Night also I returned from the Burial, and slept by the Wall of my Court-yard, being polluted.]* *St. Ambrose* says, that he slept in *cubiculo suo*, in his Chamber; but it seems most probable, from the Accident which is related afterwards, that he reposed himself in the Court-yard by the Wall of the House, not through Fatigue, as if Sleep had overtaken him just at the Entrance of his House, nor on account of the excessive Heat, as the antient *Italic* Version has it, but as our Version intimates, on account of his Pollution from the dead Body which he had just buried. *Munster's Heb. Copy* says, that *Tobit* had prepared a Bath to purify himself withal, not being able to employ the Means prescribed in the Law, which he intended to make use of the next Day, and so would pass the Night till that Time out of his House,

as every Thing, or Person that touched one thus defiled, was made impure thereby.

Ver. 10. *And I knew not that there were Sparrows in the Wall, and mine Eyes being open, the Sparrows muted warm Dung into mine Eyes, and a Whiteness came in mine Eyes, and I went to the Physicians, but they helped me not.]* I think we need not ask here with the Commentators, whether *Tobit* slept with his Eyes open or shut, since the Text says expressly, his Eyes were open, and his Face uncovered. The Author of the *Synopsis*, attributed to *Athanasius*, mentions, that usually, *ὡς ἐγώ*, *Tobit* slept with his Eyes open, as some People are known to do, particularly such as walk in their Sleep. If *Tobit's* Eyes were open, either naturally, or by Accident, at this Time, it is easy then to comprehend, says *Calmet*, how the Dung of Swallows might occasion the Accident here mentioned; for the Excrement of these Birds, according to some Naturalists, *Pliny*, l. xi. c. 37. *Gesner; Hist. Anim.* l. iii. is extremely hot and acrimonious, and may cause Blindness by falling in the Eye, and occasioning an Inflammation there; and though the Secret seems not to have been known to the *Assyrian* Physicians, as they are here called, yet later Times have found out a successful Method to remove this Obstacle of Vision, by the Dexterity of Couching. As to the Remedy which *Raphael* employed to restore *Tobit's* Sight, which this Place prepares us for, we will consider whether it could naturally produce such an Effect, when we come to that Chapter.

*Ibid. Moreover Achiacharus did nourish me, until I went into Elymais.]* The Commentators are divided, whether this is to be understood of Father or Son; if it respects either, most probably *Tobit* himself is meant, as he continues to speak in the first Person. The Sense is, that *Achiachar* took care of *Tobit* under this Infirmary, till he (*Achiachar*) went into *Elymais*, whither he seems to have gone when he was in Disgrace, and deprived of his Place and Dignity, c. xiv. It appears from some Parts of this History, c. xi. and xiv. that *Tobit* continued at *Nineveh* till his Death: the true Reading therefore I presume to be *ἐπορεύθη*, which *Drusus* and *Grotius* both prefer, and *Junius* renders accordingly *Achiachar vero aluit me, donec profectus esset in Elymaida*. There seems to be the like Mistake in the *LXX Ps. vi. 7.* where *ἐπαλαίσθη* should be rather *ἐπαλαίωθη*, to answer to the *Hebrew*.

Ver. 11. *And my Wife Anna did take Women's Works to do.]* *Tobit* was at this time extremely poor, and maintained by his Nephew *Achiachar*. It may seem surprising, that *Tobit*, who before had lived in good Condition, should fall so soon into a State of Poverty: But it may be observed of this holy Man, that he did much Alms, and was continually employed in some Instance or other of Charity, till *Sennacherib* deprived him of the Place and Employment which he had in the Court of *Salmanassar*: The Ten Talents left



left in Trust with *Gabael* he could not recover, not being able to go into *Media* through the Troubles of the Times; he had been at considerable Expence too for Advice and Help under the Misfortune of Blindness, and had doubtless suffered great Loss and Injury for his Care in burying the Dead, by a severe Persecution on that Account. All these joined together, viz. his having lost his Employment, bestowing much Alms, suffering great Oppression and Loss, and the Expences incurred for the Recovery of his Sight, were such Draw-backs, as will sufficiently explain the Alteration in *Tobit's* Circumstances; and hence we may account for his Wife taking in Work, and being necessitated to seek out an Employment for her Livelihood and Subsistence.

Ver. 14. *She replied upon me, Where are thine Alms, and thy righteous Deeds? Behold thou and all thy Works are known.*] *Tobit*, who adhered strictly to Justice, and whose Maxim was, *do uprightly all thy Life long, and follow not the Ways of Unrighteousness*, c. iv. 5. thinking such a Present, as a Kid, not usual above the common Wages, suspected that the distressed Circumstances they were in, put her upon stealing it, and reproached her accordingly with it. Upon this she upbraids him with his Tenderness of Conscience, and the little Good it had done him. "You need indeed reproach me, behold your Disgrace is known to every body; the Charities which you have exercised all your Life long, profit you nothing, they have not kept you from Blindness, which deprives you of all Comfort. You had fine Hopes, that living so piously, you could not fail to be prosperous and happy, and that serving God, he would most certainly repay thee," c. iv. 14. But where are your Alms and righteous Deeds now, that they stand you in no Stead? Have they kept Blindness or Adversity from you? Have not your excessive and indiscreet Charities brought us to the distressed Condition we are now in?" *Fagius* and *Munster* thus expound, and *Cyprian* comprizes all, when he says, *Ubi sunt iustitiae tuae? Ecce quae pateris, De Mortal.* This Reproach from his Wife, and Raillery upon his religious Disposition, who might rather have been expected sweetly to have administered Consolation to him under his Misfortunes; this taunting Behaviour to him, from one so nearly allied to him, was almost as insupportable to him as his Blindness. It reminds one of that of *Job's* Friends, or rather of his Wife's Behaviour to him under his Affliction, *Dost thou still retain thy Integrity, Curse God and die*, c. ii. 9. as our Version briefly has it; but in that of the LXX, we see her outrageous Temper more at large. The *Vulgate* here uses this very Comparison, *Hanc tentationem ideo permisit Deus evenire illi, ut posteris daret exemplum patientiae ejus, sicut & sancti Job.* *St. Austin* thus draws the Parallel, reflecting upon the different Conduct of this Couple: "How miserable is his Con-

dition thought who wants the Blessing of Sight! When such a sad Spectacle appears, censorious and ill-natured Persons presently say, He has committed some great Crime, and God was angry and displeased with him. In this Sort of Strain *Tobit's* Wife insulted her Husband; the good Man exclaims upon the Subject of the Kid, from a conceived Jealousy of its being stolen; his Wife replies upon him, with great Warmth, And what is all your righteous Dealing come to? How blind was the Woman, and how enlightened her Husband? The one enjoyed the outward Benefit of the Sun, and the other the inward Light of Justice, and the blessed Fruits of the Spirit; and can there be any doubt which of these Illuminations to prefer?"

## CHAP. III.

Ver. 1. **T**hen I being grieved, did weep, and in Sorrow prayed, saying—Punish me not for my Sins and Ignorances.] The foregoing Chapter concluded with *Tobit's* Wife's Taunts, proceeding, no doubt, from his suspecting her Honesty, which will in some measure plead her Excuse. In this we have a further Instance of his good Disposition, and particular Sweetness of Temper; he does not return Railing for Railing, but silently, and as it should seem from the latter End of ver. 17. in some retired Place from the House, he pours fourth his Complaints to God, of the great Injustice done him, but confesses at the same time, in the Spirit of Humility, that his Sins had deserved a worse Treatment. Sins and Ignorances are here synonymous, and so the *oriental* Versions generally render them; and thus also *ἀγνοῦμαι* is used often by the *Hellenistic* Writers. See *Num.* xii. 11. *Judith* v. 20. *Ecclus* xxiii. 2, 3. 1 *Esdr.* viii. 77. 1 *Macc.* xiii. 39. *Hebr.* ix. 7.

Ver. 5. *And now thy Judgments are many and true, deal with me according to my Sins.*] How is this consistent with ver. 3. where it is said, *Punish me not for my Sins and Ignorances*; there seems some Omission or Mistake here, probably the Negative Particle is wanting, the *Vulg.* takes no notice of this Sentence: *Fagius's* *Heb.* Copy has quite a contrary Sense, *Nec facias nobis juxta iniquitates nostras, & iniquitates patrum nostrorum*; and *Munster's*, *Ne quaeso retribuas mihi juxta iniquitates meas, &c.* the *Geneva* Version affords a new Sense, and a good one, and now thou hast many and just Causes to do with me according to my Sins. Our Translation, I think, hath wrongly followed the *Complut.* in reading *ποιήσων*, whereas *Alex. Ald. Vat. Syr.* and the older *Latin* Version, read *ποιήσαι*, and so the Sense and Translation will be plain, and more agreeable. *Grotius* thinks the true reading may be *ἐξ ἡμῶν ποιήσων*, *tolle me de rebus humanis*, but as this Sense follows in the next Verse immediately, it seems not agreeable to this Place.

Ver. 6.



Ver. 6. *Command my Spirit to be taken from me, that I may be dissolved, and become Earth; for it is profitable for me to die, rather than to live.*] The *Vulg.* omits what follows, and finishes the Verse here. *Tobit* begs of God, the sovereign Disposer of Life and Death, to set him free from the Prison of the Body: And in this Sense of dying, or departing out of this Life, we find ἀπολύω frequently used in Scripture, and profane Authors. See ver. 13. and *Luke* ii. 29. the Term *Dissolution*, confirms the Distinction of the Soul from the Body, the latter returning to Earth, and the former continuing in a State of Separation, even in *Hades*, or the Everlasting Place, *domus statuta omni viventi*, as *Fagius* expounds here. There is nothing more common even in Scripture, than for the Saints, under great Tribulation, to express a *tædium*, or loathing of Life. Holy *Job*, grieved with the unjust Reproaches of his Friends, the Insults of his Wife, and various Assaults from *Satan*, in the Bitterness of his Soul cries out, *my Soul chuseth Strangling, and Death rather than my Life, I loath it, I would not live always*, c. vii. 15. when the Prophet *Elijah* was persecuted by wicked *Jezabel*, he asks it of God as a Favour, that he might die, *It is enough now, O Lord, take away my Life*, 1 *Kings* xix. 4. and *St. Paul*, that through Trouble he was pressed out of Measure, above Strength, *ut tæderet eum vita*, says the *Vulg.* It is therefore not at all surprising, that *Tobit*, under the Misfortune of Poverty and Blindness, insulted and reflected on by his Wife and Friends for the good Deeds of his past Life, should desire to die, and thereby be freed from the unjust Scandal cast upon him; but it is observable, that he introduces this Request to God with Submission to his Will, who knew best what was most for his Advantage.

Ver. 7. *In Ecbatane, a City of Media.*] The *Vulg.* and the old *Eng.* Translations have here *Rages, a City of Media*, contrary to c. vii. 1. If *Sara* lived at *Rages*, then *Gabael* and *Sara* would have been in the same City, nor would there have been any occasion to have gone from *Ecbatane* thither, as is mentioned c. ix. 2. as certain therefore as *Raphael* went to *Rages*, so certain also is it that *Sara* did not live there.

Ver. 8. *Asmodeus the evil Spirit.*] Some will have it, that *Asmodeus* is so called from the Place which he chiefly haunted, *a regno Medorum, ubi dominabatur*, and to be the same with the Prince of *Persia*, *Dan*. x. 13. *Jerom.* in loc. & *Cassian.* in *Collat.* but more probably this is an *Hebrew* Name, signifying a Destroyer, evil Spirits delighting in Mischief, and leading them that worship them into Perdition; hence almost all Plagues, ordinary and extraordinary, were attributed to them. And it is worth observing, that the Names of the Devil and evil Spirits in Scripture, have all a relation to the Mischief they do, or occasion; thus *Levit.* xvii. 7. they are called שׁעִירִים, frightful, or, as others render, lustful as Goats; *Deut.* xxxii. 17. שׂרִפִּים, Destroy-

ers, as here; יָשׁוּ, an Adversary, *Job* i. 6. διάβολος, a Calumniator, *Mat.* iv. 8. ἐχθρός, an Enemy, *Mat.* xiii. 39. ἀνθροποκλόνος, *John* viii. 44. ἀντίδικος, 1 *Pet.* viii. Ἀβδδών, or Ἀπολλύων, *Rev.* ix. 11. the Destroyer. The same according to some with *Apollo*, the famous God of the Heathens, whose Image accordingly is represented with Arrows in its Hands, prepared for Slaughter and Destruction; and lastly, κατήγορος, an Accuser, *Rev.* xii. 10. According to the Notion of the *Hebrews*, there were also evil Angels or Genii, whereof some presided over one Vice, and some over another, insomuch that there are Demons of Avarice, Demons of Pride, and Demons of Impurity, each endeavouring to ensnare Persons with a complexional Temptation. The *Vulgate* insinuates, that the seven Husbands who met with their Fate the very Day of their Marriage, were killed by the Demon *Asmodeus*, because Lust was their chief Motive; for thus *Raphael*, according to that Version, c. vi. 17, 18. explains that Accident, *Ostendam tibi quibus prævalere potest Dæmonium; hi namque qui conjugium ita suscipiunt ut Deum a se & a sua mente excludant, & suæ libidini ita vacent, sicut equus & mulus, quibus non est intellectus, habet Dæmonium potestatem super eos.* *Grotius* supposes, that the pretended *Asmodeus* here, was only some ill Quality attending *Sara's* Body, which had proved mortal to her other Husbands; but that *Tobias*, by using such Fumigations as were prescribed in that Case, not only preserved himself from the Fate of the rest, but cured his Wife likewise of a Malady that was unknown to Physick, and therefore ascribed (as the Custom of the *Jews* was, *Luke* xi. 14. *Mat.* ix. 32. with every Distemper they could not cure) to the Operation of the Devil. Hence, or on account of this bodily Infirmary, he conjectures, she is reproached in the Words following by her Father's Maids, as ἀποπνίγναι τὰς ἀνδρας. See *Dissertation*.

*Ibid.* *Thou hast had already seven Husbands, neither wast thou named after any of them.*] All of them being killed by the evil Spirit before the Consummation of Marriage. It may perhaps seem surprising, that *Sara* should have such a Succession of Suitors, when matching with her was by Experience found so very dangerous: The Reason that induced them was probably her Beauty, or Portion of Inheritance, or pretended Nearness of Relation. And what seems to have hastened their Fate, was, either their immoderate Lust, void of all Fear of God, or religious Sense of the matrimonial Institution, or the Illegality of their Claim. A learned Writer indeed thinks, that the *Jews* allude to this History of *Sara*, when they speak of seven Brethren that had all been married to one Wife, *Mark* xii. 20. See *Whist. Auth. Rec.* vol. ii. But this seems a fanciful Conceit, as in this History no mention is made, or Intimation given, of any such near Relation; and from that, in the Gospels, it may, I think, be gathered, that each of the



Husbands cohabited with the Woman at least for a Time, which does not suit this Account in *Tobit*: And in reality Sara had eight Husbands, including Tobias, whereas seven only are mentioned in the Gospels, and then the Woman, surviving all of them, died also, which does not seem clear of Sara, especially as Tobias died in such an advanced Age, as an hundred and seven and twenty Years old, c. xiv. 14.

Ver. 9. *Wherefore dost thou beat us for them? If they be dead, go thy Ways after them.*] All the Gr. Copies place the Interrogation, as our Version does, pointing the Passage thus, τί ἡμᾶς μασιγοῖς περὶ ἀνδρῶν; εἰ ἀπέθανον, βάδιζε μετ' ἀνδρῶν. But Junius conjectures it ought to be placed in this manner, τί ἡμᾶς μασιγοῖς περὶ αὐτῶν εἰ ἀπέθανον; i. e. why by your Blows do you revenge upon us the Death of your Husbands? And indeed the Version both of *Fagius* and *Munster* confirm this latter Construction.

Ver. 10. *When she heard these things, she was very sorrowful, so that she thought to have strangled herself.*] ἐλυπήθη σφόδρα ὥστε ἀπ' ἀγχαῶσαι. Our Version manifestly implies, that she had actually Thoughts of strangling herself. But though 'tis certain that Grief does sometimes put Persons upon desperate Courses, yet that any such rash Resolution was entered into here, as to design actually to make away with herself, does not appear, but rather the contrary. For the History informs us, that she not only suppressed such a Thought, but condemned such a Fact, as what would bring great Reproach to her Family, being the ordinary and common Punishment of great Malefactors. On her Father's Account too, whose Death it would probably occasion, or hasten, she rejects such an Intention; and lastly, one who appears so religious and well-disposed, cannot be suspected of any such wicked Design as Self-murder, which would be inconsistent with her general Character, and the Resignation which she expresses to the Will of God. Others therefore think, that the Words ἐλυπήθη σφόδρα ὥστε ἀπ' ἀγχαῶσαι, do not mean any premeditated Design of strangling herself, but that she was so concerned at the Reflections cast on her, and grieved so extremely, as to fall into so deep a Melancholy, as to be in a manner suffocated and strangled as it were by it, according to that of *Ovid*, *Strangulat inclusus dolor*. The Consequence of which unhappy State of Mind was, her wishing herself dead. See *Hammond* on *Mat.* c. xxvii. and thus the Words, ἀπ' ἀγχαῶσαι, 2 *Sam.* xvii. 23. may not improperly be understood; for *Achitophel*, according to the Sense of the most learned Rabbins, did not hang himself, but was stifled with Grief. And so, where *St. Matthew*, speaking of the Death of *Judas*, xxvii. 5. says, ἀπελθὼν ἀπ' ἀγχαῶσαι, very judicious Interpreters expound it, of his being suffocated by Grief, by a Disease called ἀγχαῶνη, when a Man in a violent fit of Spleen or Melancholy is strangled, and sometimes bursts with it;

which, according to *St. Peter's Exposition*, *Acts* i. 18. seems to have been *Judas's* case.

Ver. 11. *Then she prayed towards the Window.*] i. e. of the upper Room or Oratory, which opened toward Jerusalem. *Munster's Hebr. Copy* has, *She prayed before the Lord*, i. e. toward his Sanctuary at Jerusalem. The *Vulg.* is more explicit, *Perrexit in superius cubiculum domus suæ, & tribus diebus, & tribus noctibus non manducavit neque bibit, sed in lacrymis persistens deprecabatur Deum, ut ab isto improperio liberaret eam.*

Ver. 12. *And now, O Lord, I set mine Eyes and my Face towards thee, and say, Take me out of the Earth.*] Εἶπον ἀπολῦσαι με ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς. Our Version is not very accurate here, it would be better render'd imperatively, *And now, O Lord, command or speak, ἔπον, that I may be taken from the Earth, and bear no more Reproaches*, like ἐπιτάξον ἐπιτέλειαι ἐπ' ἐμῇ, ver. 15. See also c. viii. 7. the old *Latin* Version accordingly has, *Fube me jam dimitti*. The *Syr.* indeed countenances the other Rendering; and it may seem to have some Support from *Is.* xxxviii. 10, 11. With respect to the Manner of Expression here, and other Places of the Apocryphal Writings, it may be pertinent to observe, that what in pure Greek would be very singular, becomes just and natural, considered either as the Translation of *Chaldee* or *Hebrew*, or as the Writing of an *Hebrew* Author used to *Heb.* Tautology, and to that most peculiar Mood, *Hipbil*.

Ver. 13. *That I may bear no more the Reproach.*] *Terentius Christianus* introduces Sara thus lamenting and expostulating:

*Nam quid tandem est, quod in hac vita diutius  
Esse velim, aut cur non malim extemplo abolerier?  
Quoquo vorsum foras prospicio, passim irrideor  
Misera, ac conspuor ab omnibus. Imo, quod est  
longe crudelius,*

*Cuncti me ut portentum execrantur, borrent ut  
veneficam.*

*Quin & diris ut parricidam devovent ... &  
nomen commutant mibi,*

*Pro Sara appellantes Zaram: videlicet par-  
ricidii*

*Facinus exprobrantes.* In *Tob. Act.* i.

Ver. 14. *Thou knowest, Lord, that I am pure from all Sin with Man.*] The *Vulg.* is more full and explicit, *Tu scis, Domine, quia nunquam concupiui virum, & mundam servavi animam meam ab omni concupiscentia. Nunquam cum ludentibus miscui me, neque cum his qui in levitate ambulant, participem me præbui.* ἀμαρτήματα here relates to the Sin or Offence against Chastity in particular, and thus many Interpreters understand ἀμαρτήματα, *Luke* vii. 37. See also *John* viii. 11. and in this impure Sense *peccare* is used by the *Latins*, especially the Poets.

Ver. 15. *Neither any near Kinsman, nor any Son of his alive, to whom I may keep myself for a Wife.*] i. e. Her Father had no Son to inherit his Substance, nor any near Kinsman or Relation, neither Brother, nor Brother's Son,



Son, to whom, as the Law required, she might dispose of herself in Marriage. Agreeably to this the Writer of *Judith's* History says, that her Husband was not only of the same Tribe, but of the same Family also. For the Women of *Israel*, who had no Brothers of the same Blood, were enjoined by the Law of *Moses*, to marry the next of Kin. As appears particularly in the Case of the Daughters of *Zelophebad*, *Num.* xxxvi. who were confined not only to the same Tribe of their Father, but also to the very Family of that Tribe: And the Reason there given is, that the Inheritance of the Father should not pass unto Strangers. A wise Provision, not only for preserving the Tribes, but the several Families likewise entire.

Ver. 16. *So the Prayers of them both were heard before the Majesty of the Great God.*] See *Titus* ii. 13. where there is the like Expression. Some Copies have only τὴ μεγάλη, which seems an Omission. In the *Alex. MS.* Παφάηλ is wrongly joined to it, which proper Name ought to begin the next Verse, as in our Translation. It may be asked, how what is here said, that the Prayers of them both were heard before God, can be true; for both of them prayed to God, if it was his good Pleasure, that he would remove them from a World, where they saw Religion reviled, and Innocence oppressed; and yet one of these lived to a very advanced Age, and the other probably very long with *Tobias*, as it appears in the Sequel of the History. To this it may be answered, that it is true that both of them were heard; not that they obtained precisely the very Particular they asked, but God, at their Request, granted what was more for their Benefit; he did not indeed take Life from them, but he made it more easy and agreeable. Or thus, that as they were entirely resigned to the Will and Determination of God, their Prayers were so effectually heard, that his good Pleasure accomplished in them, what was most for his own Glory. This Example, as the *Port-Royal Comment* well observes, affords excellent Matter of Instruction, assuring us, “that if we pray as *Tobit* and *Sara* did, with a Spirit of Humility and Submission, our Prayers shall not be rejected; and tho’ perhaps we may not be answered at the Time, or in the Manner we expected and wished for, we shall in another way that may be more advantageous and better for us, and more agreeable to what he designs us for. And thus it is observable it happens often in Life, that one prays to God for Health, another for Sight, a third for Hearing, without obtaining their particular Request; and yet, if their Prayer is with Faith and a pious Resignation, it may truly be affirmed, that their Prayers are heard of God; who foreseeing some Danger, or Misapplication of those Faculties, that the Blessing of Health will be abused, or Sight an Inlet to Temptations, and final Ruin, exchanges the Object of their

“Wishes for a better, and instead of granting what would prove Matter of Offence to them, bestows on them, in a manner wholly spiritual, what his Wisdom sees best and most convenient for their everlasting Interest.” *In loc.*

Ver. 17. *And Raphael was sent to heal them both.*] The introducing *Raphael*, a Name nowhere mentioned in Scripture, as the ministering Angel for the Purposes here mentioned, has been objected against this History. But this deserves little Attention, for 1. this Name may as inoffensively be used as *Gabriel* and *Michael* are by the sacred Penmen. 2. As Part of *Raphael's* Commission was to heal *Tobit's* Blindness, the Name of this Angel was particularly proper to be used, as being expressive of the Business itself; for *Raphael* signifies one that healeth from God, and in *Munster's* Version he is called *Princeps & præsēs sanitatum*. When God would cure any sick Person, says *St. Jerom*, he sends the Archangel *Raphael*, one of the Seven Spirits before his Throne, to accomplish the Cure, *ille minister curationis, Deus autor sanitatis; hoc videlicet nominis interpretatione significante, quod in Deo sit medicina vera, In Dan.* viii. Some will have the Angel that went down at certain Seasons to move the Waters of the Pool, *John* v. 4. for the Cure of the Distempered, to be *Raphael*. And in Allusion to this History of *Tobit*, probably, says *Calmet*, he is invoked as the Patron of the Sick, and Guide of the Traveller. 3. Such an exalted Spirit was proper to be opposed to, and to subdue the evil Fiend *Asmodeus*, which will in some measure satisfy the Enquiry, why such a distinguished Angel was introduced here.

*Ibid.* *And Sara, the Daughter of Raguel, came down from her upper Chamber.*] Where probably she had been praying: And so *Fagius* expounds it, *Sara descendit e cœnaculo, in quo oraverat*. It seems to have been customary among the devout Persons of the Jewish Nation of both Sexes, to set apart some upper Room for their Oratories, where they might attend the Business of Prayer without Noise or Disturbance, see *Dan.* vi. 10. *Acts* i. 16. Or this might be a sort of *Gynæceum*, where she sat to work; for it was the Custom of the early Times to assign the uppermost Rooms to the Women, that they might be farther removed from Interruption in their Employment: Accordingly *Penelope* in the *Odyssey* mounts up into a Garret, and there sits to her Business. So *Priam* had Chambers for the Ladies of his Court under the Roof of his Palace, *Il.* vi. *Munster's Heb. Copy*, and the *Syriac* begin the next Chapter with this Verse.

#### CHAP. IV.

Ver. 3. *My Son, despise not thy Mother, but honour her all the Days of thy Life.*] The Son of *Sirach* presses the same Duty very strongly, and by a Variety of Reasons



sons asserts the Reverence due to Parents, *Ecclus* c. iii. With respect to the Mother, whose Authority is generally less regarded, he urges filial Obedience, from the Consideration here insisted on, viz. the Sorrows of the Mother in the Time of Gestation, and the Dangers attending her bringing forth, c. vii. 27, 28. The Advice which *Tobit* in this Chapter gives his Son, when he presumed Death was approaching, and that God had heard his Petition to be removed from the Miseries of Life, which he enters upon preferably to the settling his worldly Affairs, has always been esteemed an excellent Abridgment of moral Duties. The Precepts are very plain and obvious, and require only Sincerity and a good Disposition to apply them. *St. Austin*, reflecting upon the fine Instruction given to *Tobias* by his Father, cries out, *O Lux quam videbat Tobias, cum clausis oculis istis filium docebat viam vitæ, & ei præibat pede charitatis nunquam errans. Confess. l. x. c. 34.*

*Ibid.* When she is dead, bury her by me in one Grave.] The ancient Patriarchs expressed the same Care and Concern in this particular of Interment. *Abraham* purchased the Cave of *Mach-pelab* for the Burying-place of *Sarah*, *Gen.* xxiii. 19. and was afterwards deposited in the same himself, c. xxv. 10. *Isaac* and *Jacob* with their Wives were buried there also, c. xlix. 31. By this officious Care providing, that such as were intimate and loving in their Lives, in their Deaths should not be divided, but that a kind of Friendship should be continued in Death, and the conjugal Society as it were made perpetual, and indissoluble: Thus *Apuleius*, *Unita sepultura marito perpetuam conjugem reddidere*, l. viii. And the following is a most memorable Instance of conjugal Tenderness and Union, which *Valerius Max.* relates of *M. Plautius*, *Funerata uxore Orestilla, atque in rogam imposita, inter officium ungendi & osculandi, stricto ferro incubuit. Quem amici, sicut erat, togatum & calceatum corpori Conjugis junxerunt, ac deinde subjectis facibus, utrumque una cremaverunt. Quorum ibi factum sepulchrum Tarentii etiamnum conspicitur, quod vocatur τῶν Φιλῶνων*, l. iv. c. 6. Anciently it was esteemed a Mark of Ignominy, as well as a Misfortune, not to be buried among one's Ancestors; that the Kings of *Judab*, when they died, were buried in the Sepulchre of their Fathers, is a Circumstance scarce ever omitted in the Relation of their Deaths; and indeed this Inclination of lying by, and mingling with kindred Dust, prevails almost among all People, so that the following Decree of *Pope Leo* to enforce this, which seems even a Dictate of Nature itself, appears the more strange, *Nos instituta majorum patrum considerantes, statuimus unumquemque in sepulchro suorum majorum jacere, ut patriarcharum exitus docet. Titul. de Sepult.* From the like Union of Affection dear Friends often coveted one common *Mausoleum*; and the Regard which one good Man bare to another, we may suppose induced the Prophet

to speak to his Sons, saying, *When I am dead, then bury me in the Sepulchre wherein the Man of God is buried, lay my Bones beside his Bones*, 1 *Kings* xiii. 31.

Ver. 6. *If thou deal truly, thy Doings shall prosperously succeed to thee, and to all them that live justly.*] This whole Verse is omitted in the *Vulg. Munster* and *Fagius's Hebr.* Copy take no Notice of the last Sentence, nor does *St. Cyprian*, who recites all the foregoing Part; and indeed it seems improperly inserted here, as one sees no Reason why *Tobias's* personal Honesty and Righteousness should succeed prosperously to all others that live justly. But however the Observation will be found true in the general, applied to all others that deal fairly and uprightly.

Ver. 7. *Give Alms of thy Substance; and when thou givest Alms, let not thine Eye be envious, neither turn thy Face from any Poor, and the Face of God shall not be turned away from thee.*] This is agreeable to that of *Solomon*, *Prov.* xxi. 13. *Whoso stoppeth his Ears at the Cry of the Poor, he also shall cry himself, and not be heard*; which may mean, that both God and Man shall be deaf to his Retition, when he cries for Relief in the Day of Necessity. See also *James* ii. 13. where the Apostle says, *he shall have Justice without Mercy, who hath shewed no Mercy.* By an envious Eye we are to understand, a niggardly and covetous one. See *Ecclus* xiv. 10. xxxv. 10, 11. The *Port-Royal Comment* restrains the Charity here enjoined to Mens own proper Goods, to that which truly and lawfully belongs to them; for Alms founded upon Spoil, and given from another's Substance, is not Charity, but Theft and Robbery, and will be so far from procuring the Favour of God or his Blessing, that a Sacrifice of Goods unjustly gotten will rather provoke his Resentment, and call down his Judgments. And indeed, if we consider the Context, and compare this with the two foregoing Verses, this Exposition of the Place will not appear forced or unnatural.

Ver. 8. *If thou hast Abundance, give Alms accordingly: If thou have but a little, be not afraid to give according to that little.*] Our Charity to others ought to rise in Proportion to what we have received ourselves from the Hand of God, who, if he gives much, it is with an Intent that Men may in Return bestow the more. Not to give plenteously, i. e. in Proportion as a Man is able, is frustrating the Designs of God's Providence, who will treat such of the Rich as public Robbers, who look upon that to be their own, which they were entrusted with for the Benefit of others; injuring by such niggardly Behaviour as many poor Persons, as they were able to relieve. If we take in the whole Verse, the Advice then is of very great Extent, and one may affirm that nobody is exempt; in what State or Condition soever he be, it is impossible but that he must have something or other to bestow, either Money, or Victuals, or Cloaths, or if all these be wanting, Attendance



ance, or some bodily Help and Service may be administred, or however, Advice, and kind and tender Expressions to such as are in Affliction, will not be unacceptable, as one testifies thereby a sympathizing and humane Temper, which soothes and engages the Distressed, and is a Relief next to Alms.

Ver. 9. *For thou layest up a good Treasure for thyself against the Day of Necessity.* i. e. God will reward the charitable Person with temporal Blessings, or guard him against Necessity, or provide for him under it. David pronounces the same Blessedness on him, Ps. xli. 1. *Blessed is he that considereth the Poor and Needy, the Lord will deliver him in the Time of Trouble, the Lord will preserve him, and keep him alive, and he shall be blessed upon Earth: The Lord will strengthen him upon the Bed of languishing, and make all his Bed in his Sickness.* And Solomon confirms the same Truth, *He that giveth to the Poor shall not want,* Prov. xxviii. 27. The Phrase *θεμα αγαθόν διασυνείζεν*, very much resembles that of St. Paul on the like occasion, *ἀποδοσάμεν δὲ τὸ μέλλον*, 1 Tim. vi. 19. where a very learned Writer observes, that *θεμέλιον* in the Rabbinical Dialect signifies a Bond or Obligation, whereby such as lend are secured to receive their own again, and that the Apostle's Meaning in that Place is, That those who exercise Works of Charity and Beneficence, do provide themselves as it were of a Bill or Bond, upon which they may sue and plead for a Reward, and a suitable Return of their Kindness. *Mede's Works*, l. i. Disc. 22. The like may be said of *θεμα* here used. And accordingly the Hebrew Copy set forth by Fagius, renders it by a Word which signifies *depositum*, or a Pledge.

Ver. 10. *Alms do deliver from Death, and suffereth not to come into Darknes.* i. e. Charity, thro' the Blessing of God, often proves the Means and Occasion of long Life, as seems to be more fully expressed, ch. xii. 9. Or it may mean, that it is effectual for the procuring God's Mercy and Favour in the Day or Manner of one's Death; that it shall make the good and beneficent Man's Exit easy, and his Death, comfortable; according to that Observation of St. Jerom, *Nunquam memini me legisse mala morte mortuum, qui libenter opera charitatis exercuit.* *Ad Nepot.* Or lastly, That Charity wipes away Sins, and delivers from Death the Consequence of them. See Dan. iv. 27. *Ecclus* iii. 30. 1 Pet. iv. 8. St. Austin has a fine Reflection upon the other Part of the Verse: "Tobit had the Misfortune to be blind, and yet he shewed his Son the Way of Truth. He who had lost his bodily Eyes, could say to his Son, *He that does Alms, shall not come into Darknes.* Being deprived of outward Light, he yet found himself in a Condition to direct others how to walk. There is therefore another Illumination than that of Sense, which enlightens the Soul of the good Man. He feared not any such Reply from his Son: *My Father, have not you*

*been careful to give Alms, and yet you are blind? Is it possible that Alms should deliver from Darknes, when you, who have been a cheerful Giver, are oppressed with it? Tobit might very consistently say what he did; he knew what Light he was then speaking of to his Son, and what he saw and perceived, was spiritually discerned. The Eyes of the Understanding were his Support and Comfort, and for the outward Help which he received from his Son, he returned a better Guidance. Filius patri porrigebat manum ut ambularet super terram, & pater filio, ut habitaret in celo." August. de verb. Dom. Serm. xviii.*

Ver. 12. *Remember that our Fathers from the Beginning, even that they all married Wives of their own Kindred, and were blessed in their Children, and their Seed shall inherit the Land.* May not the Falsity from hence appear of that vulgar Expression, that Relations who marry never thrive? And may it not be further observed, that the whole Jewish Nation (whose Riches are even become proverbial) descends from Isaac and Rebecca, who were related in the same Degree?

Ibid. *And in Lewdness is Decay, and great Want, for Lewdness is the Mother of Famine.* This is undoubtedly a very true Observation and confirmed by the unhappy Experience of Persons addicted to it. But *ἀχρεΐα*, the Term here used, I apprehend, is an unusual Word for Lewdness; it signifies rather Unprofitableness, or Idleness, and to this the Observation will equally correspond.

Ver. 15. *Neither let Drunkenness go with thee in thy Journey.* Fagius's Hebr. Copy has, *Neque cum temulento consuetudinem habear in omnibus viis tuis.* And Junius, by a Hebraism, understands *μέθυ* to signify *vir ebrietatis*; according to which the Sense is, "Keep not Company at any Time with such as are addicted to Drunkenness." Or may we not suppose, as the Expression in the Greek is, *ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ αὐτοῦ*, that Tobit had the particular Journey in his Eye he was going to send his Son upon, and that the Thirst arising from travelling, especially in a warm Climate, being a strong Temptation to drink plentifully, he might caution his Son against any Excess? The Vulg. omits this Precept relating to Sobriety.

Ver. 17. *Pour out thy Bread on the Burial of the Just.* The Jews had not only Banquets upon Account, or in Honour of the Dead, but even over their Dead: So that we may distinguish their Funeral Entertainments into two Sorts, domestic, or such as was kept in the House of the Deceased, for the Refreshment of the melancholy Relations and Friends there present, which was more or less public and expensive, according to the Quality of the Deceased, see *Joseph* l. xvii. *Antiq. Jud.* c. viii. and *De Bell. Jud.* c. i. *Jerem.* xvi. 5, 7. in 4. And 2<sup>dly</sup>, Sepulchral Entertainments, or such as were carried to the very Sepulchre of the Deceased, and there



there either consumed, or distributed, and carried away by the Poor. *Meursius de Funer.* c. xxxv. The Exhortation of *Tobit* here to his Son to pour out his Bread ἐπὶ τὸν τάφον ἡ δίκαιον alludes to this latter Custom (an ancient one among the Heathens) and shews, that it was of some Antiquity among the *Jews*. *Vallapandus*, referring to this Passage, says, *Sat patet moris fuisse, ut in ipsis sepulchris moriuorum epulae ponerentur*, in *Ezek.* xxiv.

17. The Words ἐπὶ τὸν τάφον imply something particular to be done upon the Tomb itself, and not barely, something to be expended at the Burial of the Just, as if the ἐπιτάφιος ἐστὶς in general was only enjoined. We cannot have a more ample Testimony of this Custom, than what we meet with *Ecclus* xxx.

18. *Delicates poured out upon a Mouth shut up, are as Messes of Meat set upon a Grave.* Where the *Son* of *Sirach* manifestly alludes to this Ceremony of Feasting at, or upon the Graves of the Deceased; a Comparison, which he would not have used to have explained his Meaning, had not the Custom been well known and established. See Note in *loc.* and *Spencer de Leg. Hebr.* Tom. ii. p. 1145. the Distinction which *Eustathius* makes upon that Verse of *Homer*—αὐτὰρ ὁ τοῖσι τάφον μενοεικέα δαῖνον, *Il.* v. makes much for our Purpose, where he distinguishes between the Entertainment on the Tomb, calling it τάφον, from the Name of the Sepulchre, and, that after the burying, which he calls περὶ δειπνον. We have express mention of the περὶ δειπνον νεκρῶ, or the funeral Feast, in the Epistle of *Jeremy* v. 32. The primitive Christians, many of whose Customs it is well known were derived from the *Jews*, expressed thus their pious Regard to their Saints and Martyrs, by pouring Wine upon their Tombs, and celebrating the Funeral or Sepulchral Feast over them; but these at length degenerating into Dissoluteness and Debauchery, *St. Ambrose* found it necessary to forbid them in the Churches of *Milan*, as did *St. Austin* in those of *Africa*. They obtained also among the *Romans*; but the same Abuse probably induced *Numa* to give strict Orders, that no one should honour the Dead by pouring Wine upon their Tombs. *Estius* and *Tirinus* upon the Place, remark, and *Bellarmino* abuses it to the same Purpose, that *Tobit* had not recommended to his Son such a Practice, if he had not thought that this Work of Mercy regarded, and in some sort affected, the just Persons themselves; *i. e.* that it would procure some Ease and Refreshment to the Souls of the Deceased; and from hence they infer the Advantage and Necessity of those solemn Masses and Oblations, which the *Romish* Church offers for the Repose of the Soul. To this it may be answered, 1. That by these sepulchral Feasts no Oblation was intended to be made to God, but only a decent Honour shewn thereby to the Memory of the Righteous. 2. That no mention is here made of any Prayers, or Intercessions for the Dead. 3. That what is here enjoined was to com-

fort, by a seasonable Entertainment, the distressed Relations, and Friends of the Person deceased, and was purely for the Benefit of the Living. 4. That the Heathens, from whom this Rite was borrowed, and who entertained a Notion that the Ghosts of the Deceased were regaled with this sensible Repast, yet extended it not so far, as to the purging of the Soul thereby, or affecting the Condition of it in its separate State.

Ver. 19. *For every Nation hath not Counsel.* No Nation, *i. e.* no Part of Mankind, mere Mankind, independently of God, hath Counsel, or Wisdom enough to effect any Scheme of Importance, or establish any Business of Consequence; which is a sufficient Reason for all private Persons, or Communities to trust in the Lord *Jehovah*, and to depend upon him for Direction and Assistance. The Context warrants this Interpretation. *Munster's Hebr.* Copy has, *Quoniam non est in potestate hominis ullum consilium, sed solum in manibus Dei*; and *Fagius*, *Quoniam non est sapientia, neque prudentia, neque consilium contra Dominum*. *Calmet* also takes it in the same Sense, *Mettez en Dieu votre confiance, & desesperez en lui; il fera reussir tous vos desseins; parce qu'il n'y a ni sagesse, ni prudence, ni conseil contre le Seigneur*.

Ver. 20. *And now I signify this to thee, that I committed Ten Talents to Gabael, the Son of Gabrias.* c. i. 14. He is called his Brother. The *Hebrew* Versions give no Light here, as *Munster* has Brother in both Places, and *Fagius*, Son. *St. Ambrose* admires the Conduct of *Tobit*, and his remarkable Disinterestedness with Respect to this Money. "He was poor and in Want, and yet regarding less his own, than others Necessity, he thought not of recalling a very considerable Sum which he had lent, and which would have been of great Service to him in the Condition he was in: Nor did he resolve to call it in, till he imagined himself near Death, and then he thought it but a Piece of Justice due to his Family to enquire after it, that his Son should not be deprived of a Sum, which lawfully belonged to him, *Non tam cupiens commodatum reposcere, quam sollicitus ne fraudaret heredem.*" *Ambr. in Tob.* c. ii. tom. ii. The same Writer takes occasion, from this Example of *Tobit*, to reflect on, "The prodigious Difference between his Conduct, and that of those, who are so wedded to their Interest, that they are glad of an Opportunity to take Advantage of a Brother's Necessity to enrich themselves, under the Pretence of doing them a Kindness, and on that account exact large and unlawful Interest: Whilst the generous and open-hearted *Tobit*, unmindful of the Necessity he found himself in, and of the Regard which he owed to his Family, hastened not to demand this Money, nor required any thing more than the bare Principal, tho' it had been lent a long Time; even from *Tobias's* Infancy," as the *Vulg.* here adds,



adds, *ibid.* There is also another useful Inference, which may be drawn from this Place, viz. that tho' *Tobit* seems, from Ver. 1. to have sent for his Son on purpose to communicate to him the Affair of the Money lent, yet it is observable, that he rather chooses to begin his seemingly farewell Charge, by laying down Rules for his moral Conduct, and his Instruction in Righteousness, which indeed is the Substance of it, before he opens to him the Business of the Talents in *Media*; as if in those early Times he had known the divine Precept, given by him who fulfilled all Righteousness, *Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and his Righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.* *Matt.* vi. 33.

Ver. 21. *Thou hast much Wealth, if thou fear God.*] This Sentiment is so exalted, that, as the *Port Royal Comment* observes, one would think that it was spoken by some Christian Father to his Son in the Times of the Gospel. It is not unlike that of *St. Paul*, *Godliness with Contentment is great Gain.* *Tobit* had lost his Sight, was a Captive, and reduced to low Circumstances; and yet in the full Assurance of Faith, from the good Treasure of his Heart, he pronounces this encouraging Maxim to all others in the like distressed Circumstances, *Thou hast much Wealth, if thou fear God.* God will either return with Usury to a persecuted and afflicted Servant, what he may at any time have lost, especially for the Sake of his Truth, and bless his latter End, as he did that of *Job*, with the greater Flow of Prosperity; or having proved his Soul by a great Trial of Afflictions, reserve for him a Treasure in the Heavens, with which temporal Goods are not worthy to be compared. *St. Austin*, full of Admiration of *Tobit's* devout Behaviour in a State of Poverty, says, *Quam laudabilis sit Sanctus Tobias scriptura docemur, cujus devotionem nec captivitas minuit, nec oculorum amissio, quominus Deo benediceret, persuasit. Neque exhausta substantia a via justitiæ & veritatis avertit. Necessitas enim probat justum. In egestate equitatem servare, vera & perfecta justitia est. Unde enim quorundam devotio minuitur, inde augmentum facit laude dignus Tobias. Quest. cxix.* How happy would the Case of the Poor be, if, like *Tobit*, they had ever this excellent Maxim in their Minds, which he here gives in charge to his Son! It may not be amiss to observe, and place in one View the several admirable Precepts, given by a religious Father to his Son in this Chapter. 1. To remember God; and to praise him devoutly for his Blessings. 2. To pay a Reverence and Regard to Parents, for the Kindness received from them. 3. To shew Charity to the Poor. 4. To avoid Fornication, and every Species of Lewdness. 5. To abhor all Pride. 6. To be just towards all, and in particular to give the Labourer his Hire. 7. To honour good and just Men, and to pay a Respect to their Memory, by a decent Funeral. 8. To ask Counsel of the Wise and follow it. 9. To trust in God's Goodness, even in the midst of Poverty.

## CHAP. V.

Ver. 3. **S**EEK thee a Man which may go with thee, whilst I yet live.] Besides that of our Version, there are other Rendings of this Sentence, according to the pointing of the Greek. The *Vulg.* has, *Ut, dum adhuc vivo, recipias pecuniam.* *Fagius's Heb. Copy,* *Fortasse redibitis, me adhuc vivente.* And the Greek and Syriac, *Dabo ei mercedem dum vivo.* The *Vulg.* properly enough inserts *fidelem* here, *Inquire tibi aliquem fidelem virum, qui eat tecum.* i. e. Enquire for somebody of Trust and Probity to go with you: For every idle Person or Vagrant was not proper to be sent on such an Errand, or joined in a Commission of receiving such a Sum of Money. See Ver. 8.

Ver. 4. *But he found Raphael that was an Angel. But he knew not.*] i. e. He knew him not to be such, having assumed a human Form, of no mean or common Appearance, but as the *Vulg.* adds, having an Air of Majesty and Greatness, which he looked upon as his natural Mien, and not as the Reflexion of a heavenly Glory, as he found it afterwards to be. That good Angels are appointed by God to be the Guardians of particular Men, and in Execution of this their Office, do frequently assume human Shapes, to guide them in their Journies, and to deliver them from all Dangers, is a Doctrine as ancient as the Patriarch *Jacob's* Time, embraced by Christians, and believed by the wisest Heathens, *Gen.* xlviii. 16. *Pf.* xxxiii. 8. *Matt.* viii. 10. *Acts* xii. 15. *Hes. Oper. & Die.* l. i. *Plato de Leg.* l. x. Hence *Mercury* was fabled to be the Messenger of the Gods, and Guide of the Way; and as such was said to have Wings on his Arms and his Feet. A learned Writer observes, that this Story of *Tobias* and the Angel has a wonderful Relation, and a great Conformity, both in the Ideas and the Style, with *Mercury's* descending in the Shape of a young Man, and conducting *Priam* in his Journey to the Pavilion of *Achilles*, *Il.*  $\Omega$ . where their Conversation on the Way is described. And the Example of *Homer*, so long before *Tobit*, proves, that this Opinion of God's sending his Angels to the Aid of Man, was very common, and much spread among the Pagans in those former Times, as will appear to any one that consults their Theology, *Dacier's Note in loc. cit.* The Part which the Angel acts in this History is attended with some Difficulties, and has been made a principal Objection to the Authority of the Book; for tho' it be true, that Angels have sometimes actually assumed the Form or Appearance of Men, upon some extraordinary or high Errand from God to Man, yet this has been in Appearance only: Our Saviour himself seems to say as much; for when upon his entering into the Room where his Disciples were assembled, and the Doors shut, they were terrified, and thought they saw a Spirit, he puts the Proof of



of its being really himself, and no mere Appearance, that a Spirit has not Flesh and Bones, as they might actually feel, and experience him to have. But it may be thought incredible, that *Tobias* should so long travel, and eat and lodge with an immaterial Form or Appearance, and after so many Occasions, as must unavoidably offer, for sensible Touch, not only to himself, but in the Family of *Raguel*, &c. no Discovery should be made, nor so much as any Suspicion raised of the thing. In Answer to all which, it may, I presume, be very justly replied, first, with regard to the Angels appearing at all in this Transaction, that it was an occasion *vindice digna Deo*; for whether we consider the Greatness of *Tobit's* Virtues, who was probably the most illustrious Instance of Piety and Charity amongst the whole Ten captive Tribes, or the Loss of his Fortunes first, and his Eyes after, and so the Greatness of his Sufferings also; if we attend further to the particular Situation of himself and his Countrymen, which required uncommon Supports to keep up their Spirits, and maintain a proper Dependence and Hopes in God, it could be no ways unworthy God's wise and good Providence in such Circumstances, to send a Messenger from Heaven, and to make this a sensible Example, that he had neither cast off his People, nor would at any time be wanting in the Care of good Men under their Afflictions. As to the other Part of the Difficulty, which arises from an immaterial Being conversing and cohabiting under a corporeal Appearance only, without any Discovery, or so much as Suspicion, that it was not a real Body, we answer, that the Angel's Skill and Address, ever awake to his Business, and not subject to such Absence and Inadvertencies as ourselves, would easily prevent or divert the Occasions of Discovery. And if, as we have a Right, we further include God's extraordinary Providence here, all the Difficulty is at once removed.

Ver. 9. *So he called him, and he came in, and they saluted one another.* Ver. 10. *Then Tobit said unto him, Brother, shew me of what Tribe and Family thou art.* The *Vulg.* is fuller, and more explicit as to the Salutation, *Dixit, gaudium tibi sit semper. Et ait Tobias, Quale gaudium mihi erit, qui in tenebris sedeo, & lumen cæli non video. Cui ait juvenis, Forti animo esto, in proximo est, ut a Deo cureris.* Preparing the Reader for the Accomplishment of this, c. xi. The Term *Brother* is not to be taken strictly; the *Jews* called all those of their own Tribe or Nation Brethren; *Tobit*, who uses this Appellation in several Places of this Chapter, speaks to *Raphael* according to his human Appearance, as one of the Brethren.

Ver. 11. *Dost thou seek for a Tribe or Family, or an hired Man to go with thy Son?* i. e. Why dost thou trouble thyself about my Tribe or Family; content thyself, without any further Inquiry, that thou hast got a good Guide for thy Son, *ad votum tuum merce-*

*narium*, according to *Munster's Heb. Copy.* Of what Service will it be, in the intended Journey, to know my Family? Dost thou want the Family, or an Hireling only, that is well acquainted with the Way to conduct thy Son? And thus the *Port-Royal Comment* explains it, *Est-ce la famille du mercenaire, qui doit conduire votre fils, ou le mercenaire lui-même que vous cherchez?* There is, however, more in this Question than may seem at first hearing; it is not merely a Question of Curiosity, natural to old Men, but *Tobias* being young and inexperienced, the Intention of the good old Man his Father, was by this Enquiry to get all the Intelligence and Assurance he could possibly of the Condition and Credit of one, to whom he was about to entrust a Son, whom he had been all along careful to bring up in the Fear of the Lord, and with an Abhorrence of evil Company: And when *Tobit* asks *Raphael* of what Family he was, it was in effect only to demand, who, and what he was himself; for from the good or evil Disposition of the Stock, or Heads of the Family, may with great Probability be inferred the Temper and Manners of the Children and Dependants; as we form a Judgment from the Tree itself, what Fruit may be expected from it. *Terentius Christianus* expresses this Conference more clearly:

*Tob. Amabo hospes*

*Cujas es? aut quibus parentibus, quæso, Prognatus? Raph. Quorsum id percontare? Nil refert*

*Ad id quod agimus nunc. Tob. Ne id mihi, precor, frater,*

*Succenseas, quod curiosus stirpem*

*Tuam expiscari non erubuerim. Scis quam*

*Non sit tutum cuiquam hoc rerum statu quicquam.*

*Committere ignoto: & curæ est mihi gnatus.*

In *Tob. Act. ii:*

Ver. 12. *I am Azarias, the Son of Ananias the Great, and of thy Brethren.] i. e. An Israelite.* See c. vii. 3. where he makes himself to be of the Tribe of *Nephthali*. Many *Gr.* Copies read here very corruptly, *ἐγὼ τὸ γένος Ἀζαρίης καὶ Ἀνανίης τοῦ μεγάλου*, but the Reading followed by our Version is confirmed by c. vi. 8. vii. 8. ix. 2. It may be more material to enquire how *Raphael* is *Azarias*, and with what Propriety or Truth he styles himself so? To this Objection several Answers may be given. 1. That Angels having no proper Name, but what is derived from the Office and Ministry they are employed about, and *Azarias*, according to the *Hebrew* Signification, meaning a *Helper from God*; this Name may agree very well to the Angel *Raphael*, who was sent for this very Purpose to be instrumental in curing *Tobit's* Blindness, and to be a Guide and Assistant to *Tobias* in his Journey, and therefore very prudently concealed his Quality of an Angel, that he might more conveniently execute his Commission. The giving of proper Names to Persons derived from some Accident, Quality, or Office, belonging to them, was very ancient, and



and customary among the *Hebrews*: There are many Instances of this kind in Scripture, particularly *Gen. xxx.* where the Names given to *Jacob's* Children are very observable and expressive, if considered in this View. 2dly, As the Angel had assumed the Form and Person of *Azarias*, he may be supposed to speak according to his Appearance only; as the Author of the First Book of *Samuel* saith, That *Samuel* spake to *Saul*, seeking his Counsel by the Witch of *Endor*; because the Person that appeared was in *Samuel's* Habit, and the Witch, or at least King *Saul*, did repute him to be so. In like manner this Angel personating *Azarias*, for a Time bare his Name; or thus, as the Picture is usually called by the Person it represents, and he who in Tragedy acts the Part of *Cyrus*, does for that Time go under his Name, so *Raphael* personating *Azarias* in the Form and Appearance of a young Man, was in that Capacity to act and speak as if he had been such. 3dly, The following Instance may likewise serve to illustrate this, *viz.* When *Joseph* was sent after his Brethren to *Sichem*, and had lost his Way, there met him a Person, *Gen. xxxvii. 15, 16.* that directed him where to find them, which the *Targum* of *Jonathan* on the Place pronounces to be the Angel *Gabriel*. As this concealed Angel had the Appearance of a Man, and is indeed so called in that Text, and under that Form was assisting in directing the Way, we may hence perhaps conceive, how the same Person here should be the Angel *Raphael*, and yet *Azarias* also.

Ver. 13. *My Brother, thou art of a good Stock.*] It may seem surprizing, that *Tobit*, hearing the Name of *Ananias the Great*, did not think proper to enquire how it happened, that *Azarias*, the Son of so considerable a Person, was so reduced in his Circumstances, and to such a State of Meanness, as to be obliged to get a poor Livelihood, by occasionally hiring himself. To say nothing of the Vicissitude of Fortune, which God has placed in his own Power, it may be sufficient to answer, That in a Time of Captivity, such as was that of the *Israelites* at present, all Distinction of Families is lost, or however not considered, the greatest and most considerable are confounded with the meanest; as they are carried away promiscuously from their Country, so they are equally stripped of their Possessions and Fortunes, and condemned by the merciless Victor, to the same Instances of Hardship and Servility.

Ver. 14. *Wilt thou a Drachm a Day.*] It appears by the Gospel of St. *Matthew*, that an *Hebrew Drachm* was the fourth Part of a *Shekel*, i. e. *Nine-pence* of our Money; for there, ch. xvii. 24. the Tribute money, annually paid to the Temple by every Jew, which was half a *Shekel*, is called *διδραχμον* (i. e. the two *Drachm* Piece) and therefore if an half *Shekel* contained two *Drachms*, a *Drachm* must have been the Quarter of a *Shekel*, or *Nine-pence*, as every *Shekel* weigh'd about

three Shillings of our Money. If we suppose this *Greek* Version of *Tobit* to be made from the *Chaldee* by some *Alexandrian Jew*, then as every *Alexandrian Drachm* contained two *Hebrew Drachms*, one *Drachm* of *Alexandria* will be of our Money *Eighteen-pence*.

Ver. 16. *Go thou with this Man, and God, which dwelleth in Heaven, prosper your Journey, and the Angel of God keep you Company.*] As indeed he did according to the Representation of this History, though *Tobit* in Faith spoke this. This pious Wish, no less than *Raphael's* Example and Presence, shews us the Opinion of the *Jews* at least, that God has given his Angels the Charge of Mankind, and that he makes use of their Ministry to conduct them through this Life, in the midst of the many Dangers that accompany them. Our Saviour intimates such a tutelar Care with respect to little Children in particular, *Matth. xviii. 10.* But it does not from hence follow, that the Angels have such a Knowledge of human Affairs, or Power over them, as that Prayers should be offered up to them, or their Intercession with God should be requested, or that any Reliance should be had on their Merits, as the *Papish* Expositors on this Book would infer; for however highly favoured, still they are but Servants of God, and his ministering Spirits, and have neither Omniscience, nor Omnipresence, nor any Attribute to make them fit Objects to be addressed to in a manner which is incommunicable to the Divinity. *Tobit's* affectionate Charge here greatly resembles *Abraham's* Commission to his Servant, *Gen. xxiv. 40.* upon his sending him to fetch a Wife for his Son *Isaac*; *The Lord, before whom I walk, will send his Angel with thee, and prosper thy Way, and thou shalt take a Wife for my Son of my Kindred, and of my Father's House.* In this particular also of a Wife the Resemblance holds, for though *Raphael* had nothing in Commission relating to *Sara*, yet he happily crowned his Journey by concluding a Match for his Master's Son, who sent him in quest of Money only.

*Ibid.* *So they went forth, and the young Man's Dog with them.*] This Clause is wanting here, both in *Munster's Heb. Copy* and in *Vulg.* The latter indeed inserts it, c. vi. 1. It is most probable that the Dog went with them, as it is mentioned in all the *Gr. Copies*, the *Syriac*, and *Fagius's Heb.* as going and returning with them, c. xi. 4. This Circumstance of the Dog, though of no great Moment, is neither absurd nor unusual, as it is according to the Simplicity of ancient Times. But it may be the more necessary not to pass over this Incident of the Dog without some further Remark, since no less a Critic than Mr. *Pope* has passed some Raillery upon it. As he very ingeniously entertains himself and his Friend (see Letter to Mr. *Cromwell*) in satyrizing some of the Follies and Failings of Men, by setting forth the contrary Virtues and good Qualities of Dogs; in the Flow of his Wit he observes, with relation to the



Book of *Tobit*, that there was no manner of Reason to take notice of the Dog, but the *Humanity of the Author*. Now, to call the introducing the Dog an Instance of the *Author's Humanity*, is certainly a very odd Conceit, so odd, that it seems plain we are to consider it as an hasty Stroke of Fancy, not the Result of Mr. *Pope's* Judgment: Indeed, were he serious, there is as little Truth as Candour in this Censure. *Tobias* was to take a long Journey into a strange Country, and to bring a large Sum of Money back with him, attended only with one other Person, who, though an Angel, was not discovered by him to be such; and does not the Reason of the thing speak itself, that the Dog was thought a proper Guard under these Circumstances, and therefore taken by *Tobias*, *Cómesque viæ dominique satelles*. *Pliny* thinks it worth his while to remark this Use of Dogs, and gives an Instance of a Master preserved in his Journey from Thieves by his Dog, *Nat. Hist.* l. viii. c. xl. And this we apprehend is sufficient to shew, that the mentioning the Dog at the entering upon their Journey was not impertinent. As to the Significancy of introducing him again at their Return, there is no Reason why we should admire such a Circumstance as natural and beautiful in *Homer*, and yet low and trifling in our Author. Take the two Passages together, *Tunc præcurrit canis qui simul fuerat in via, & quasi nuncius adveniens, blandimento suæ caudæ gaudebat*:

Δὴ τότε γ' ὡς ἐνόησεν Ὀδυσσεύς ἰδὺς ἑόντα,  
Οὐκ ἦ μὲν ῥ' ὄγ' ἔσῃνε. *Odyss. P.*

It would indeed argue great want of Taste, to put these two Cases quite upon a Parallel: *Ulysses* was in Disguise, and entirely unknown to every human Creature; yet the Sagacity of this Animal at once discovers him under all the Changes that twenty Years Absence and Fatigues, together with all that Art and Design could contribute further to his Concealment, had brought upon him. This is a very beautiful and striking Circumstance in the Poet, and though we find nothing in the Historian to correspond with it, yet there remains Likeness sufficient to secure him from Ridicule. To which we may add, that, after the Eagerness and Impatience of the Parent for the Return of her Son, we are affected with a very sensible Pleasure to see it removed at once, and changed into Joy by the Appearance of that faithful Guard, which, upon his Master's approaching Home, ever naturally hastens to be the Harbinger of it. It may not be amiss to observe, that the Passage quoted above from the *Vulgate*, receives great Confirmation from the *Syriac* Version, which makes *Anna* see the Dog first, before she saw her Son, c. xi. 6. upon which she flies to *Tobit*, to tell him they were coming. Nor does the *Greek* disagree with this; for it says not, that she saw *Tobias* himself, but *προενόησεν αὐτὸν ἐρχόμενον*, i. e. knew it, or perceived it by some Token, to wit, this of the Dog. We should not have dwelt so long

upon a Circumstance seemingly so trifling, nor have been induced to have taken so much Notice of it, had not this Circumstance been represented, as if the Dog was introduced into the History foolishly, and without any sort of Reason for it.

Ver. 17. *Is he not the Staff of our Hand, in going in and out before us?*] This is a *Hebraism*. We meet with the like Phrase, *Num. xxvii. 17*. The Sense here is, "Is he not the Staff of our Age, in managing our Affairs, and taking Care for us?" And thus the *Geneva* Version, *Is he not the Staff of our Hand to minister unto us?* And so *Junius*, *Nonne scipio manus nostræ est, res nostras agens arbitrato nostro?* *Fagius's* *Hebr. Copy* has, *Promus & condus est domus nostræ*, i. e. He is the Proveditor or Steward of our Family; and the *Vulgate*, *Baculum senectutis nostræ*. *Terentius Christianus* well expresses the Sense of this and the following Verse:

—multæ simul  
Concurrunt suspiciones, quæ meum animum diversum trahunt:  
*Via crepidines periculosa, adolescentis parum Circumspecti imperitia: tum hospes, cujus fidei creditus est,*  
*Ignotus — saltem spectata fidei viro Commisisset, cum ipsi salute filii pecunia Prior esset. O insaturabilem habendi sitim! Quasi non multo satius fuisset, paululum Perdere pecunia, quam filium, unicam Nostræ senectutis requiem, vitæ subire periculum.*  
In *Tob. Act. iii.*

Ver. 18. *Be not greedy to add Money to Money.*] *Ἀγγύγιον τῷ ἀγγύγιῳ μὴ φθάσαι*. The Sense of the *Eng. Version* is clear and easy, but the *Gr.* is not so intelligible. The Meaning of the different Translators in their several Expressions, probably may all be brought nearly into one Sentiment. *Let not Money be added*, *Marg. i. e.* Let not the Value of it be enhanced above what it is. *Would to God we had not laid Money upon Money*, *Genev. viz.* we had not doubted the Price of it in our Estimation, *Nunquam fuisset ipsa pecunia pro qua misisti eum*, *Vulg.* I wish there not been any such Money; or, *that Money should never have been the Consideration of sending away thy Son*, *Utinam argentum huic argento non antecessisset*, *Junius*. I wish the Desire of Money hath not overprized this Money in *Media*, *Argentum ad argentum non perveniat*, *Syr.* The Silver or Money there loses its Value, if my Son's Life is to be the Price of it. As it is generally agreed that *Tobit* was wrote originally in *Hebrew* or *Chaldee*, it may perhaps contribute towards understanding this Passage, to enquire what Word it probably was that is here translated by *φθάσω*. As to the two *Heb. Copies* of *Fagius* and *Munster*, they are comparatively modern things, and depart too widely from the more authentic Versions, to give us any Assistance here. There are two *Hebrew Words*, and, as far as I find, those only, which in the *LXX* are thus translated, if they may be thought to reach



reach the Point. The first is *וָאֵן*, in *Hiphil. pertingere fecit, adduxit*; in this Sense, *ἀγγύειον τῷ ἀγγυεῖω φθάσαι*, is to add Money to Money. The other Word, which they translate by *φθάνω*, is *וָדַן*, in *Hithp. roboravit*, and, by a common *Hebraism*, to hasten a thing, or to do it with all one's Might; *1 Kings xii. 18*. In any of these Senses, and supposing either of these Words to have been the original one in this Passage, the Meaning clearly is, to hasten or accumulate Money on Money. They are both *Chaldee* Words likewise, and bear a Meaning perfectly suitable to what we have deduced from the *Heb.* ones. It will be proper likewise to consider the *Gr.* Word itself, which will be found not incapable of the same Meaning. *φθάνω*, amongst its other Significations, is by *Stephens, Budeus, &c.* explained, *Voti compos esse, propositi summam attingere*, and so may be interpreted here, *to get Money to Money*. There remains, however, still a Difficulty, which is, to account for the Construction, and fill up the Sense, for to what shall we refer *φθάσαι*? *Grotius*, to make out his own Meaning, would have *ἰδὲν*, or something equivalent, to be understood, which would also answer as well to compleat ours, without any such Liberty as altering the Text: But possibly there may not be Occasion even for this here; may not *γένοιτο*, in the second Clause of the Verse, be referred or extended to the first also? *ἀγγύειον τῷ ἀγγυεῖω μὴ φθάσαι γένοιτο*, let it not be our Business to get Money to Money, but let the Money be *περίφημα τῷ παιδί, i. e.* either *ἐνεκα τῷ παιδί*, as Filth and Dirt for the Sake of our Child; let us lose it rather to save him: So *Galat. vi. 17. σιγμαῖα τῷ Ἰησοῦ*, are not the Marks properly of the Lord Jesus, but the Wounds and Marks suffered, *ἐνεκα τῷ Ἰησοῦ*, for his Sake. Or else we may suppose *περίφημα* to refer to those propitiatory Sacrifices among the Heathens, when, in the Time of any great Calamity, some vile Wretches were sacrificed for the Purgation and Atonement of the whole People; and such Sacrifices were called *περικαθήματα, περιφύματα*: And the sacrificial Form was, as *Suidas* tells us, upon such Occasions, *Be thou our περίφημα*; in this View the Meaning of our Passage is, Let us sacrifice our Money to the Welfare of our Son.

CHAP. VI.

Ver. 2. **A** Fish leap'd out of the River, and would have devoured him.] According to *Bochart*, it was the *Silurus*; this some call the Sheat Fish; and which, as described by *Ray*, *Ad octo & amplius cubitos longitudine excrescit, pondere 150 libras superat, rictus oris amplissimus, estque piscis admodum vorax*. *Johnston* says further of it, calling it *Glanis*, another Name for the *Silurus*, that *Non minoribus duntaxat pisciculis ventrem implet, sed & in majores, immo homines grassatur*, and gives Instances of human Limbs found in the Belly of this Fish. Again,

*Tobias's* Fish was eatable, so is the *Silurus*, and is in some Places esteemed, *Pinguis, bonique saporis*. *Bochart* gives the same Account from the Ancients, and goes on with the Parallel; Was *Tobias's* Fish found in the *Tigris*? *Pausanias*, in like manner, makes the *Glanis* or *Silurus* to be an Inhabitant of the *Euphrates*, from whence the Excursion into the *Tigris* is easy, as those two Rivers join: And *Diodorus* expressly tells us, that Fish of the Belluine Kind are found in the *Tigris*, especially about the Dog-days. He proceeds further to shew from *Galen*, and other Writers, that the Liver of the *Silurus* was in great Fame for the Cure of Suffusions, and Dimness of Sight; and from some *Greek* and *Arabic* Authors, that even its Smell was effectual in expelling Dæmons; but possibly this very History of *Tobit* might originally give occasion to these Notions. If it should be objected, that the *Silurus* is a Fish of a very smooth and slippery Skin, destitute of Scales, and therefore not to be supposed to be held by the bare Hands of *Tobias*, it is sufficient to answer, that the Head is disproportionably big to its Body, and the Gills vast and open, so as to offer easy and firm Hold; there is therefore in the *Latin* Version, where *Tobias* is ordered *prehendere Brachiam*, very great Propriety from the singular Form and Structure of this Fish. But whether the eating this Fish, as mentioned ver. 5. is quite agreeable to *Levit. xi. 10.* is a Difficulty that hath not been fully considered. Against the *Callionymus*, which the greater Part of the Interpreters suppose to be the Fish here meant, from the sanative Virtue said to be in it by *Pliny*, and other Naturalists, there lies this very material Objection, That it is a Fish of so small a Size, as is utterly inconsistent with the Story: *Longitudine est*, says the most accurate *Mr. Ray*, with whom *Johnson* agrees, *dodrantali, rarius pedali*, and therefore can never be supposed to attack, much less able to devour a Man.

Ver. 7. Touching the Heart and the Liver, if a Devil, or an evil Spirit, trouble any, we must make a Smoke thereof before the Man or the Woman, and the Party shall be no more vexed.] Those who are of Opinion that Dæmons were invested with certain material Forms, wherein they snuffed up the Perfumes, and feasted themselves upon the Odours of the Incense and Sacrifices that were offered to them, have an easy Way of solving this Difficulty, by supposing that the Smell of the burnt Heart and Liver of the Fish was offensive to *Asmodeus*. The *Chaldeans*, among whom the Book of *Tobit* was wrote, and the *Israelites*, for whose Use and Instruction it was wrote, might both be of this Opinion, that Dæmons, as not absolutely divested of all Matter, were capable of some Sensations and Impressions that belonged to corporeal Substances; and therefore, in Accommodation to the vulgar Idea, and Prejudice of the People, the Author of this History



History might express himself, as tho' the Expulsion of this evil Spirit was effected by a natural Cause, the Smoke of the Fish, even tho' at the same Time he sufficiently intimates, that it was thro' the merciful Help of God, obtained by Prayer, that it came to pass, *v* 17. But if this Demon was incorporeal (and this is the Supposition which generally prevails) we may safely conclude that the Smoke of the Fish's Entrails could have no direct nor physical Effect upon him; that his fleeing away therefore was occasioned by a supernatural Power, in the Exercise of which this Angel appointed to attend *Tobias* was the principal Instrument, and that he ordered the Fumigation as a Sign only when the evil Spirit, by his superior Power should be chased away. Others have been disposed to consider *Asmodeus*, not as any real Demon, but only as expressive of the great Power of Lust, and that the Fumigation in no other Sense drove away that evil Spirit, than as its Virtue contributed to check and suppress such an extravagant and brutal Passion, as was predominant in her other Husbands; the Efficacy of which, *ver* 7. is said to be so powerful and general, as that it would cure *τινα*, any other Person tempted in the like irregular manner. But allowing this Fumigation to have some physical Effect, like other foetid Medicines, yet it would, I conceive, be more proper to consider this as a lower and secondary Instrument only in the Cure, as Prayer and Abstinence are in the History itself set forth as the principal Means by which so wonderful an Event was produced. And this seems to be a more likely way to hinder the Return of *Asmodeus*, *i. e.* of any base Lust again, than the Power of natural Fumigation, which has not escaped Censure, as having some Appearance of Magic.

*Ver* 8. *The Gall is good to anoint a Man that bath Whiteness in his Eyes, and he shall be healed.*] Whether the Gall of this, or any other Fish, has such a natural Virtue to restore Sight, Naturalists can best determine. *Pliny*, indeed, speaking of the *Callionimus*, mentions something like this, *Fel cicatrices sanat, & oculorum carnem superfluam consumit*, l. xxxii. c. 4. & 7. But I have before shewed, see Note on *Ver* 2. that this is not the Fish here mentioned. It seems best in this Case, likewise, not to rest the Cure in the more natural Liniment, but to understand the outward Application, as somewhat similar to our Saviour's spreading Clay upon the Eyes of the Man that was born blind, and ordering him to wash in the Pool of *Siloam*, not as the Cause, but as the Proof of the Cure. It was the Power of God in both Instances, and *Tobit*, sensible of this, returns devout Thanks to God accordingly, c. xi. 14, 15.

*Ver* 12. *I know that Raguel cannot marry her to another, according to the Law of Moses, but he shall be guilty of Death.*] According to the Precept in the *Mosaical Law*, *Num* xxvii. 8. a Woman ought to marry her nearest Kinsman, who having no Brother, succeeded to

the Inheritance of her Father; but the Penalty of Death mentioned in our Version, the *Syr.* and *Gr.* Text seems very particular, and is not to be met with any where in the Law, either as denounced against the Father, who would not give his Daughter to his nearest Kinsman, or against the nearest Kinsman himself, if he would not espouse her. The *Geneva* Version, which qualifies the Expression, is therefore preferable, *I know that Raguel cannot marry her to another according to the Law of Moses, else he should deserve Death.* But I think the Words *ὁ φειλήσει θάνατον* may be better rendered, *ἢ, or* (if he does) that other to whom he gives her, *ὁ φειλήσει*, will be obnoxious to Death, or in great Danger to be slain by the Power of *Asmodeus*. For it has been thought not very unlikely, that the true Reason why the seven Husbands were given up to be slain by the wicked Demon, was because they unjustly claimed the Right of Marriage to this Heiress; the Attempt to lie with whom was a sort of Attempt to ravish a Virgin, already betrothed and belonging to another by their Law: And by the Slaughter of these, Providence preserved her pure and unspotted for her rightful and legal Husband *Tobias*. See *Whist. Auth. Records*, vol. ii. Nor is the Sense which *Terentius Christianus* gives of this Passage to be despised,

*Non denegabit, sat scio: Nec si velit  
Maxime, jure poterit: Nam præter jus tuum  
Nil postulas; tibi enim debetur: utpote  
Qui ei cognatione ac genere proximus  
Es. Nec eam contra præceptum Mosaicum  
Alienigenæ nuptum locabit conjugii,  
Nisi crimen capitale velit incurrere.*

In *Tob. Act.* iii.

The *Vulg.* and *Hebr.* Copies wholly omit the threatening Clause, and indeed the Sense is as complete without it.

*Ver* 14. *For a wicked Spirit loveth her, which hurteth nobody but those which come unto her.*] *Calmet* observes, that this Demon being incorporeal, could not possibly love *Sara*, on account of her Youth or Beauty, or any bodily Accomplishment; much less did he respect, as he was an unclean and impure Spirit, her Chastity and Virtue. *Tobias*, therefore must be understood to speak here according to popular Prejudice and Opinion. The *Vulgar* supposed Demons to be corporeal, and to be enamoured, like Mortals, with the Love of Women; hence it became a Notion that *Asmodeus*, thro' a Motive of Jealousy, killed those that went in unto *Sara*. The *Vulg.* and *Hebr.* Copies only mention the bare Fact, but the *Gr.* and *Syr.* assign Love, or rather brutal Lust, as the Cause of this Cruelty. The *Rabbins* and latter *Jews* it is certain supposed that evil Spirits were enamoured of handsome Women, from misunderstanding perhaps *Gen* vi. 2. And there are many Authors that pretend evil Spirits are not only capable of, but often indulge and satisfy a criminal Passion with Women: And particularly that the Demons called *Incubi* and *Succubi*, carry on



on shameful and abominable Intrigues with both Sexes. Stories of this sort are not wanting even in Writers of good Note and Authority, see *August. de Civit. Dei*, l. xv. c. 23. and *S. Bern.* l. ii. c. 6. But the Opinion that Demons and Angels are corporeal, tho' countenanced by the *Platonists*, *Origen*, and others of the Fathers, is now generally exploded. And if one examines the Accounts in History, which mention such an unnatural Commerce of Demons with Mortals, Male or Female, it is generally represented as transacted during Sleep, and therefore is to be looked upon rather as the Effect of the disordered Imagination of such Persons, than any sensible or corporeal Act of any real Demon. Had *Raphael* himself said this, that the Demon had slain the seven Husbands thro' his own Love for *Sara*, it had been a Difficulty indeed; but as it was *Tobias* only, he might do it according to the received Opinion of his Countrymen. We may therefore here justly call this an Error of *Tobias*, but it is no Reflection on the History.

Ver. 17. *And the Devil shall smell it, and flee away, and never come again any more: But when thou shalt come to him, rise up both of you, and pray to God which is merciful.*] This Account of driving away the Demon by Fumigation reminds one of what *Josephus* mentions, *de Bell. Jud.* l. viii. c. 2. that one *Eleazar*, before *Vespasian*, and a great Number of persons, freed several, who were possessed with evil Spirits, from the Power of them, by putting to their Nose a certain Ring having a specific Root under it, which quickly expelled the Demon out of their Bodies, so as never to return again; and that this Method of Cure was at that time successfully made Use of against evil Spirits: If this Relation is to be depended on, it shews the Power of Smell upon evil Genii, and the Effect here ascribed to Fumigation, may from thence receive some Countenance. But I do not build much upon this Narrative, which carries in it the Appearance of Magic: Much less can I persuade myself to run the Parallel between ejecting the Demon here by the Ashes of the Perfume, and those undoubted Miracles recorded in the *Old* and *New Testament*, *Num.* xxi. 9. *Josh.* vi. 20. *2 Kings* ii. 21. iv. 41. *Matt.* ix. 20. *John* ix. 6, 7. *Acts* v. 15. xix. 12. with which the *Papish* Expositors, out of an implicit Regard to Authority, and a Zeal for their Canon, have presumed to compare it. Without straining the Point so far, the History itself seems to afford Light enough to account for the supposed Miracle, without Recourse to, or any way relying upon, the Virtue of the burnt Entrails; for as Prayer to, and Faith in, God, was, according to the Angel's Direction, to accompany the Use of the outward Means, to which, according to the *Vulg.* was added matrimonial Continence for a Season likewise, these have that known and sovereign Virtue in them, as to supersede the Necessity of any less powerful Means. Especially if this Demon was like that, which

went not out, but by Prayer and Fasting, *Matt.* xvii. 21. This rich and holy Perfume was an Incense more precious and available with God, than any Secret of Nature, or Invention of Art. Joint Prayer, from Persons so well disposed, had, as it were, the Efficacy of an Evening Sacrifice.

*Ibid.* *Fear not, for she is appointed unto thee from the Beginning.*] i. e. She belongs to thee according to the Constitution of the Law; or is thine by divine Appointment and Designation, *ἐτοιμασθαι* is taken in this Sense to signify what is ordered by divine Appointment, *Matt.* xx. 23. xxv. 34. *1 Cor.* ii. 9. *Heb.* xi. 16.

*Ibid.* *And thou shalt preserve her.*] i. e. By maintaining, protecting, and defending her; and be a Saviour to her, as the Term is used on the like Occasion, *Ephes.* v. 23. *Munster's Hebr.* Copy is more explicit, *Et per manum tuam de minus liberabit eam de manu demonis.* See c. xii. 3. where *Sara* is mentioned as made whole, or freed from that Plague of the Possession of the Demon. And c. iii. 17. where *Raphael* is mentioned as sent to heal *Sara*, by giving her for a Wife to *Tobias*.

*Ibid.* *I suppose that she shall bear thee Children.*] He might express himself thus doubtfully, either as the Man *Azarias*, whose Appearance he assumed, or in his own Person, as the Angel *Raphael*. For Angels too, tho' called Intelligencies, however desirous they may be to look into, are certainly ignorant of, things future, see *2 Esdras* iv. 52. unless God is pleased to reveal them to them, or commissions them to declare them to others. As when the Angel foretells unto *Zechariah* the Birth of a Son, he mentions his Authority and Commission, *I am Gabriel that stand in the Presence of God, and am sent to speak unto thee, and to shew thee these glad Tidings,* *Luke* i. 19. *Calmet* renders, *J'espere qu'elle vous donnera des enfans.*

#### CHAP. VII.

Ver. 3. **T**O whom they said, we are of the Sons of *Nephtalim* which are Captives in *Niniveh*.] This Passage, which has been too hastily misrepresented by some Writers, as containing a notorious Falshood, see *Raynold's Præl.* tom. i. *Præl.* xlvi. is capable of being very consistently explained; for it does not appear from the Text, that the Angel gave this Answer rather than *Tobias*. 2<sup>dly</sup>, As *Raphael* assumed the Person of *Azarias*, it might very properly be spoken in both their Names, as *Ananias*, from whom *Azarias* descended, was of that Tribe, c. v. 12, 13. The like Answer will account for the Angel's saying, that he was of the Captivity of *Ninive*, for so *Azarias*, whom he personated, really was.

Ver. 7. *When he heard that Tobit was blind, he was sorrowful, and wept.* Ver. 8. *And likewise Edna his Wife, and Sara his Daughter wept.*] *Tobit's* Blindness on'y is



mentioned here as the Cause of this great Concern, the *Vulg.* and *Munster's Hebr.* Copy omit the Occasion. It is probable that the Tears which *Raguel*, his Wife, and Daughter shed, had a Mixture of Joy as well as Sorrow, arising from the *Eclaircissement*, or first Discovery of *Tobias* to be their near Relation; the former, from the agreeable Reflexion, that they had now with them the only Son of a Father, whom the Ties of Nature and Birth had endeared to them; and the latter, from a Sense of their sad Captivity, which had kept Persons so nearly related so long at a Distance from one another.—And the additional Circumstance of *Tobit's* Blindness, which must greatly add to his Affliction, must in Proportion also increase their Concern.

Ver. 10. *For it is meet that thou shouldst marry my Daughter, nevertheless I will declare unto thee the Truth.*] Καθήκει σοι παῖδιόν μὲ λαβεῖν. In this and the three following Verses, the Terms used with respect to the Marriage Ceremony, are both proper, and usual on the Occasion. Παῖδιόν λαβεῖν is the same with παραλαβεῖν *Matth.* i. 20. which is the technical Term for taking one to Wife, and so it is used, *Deut.* xx. 7. and hath Respect and Relation to δίδοναι, which belongs to the Father of the Spouse. See ver. 11, 13. because he, after the Example of God in Paradise, *Gen.* ii. 22. delivers her into the Bridegroom's own Hands, who was called *Petitor*, or the *Suitor*. St. *Ambrose* commends the great Openness and Frankness of *Raguel* in dealing so ingenuously with *Tobias*, in a Matter of such Consequence, whilst others, upon a like Occasion, are equally as careful to conceal an Objection. "Being a just man, says he, "he chose rather that his Daughter should "continue unmarried, than to expose an "Husband to imminent Danger for her "Sake: tho' he was greatly importuned to "give her in Marriage, yet neither his parental Tenderness, nor the great Inclination which he must be supposed to have to "settle his only Child well, could prevail on "him to conceal an Accident from her Lover, which he could not but imagine must "contribute to break the Match; however "he chose rather sincerely to declare to him "the whole Truth, than to appear to have "an Intention to deceive him by concealing "the matter. *Quam breviter absolvit omnes "questiones philosophorum, dum nec filiae vitia celanda arbitratus est!* How has he decided at once, in a compendious Manner, "all the Disputes of Moralists and Philosophers on this Head; with great Gravity "they can debate the Question, and are at "some Loss to determine it, whether a Person intending to sell a House, or any "Moveables, ought himself to discover the "Faults and Imperfections of them; but this "good Man thought he could not in Conscience, conceal that, which he knew would "be an Objection to his Daughter, even from "him, who was at that Time making Court

"to her, but advises him for his own sake, "to lay all Thoughts of her aside, and to be "easy and satisfied without her." *Ambros.* l. iii. *Offic.* c. 14.

Ver. 12. *Take her from henceforth according to the Manner, and the merciful God give you good Success in all Things.*] As God was the first Institutor of Marriage, and joined our first Parents in that holy State, so he still presides over it, and all Marriages ought to be concluded in his Fear, and with a Petition for his Blessing on the Undertaking. Thus *Abraham* comforts himself with relation to his Son's Marriage, that the Lord God of Heaven would send his Angel to chuse a Wife for his Son *Isaac*, *Gen.* xxiv. 7. And his Servant, who was sent on that important Commission, prays unto the Lord God, to send him good Speed that Day, and to shew Kindness unto his Master *Abraham*, in a Particular, that so nearly concerned his Welfare. See *Prov.* xix. 14. *Ecclus.* xxvi. 3. Betrothing, among the *Jews*, was commonly performed about six Months, or a Year before the Wedding: But as *Tobias's* Marriage was agreed on, and consummated on the Spot, it may be asked, how *Sara's* Parents came to comply so soon, as to give their Daughter to *Tobias* the very same Day that he arrived; the Reasons probably were, 1. Her Parents Desire of having her well married, and their Hopes of seeing Issue from her. 2. The Circumstances and Condition of her Spouse. 3. His near Relation, and legal Right to her. 4. *Raphael's* Importunity and Persuasion. Some Questions may also pertinently be asked concerning *Tobias*, as why he married on a Journey, at a Distance from, and without the Knowledge or Consent of his Parents: Such a Procedure seems not agreeable to the Opinion which one entertains of his Piety, and rather an Instance of Want of Duty, and a proper Deference to them; for is there any Affair more important, or wherein Children are more obliged to consult their Parents, and to receive their Directions and Advice, than in the great Concern of Marriage? To this it may be replied, that *Tobias* knew perfectly the Intentions of his Father on this Head, that good old Man had recommended to him before his Journey to take a Wife of his own Tribe and Family, c. iv. 12, 13. And it is observable that *Raphael* reminds him, c. vi. 15. of the Instruction which his Father gave him, to marry a Wife of his own Kindred. And indeed the Law itself was sufficiently clear in this matter. For had he been indifferent, or so particular as to have refused, what the known Custom of the Law required, *Raguel* could have compelled him to it, or obliged him to have renounced the Right which he claimed of Succession to his Inheritance. Nor do we find that *Tobit* was at all surprized, or troubled when his Son, returning from his Journey, brought with him a Wife. After this it will be almost needless to enquire, whether *Tobias* was not guilty of some Rashness and



and Imprudence, in being so eager after a Match, as solemnly to resolve neither to eat or drink till it was concluded, which his intended Father-in-law had kindly warned him against, and apprized him sufficiently of the Danger attending it. But besides the Reason before given, that the Nearness of the Relation required this from him, *Raphael* assured *Tobias*, that he had provided a Remedy effectually to secure him against the like Accident, and to prevent his sharing the other's Fate.

Ver. 13. *Then he called his Daughter, and he took her by the Hand, and gave her to be Wife to Tobias.*] In the *Vulg.* it is, *Raguel, the Father of the Bride, took her by the Right Hand, and joining it to Tobias's Right Hand, said, May the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob be with you, and unite you by the sacred Ties of Marriage, and fill you both with his Blessings.* To this Custom of giving away the Bride by the Hands of the Father, or some Relation, or Friend, *St. Paul* seems to allude, *2 Cor. xi. 2.* and the *Psalmist*, *Pf. xlv. 13.* The Reason of this, says a very judicious Writer, was, "that in ancient Times, all Women, which had not Husbands or Fathers to govern them, had Tutors, without whose Concurrence and Authority, there was no Act which they did warrantable, and for this Cause they were in Marriage delivered unto their Husbands by others. Which Custom retained, hath still this Use, that it puts Women in Mind of their Duty, whereto the very Imbecillity of their Sex doth bind them, viz. to be always guided and directed by others." *Hooker's Eccles. Pol. l. v.* Whether this, or whatever be the Cause of this Custom, it is, certainly most decent, that a Woman, whose chiefest Ornament is Modesty, should rather be led, or presented by the Hand of another, than offer herself forwardly before the Congregation to any one in Marriage; and therefore the Discretion of our Church is herein much to be admired, which enjoins it to be asked, *Who giveth this Woman to be married to this Man?*

Ver. 14. *And called Edna his Wife, and took Paper, and did write an Instrument of Covenants, and sealed it.*] Here we have a Contract between *Tobias* and *Sara*, drawn up, not by a public Notary, as was generally usual, but by *Raguel* the Woman's Father. We may further observe, that before the writing this Contract, there was a formal giving of the Woman unto her Husband by her own Father; and that a particular and express Form of Words was used upon the Delivery of her. It appears from hence, that a Contract and Marriage were anciently all one in Effect, and the like may be gathered from the Law, *Deut. xxii. 24.* where an espoused Woman is called a Wife, and if she be convicted of Unchastity, is reputed as an Adulteress, worthy of Death. By which it is manifest, that a Contract *de presenti* differeth not in Substance from a Marriage, tho' for Decency sake solemn Ceremonies are re-

quired by positive Laws. The *Jews* usually drew up the Contract of Marimoney, and agreed about the Dowry, before the Wedding; after that they read this Contract or Deed over, and lodged it in the Hands of the Bride's Relations, and then they put the Ring upon her Finger: But in *Tobias's* Marriage things were ordered otherwise, for *Raguel* immediately consents to give him his Daughter, and at the same time joins their Hands; then he calls for Paper, writes down the Contract, and hath it signed by two Witnesses, according to the *Hebr.* after which the Feast began. All this is pretty different from the Custom of modern *Jews*, tho' they look upon *Tobias's* Wedding, and the Ceremonies attending it, as a Pattern of the happiest and most regular Marriage. "One cannot but admire (say *Mess.* of *Port Royal*) the Simplicity of those early Times. *Raguel* gives his Daughter in Marriage to *Tobias*, and troubles not himself about Settlements, or Covenants as they are here called, till the Ceremony was over. Such Openness and Confidence is scarce to be found in the present Times, and would be thought little less than Carelessness. But it ought, however, to remind all those, who enter upon the like holy State, sincerely to renounce all sort of Disguise and Over-reaching in an Affair, where Integrity, Candor, and Disinterestedness, are its best and principal Security." *Comm. in loc.*

Ver. 16. *Raguel called his Wife Edna, and said unto her, Sister, &c.*] See c. v. 20. This Term is only a Word of Tendernefs and Endearment, used by Husbands to their Wives. *Tobias*, in the next Chapter, *4. 7.* calls *Sara* by the same Name after he had married her. See also c. x. 12. An Instance of this we have in *Solomon's Song*, c. iv. where the Words, *my Sister, my Spouse*, come three Times together in four Verses. And hence, if Solutions were wanting, we may justify *Abraham* calling his Wife *Sarah*, *Sister*, *Gen. xii. 13.* which some Free-thinkers have endeavoured to expose, as an Equivocation. For as *Sister* is a Name of Tendernefs, Love, and Affection, it was very properly applied to his Wife; but indeed *Sara* was so near a Relation, as to have a natural Right to be so called, being, as *Abraham* acknowledges, his Half-Sister, the Daughter of his Father, but not the Daughter of his Mother. *Gen. xx. 12.*

*Ibid. Prepare another Chamber, and bring her in thither.*] i. e. Into another Bed-Chamber, different from that where *Sara* lay before, in which her seven former Husbands were killed. This Thought was just, and the Exchange proper, as the very Room inspired Horror.

#### CHAP. VIII.

Ver. 2. **A**ND took the Ashes of the Perfumes, and put the Heart and the Liver of the Fish thereupon, and made a Smoke therewith.] This Story of driving away the Demon by the Ashes of the Perfumes, possibly took its Rise from the Account of the Smoke of *Aaron's* Incense,



Incense, staying the destroying Angel from the surviving *Israelites*, superstitiously depraved. Some Footsteps of this Mystery the *Hebrews* seem to retain, when they say, that all hurtful and destroying Spirits will flee away at the Odour of the Incense of sweet Spices. *Tobias* here literally follows *Raphael's* Directions, c. vi. 16. but perhaps the Meaning principally may be, that *Tobias*, by the Direction of the Angel, offered the Incense of Prayer, or put up fervent Prayers to God to drive away this Friend. *Munster* expressly understands it in this spiritual Sense, *Per illam suffumigationem designatur oratio, quæ instar vaporis celos penetrat.* And then he concludes, *Virtute ergo orationis Tobia & Saræ, fugatus est Asmodeus, & non efficacia aliqua odoris corporalis, Comm. in Loc.*

Ver. 3. *He fled into the utmost Parts of Egypt.*] i. e. Into the Deserts of the Upper Egypt, for so *Pliny* and other Writers describe them. That Deserts and solitary Places were the Dwelling and Resort of unclean Spirits, the Canonical Scriptures inform us. Thus the Demoniac, *Luke* viii. 29. is said to abide in no House, but to be driven of the Devil into the Wilderness; and thither was our Saviour led, as being the Devil's Residence, to be tempted by him, *Matth.* iv. 1. And accordingly the unclean Spirit is described, *Matth.* xii. 43. as walking through dry, or uninhabited Places, seeking Rest, and finding none. See *Baruch.* iv. 35. and *Revel.* xviii. 2. where *Babylon* the great City, when turned into a Wilderness, is said to be, *The Dungeon of every foul Spirit, and a Cage of every impure and ill boding Bird*, or rather, the Abode or Residence of them; for φυλακή here has the Sense of καλοικητήριον, and so it is often used by the *Hellenistic* Writers. But the Prophet's Description of the same Desolation, *Isai.* xiii. 21. is still more strong, for "in it shall dwell, not wild Beasts merely, as our Version, nor Fauni and Silvani only, as *Castellio* renders, but according to the LXX, Δαιμόνια ἐκεῖ ὀρχήσονται, ἢ ὀνοκένταυροι ἐκεῖ κατήσονται.

*Ibid.* And the Angel bound him.] Not bodily with any visible Chain, as the Words seem to imply, and as is the Custom among Men, but by a superior Power and Command which he had received over him, he confined him to that desert Part of Egypt he took shelter in, and where indeed he could do least Mischief: For Demons being incorporeal, and not having Parts or Members like Men, act on each other in a manner wholly spiritual and invisible. The Angel *Raphael* indeed appeared to the Sight as with a human Body, but it was only an assumed or borrowed Appearance, and useless as to all natural Functions; and therefore it was not by any bodily Power, or Force of his own, nor by the Efficacy of natural Means, that he drove away *Asmodeus*, but he acted in this Matter as one pure Spirit acts on another, and, by the mighty and unseen Power of him who commissioned him, he chained or

confined the impure Spirit to the Place, and in the Manner it was appointed him, that he should do no more hurt, at least in the House of *Tobias* and *Sara*. Something like this we read in Scripture, *Rev.* xx. 1, 2, 3. that the Angel which came down from Heaven, having the Key of the bottomless Pit, and a great Chain in his Hand, laid hold on the Dragon, which is the Devil, and bound him for a thousand Years, and cast him into the bottomless Pit, and shut him up, and set a Seal upon him. But it may be asked, to what Purpose then was the burning of the Heart and Liver of the Fish? or why was it enjoined, if there was no Efficacy in them, or God has not given to some natural things a secret and wonderful Power, opposite to that which the Devil occasionally makes use of to the Mischief of Men? To this it may be answered, First in general, That the Angel *Raphael* did not want any Spells or natural Means to subdue this Demon; for the least of the Angels, when invested with God's Authority, and acting by his Commission, is able to vanquish the Power of the Devil, and to overthrow his wicked Machinations. Secondly, There are the following particular Reasons for the outward Use of these Means, viz. That it was very proper that *Raphael* should conceal, under the Appearance of a mere natural Remedy, the supernatural Power he had received from his divine Master, that it might not be discovered who he really was, till he had completed and finished the whole Service for which he was sent. It was also necessary, that *Tobias*, by burning the Entrails, should give some Proof of his Belief of what *Raphael* assured him, and of his Compliance with the Direction given by him. And lastly, The Burning of the Entrails might be designed, and therefore enjoined, as a Sign only when the evil Spirit, by his superior Power, should be chased away.

Ver. 6. *Thou hast said, It is not good that Man should be alone, let us make unto him an Aid like unto himself.*] Ποιήσωμεν αὐτῷ βοηθὸν ὅμοιον αὐτῷ; one that should be as his second self, like him in Nature; one in whom he might see himself reflected as it were, and revived. The Greek Writer of this History follows here the LXX, which has in the Place referred to, *Gen.* ii. 18. Βοηθὸν καὶ αὐτὸν, *adju-torem secundum eum*, a Help meet for him, or one suited to his Wants and Inclinations, one agreeable to, and fit for him, by a Similitude of Temper and Manners; or it may be rendered, an Aid from himself, one taken from his own Rib, for so *Eve* was formed. And this Way of Formation was designed probably to intimate that close Love, and reciprocal Affection, which ought to be between Man and Wife. I shall only observe the Agreement between the Account here, and that in the LXX, that the Manner of Expression in both is plural, ποιήσωμεν, as if there was a Consultation about the Formation of his second self also, as at the first Creation of Man; which the *Vulg.* likewise retains.

Ver.



Ver. 7. *And now, O Lord, I take not this my Sister for Lust, but uprightly; therefore mercifully ordain, that we may become aged together.*] Ἐπιτάξον ἐλεῆσαι με, καὶ ταύτη συνκαταγαγεῖσθαι: The Construction is somewhat singular, like that c. iii. 15. See Note; *Grotius* thinks the true Reading to be, Ἐπιτάξον ἐλεῆσας με ταύτη συνκαταγαγεῖσθαι, omitting καὶ, which, I think, being emphatical here, might be better continued, i. e. in Mercy grant that even with her, who hath buried so many Husbands, and whom an evil Spirit pursues to the Destruction of all her Lovers, I may grow old, and escape the common Fate of the others. According to the *Vulg.* *Sara* puts up this Prayer, and that Version puts into her Mouth the very same, c. iii. 14. *Virum cum timore tuo, non cum libidine mea, consensu suscipere.* *Calmet* admires the Delicacy of this Sentiment in a young Man, and a Jew, one educated amongst a gross and carnal People; and proposes it to the Consideration and Imitation of all, that enter upon the conjugal State, as does *St. Austin*, *de Doctr. Christ.* c. 10.

Ver. 9. *Raguel arose, and went, and made a Grave, Ver. 10. saying, If fear, lest he also be dead.*] When *Raguel* gives his Daughter to *Tobias*, almost immediately after his Arrival, and consents so suddenly to the Marriage, the *Vulgate* observes, that it seem'd as if God had influenced his Heart to listen to the Proposal of *Raphael*, a Stranger to him, whom he considered only as a Man. It was such a strong Persuasion, that made him say, that he doubted not but his Prayers and Tears were accepted before God, for the Removal of the Disgrace which lay upon his Family, and that the Arrival of *Tobias* was by the Appointment of Providence, to espouse *Sara* his nearest Kinswoman, and therefore of right belonging to him: *Non dubito quin Deus preces & lachrymas meas in conspectu suo admiserit, & credo quoniam ideo fecit vos venire ad me, ut ista conjungeretur cognationi suæ secundum legem Moysi*; but it appears from the Account here, that *Raguel's* Faith and Confidence in this Match, and in what *Raphael* assured him for his Encouragement, was but faint, or was shaken afterwards; for had not the Apprehension been strong in him, that the same Fate which befel the others, would happen to *Tobias* in the same manner, he would never have given such hasty Orders to his Servants, to rise at Cock-crowing, according to the *Vulg.* to dig a Grave for his Interment. Though had he considered, that the present Marriage was made in the Fear of the Lord, and founded upon legal Right and Equity, and that the former Husbands were probably killed by the evil Spirit, either because they unjustly claimed the Right of Marriage with this Heiress, or that Lust was their principal Motive, he needed not to have had such foreboding Apprehensions about the Event of it, or provided for a Funeral before it happened.

Ver. 19. *And he kept the Wedding-Feast Fourteen Days.*] Rejoicings at the Jewish Weddings were esteemed so absolutely necessary, that the Husband could not any

ways be excused from them, but was obliged to have them for at least Seven Days; and even the Sabbath Day itself, according to *Calmet*, was accounted no Hindrance to the Feasting and Entertainments usual on such Occasions. From many Passages in Scripture it appears, that the Time of the Marriage Feast was usually Seven Days. *Fulfil her Week*, was *Laban's* Injunction to *Jacob*, *Gen.* xxix. 27. See *Judges* xiv. 10, 12. *Tob.* xi. 19. *Septem dies ad convivium & septem ad luctum*, was a Proverb among the Jews; *Lamy* says the Feast was for eight Days together, and of the third Day of such a Feast he understands those Words of *St. John* c. ii. 1. *on the third Day there was a Marriage*, &c. which he says should be translated, *on the third Day of the Marriage, which was in Cana*; and that this probably was the Reason why, upon the coming of our Lord and his Apostles, they wanted Wine, *Introd. to Scrip.* vol. i. p. 317. It is to be observed, that tho' the Time was usually limited to a Week, yet Parents of the espoused were at Liberty to make the Continuance of the Wedding Feast last as long as they thought fit. They could not shorten the Days, as the Jewish Doctors say, but they might considerably lengthen them. See *Buxtorf. Syn. Jud.* c. xxxv. *Selden's Uxor Heb.* l. ii. but *Raguel*, from the Satisfaction of his Son-in-Law's Escape from the Power and evil Intentions of *Asmodeus*, doubles the usual Number, or keeps the Nuptial Feast Fourteen Days; though, as she was a Widow, it ought to have continued no longer than Three Days, according to the *Rabbins*. The *Vulgate* mentions an Invitation given on the Occasion to all Friends and Neighbours, and sets down some Particulars of the Entertainment, *Uxori suæ dixit ut instrueret convivium . . . duas quoque pingues vaccas, & quatuor arietes occidi fecit, & parari epulas omnibus vicinis suis, cunctisque amicis.*

Ver. 20. *For before the Days of the Marriage were finished, Raguel had said unto him by an Oath, that he should not depart till the Fourteen Days of the Marriage were expired.*] According to the Sense that at first hearing offers itself, it seems as if *Raguel* had said to *Tobias*, before the Time was expired, that, he should not depart before the Time was expired. This is too insipid to be the Meaning, for if *Raguel* said this at all, he must, of course, be supposed to say it before the Time was expired. *Calmet* seems aware of this Objection, and makes the Sense to be, that before the End of the Seven Days, the usual Time allowed for such Rejoicings, *Gen.* xxix. 27. *Judg.* xiv. 12. *Raguel* had solemnly insisted upon his stay with them a longer Time, full Fourteen Days. It is uncertain from the *Gr.* whether *Raguel* swore that *Tobias* should not go, using this Expression, ἐνόχως μὴ ἐξελεῖν αὐτόν, or whether he obliged *Tobias*, ἐνόχως, by an Oath, to assure him, that he would not go. In the *Heb.* *Raguel* swears; according to the *Vulg.* he makes *Tobias* swear; but that it was *Raguel*, appears very plainly from c. ix. 3. x. 7.



## CHAP. IX.

Ver. 2. **A**ND go to Rages of Media to Gabael.] According to the *Vulg.* Sara, with whom they now were, lived at Rages, *Sara filia Raguelis in Rages civitate Medorum*, c. iii. 7. How therefore does Tobias ask Raphael to go to Rages? I answer, That this is either a Mistake, or all the Country or Province about Ecbatane was called Rages; and accordingly where our Translation has Rages, a City of Media, c. i. 14. the marginal Reading is, *in the Land or Country of Media*; and the Geneva Version has expressly in the Text, *in the Land of Media*; or Gabael might live in the City particularly called by that Name, answering to the great or County Town of one of our Shires. But the Truth is, Raguel lived at Ecbatane, c. iii. 7. vii. 1. which was at a Distance from Rages, c. vi. 9. vii. 1. and Raphael and Gabael are represented as returning from a Journey to Raguel's House, ver. 2. 6. As to the Objection which is founded on the *Vulg.* Rendering, c. iii. 7. it is to be observed, that the Gr. has there *ἐν Ἐκβατάνοις τῆς Μηδίας*, as also our Version. See Note on c. iii. 7.

Ver. 5. So Raphael went out and lodged with Gabael, and gave him the Hand-writing, who brought forth Bags which were sealed up, and gave them to him.] Tobias seeing himself pressed by Raguel, his Father-in-Law, to stay with him Fourteen Days, was unwilling to refuse him on account of the handsome Manner in which he had been received and entertained by him, and especially his new Relation to him; but as it was absolutely necessary to send to Gabael, and to exhibit to him the Note, or Hand-writing, in order to receive the Money, the Fear he had of disoblighing his own Parents, if he deferred his Return too long, and his Desire of testifying his grateful Acknowledgments to his Father-in-Law, by continuing with him the Time requested, made him contrive a Method to satisfy at once both these Obligations. He applies to, and prevails upon, Raphael, the holy Companion of his Journey, of whose Wisdom, Affection, and Fidelity, he had had sufficient Experience to undertake the Management of this Commission himself, and to set forward without him, but sufficiently authorized to receive this money, which he speedily and happily accomplishes. The *Vulg.* adds, that Tobias's Regard for Raphael was so great and extraordinary, for having conducted him through the Journey so successfully, and brought about a Match so advantageous to him, and for delivering him from the Jaws of the voracious Fish, and the Fury and Malice of the Demon *Asmodeus*, that he professed to him, that if he was for the future to be his Slave in return, he could not sufficiently repay the Obligations. It has been a Matter of much Enquiry among the Commentators, whether this Money was deposited and lodged only with Gabael at Rages, as a Place possibly of greater Security at that Time, as the Gr. and Heb. Copies mention,

or was really lent to him, probably to traffick with occasionally, as the *Vulg.* represents it; be this as it will, Gabael shewed himself an honest and punctual Man, by returning the Ten Talents instantly on a proper Demand; and Tobit proved himself no less a good Man, as St. Ambrose observes, by asking only the Principal, without any Consideration for the Greatness of the Sum, or the Length of the Time.

Ver. 6. And Tobias blessed his Wife.] Various are the Senses given of this Passage; *uxorem suam gravidam fecit*, says Bedwell, and the Geneva Version expressly has, *Tobias begat his Wife with Child*. Grotius conjectures, from the Authority of St. Jerom, that the Reading of the Gr. formerly was, *καὶ εὐλόγησε* (*παρρηλ*) *τωβίαν, καὶ τὴν γυναῖκα αὐτοῦ*, i. e. *ab-untibus bene precatus est*; but it does not appear that they were then setting forward, the Fourteen Days were not yet near expired. His blessing them on their Departure follows after, c. x. 11. Junius's rendering, inserted in the Margin, seems more probable, *Benedixit Gebabel Tobia & uxori ejus*. That Gabael, at his Arrival with Raphael, wished Tobias and his Wife all possible Joy and Happiness in their new Condition. Fagius's Heb. has, *ad quorum adventum adhuc magis benedictus fuit Tobias cum Sara uxore sua*, That upon the coming of these Guests to the Wedding, Tobias and Sara were more pleased and happy. Calmet, lastly, makes the Sense to be, That Tobias blessed, or was the Cause of Blessing and Happiness to his Wife, by the Advantage which he received from this Marriage, particularly his freeing her from the Tyranny of the evil Demon, and taking away the Reproach which before had attended her; instead whereof it would now be said, as a common Form of Benediction at future Weddings, to the Bride, *May you be as happy as was Sara, the Wife of Tobias*.

## CHAP. X.

Ver. 5. **N**OW I care for nothing my Son, since I have let thee go.] Οὐ μέλει μοι τέκνον, ὅτι ἀφῆκά σε. It is generally agreed, that the Reading of the Gr. here is corrupt. Various Conjectures have been proposed for restoring the true one, as *ὡς μέλει μοι*, and *οἱ μέλει μοι*. The last seems preferable, as being confirmed by Fagius's Heb. Copy, the Syr. *Vulg.* and Junius's Version, all of which render to this Effect, *Eheu! Pœnitet me, fili, quod dimiserim te*. And thus Coverdale, *Wo is me, my Sonne: Oh what ayled us to sende thee awaye into a straunge Countre?* To this great Concern of his Wife, occasioned by his long Absence, and an Apprehension of his Death, Tobit calmly and tenderly replies, that he would not have her be so discouraged and dejected; he was persuaded, through a strong Faith and Trust in God, that her Son was safe; that the Person he had entrusted him with might be depended upon for his Care; and that some unforeseen Accident on Gabael's Part, and not any Misfortune, had occasioned this



this Delay. One cannot but admire the exemplary Patience of *Tobit* on all Occasions, who, though poor, blind, old, and almost childless in every Sense, yet never desponds, or charges God foolishly.

Ver. 10. *Then Raguel arose, and gave him Sara his Wife, and half his Goods, Servants and Cattle, and Money.*] The Dowry which the Jewish Brides brought to their Husbands, which was different according to the Circumstances of their Parents, was called by the *Rabbins*, *Nedunia*. As *Sara* was an only Child, and disposed of in Marriage according to her Parents Wishes, and agreeably to the Appointment and Determination of the Mosaic Law, *Raguel* gives her half his Substance in Present, and engages to bestow the Remainder at his Death, c. viii. 21. Amongst the Goods mentioned here as given to *Tobias* are *σώματα*, or Servants, for so such as were altogether at the Beck and Will of their Lords, were called both by *Jews* and *Heathens*. The Sale of the captive *Jews*, by *Nicanor*, is called *ἀγορασιμὸς Ἰσδαίων σωμαίων*. 2 *Macc.* viii. 11. so all the Servants of the Men of *Sechem* are expressed by *πάντα τὰ σώματα αὐτῶν*, *Gen.* xxiv. 29. See also *Apoc.* xviii. 13. *Munster's* Version enumerates the Particulars of her Fortune, viz. *Famulos & ancillas, oves & boves, asinos & camelos, vestimenta linea & purpurea, vasa argentea & aurea.*

Ver. 12. *And he said to his Daughter, Honour thy Father and thy Mother-in-law, which are now thy Parents.*] *Sara* was shortly to leave her Abode with her natural Parents, and by Marriage to be placed, as the *Civilians* term it, *extra Familiam*; this Precept therefore was very properly, and affectionately inculcated, as the Duty of Honour and Reverence did not cease, but was transferred, or rather divided. "How happy (says the *Port Royal Comment*) is a Family when the Sentiments of Love are reciprocal; where those in the Family, whereunto the Bride enters, treat her with the Affection due to a Daughter, and the Daughter-in-law in like manner regards them as her Parents, and behaves in the same respectful and dutiful manner towards them! where such an undissembled Fondness reigns, there is great Reason doubtless to bless and pronounce Happiness to a Union, which Affection, as well as the Ties of Relation, have so closely joined: But as it too often happens that Relations so united, in time discover different Views, and act by separate Motives springing either from Jealousy or Interest, there is the less Reason to be surprized at seeing so many Heart-burnings and Differences in Families, and so little of true Love between Persons, who look upon each other with Distrust, instead of shewing that Tendernefs, which a Mother ought to have for a Daughter, and a Daughter for a Mother." *Comm. in loc.* After this Injunction to *Sara* to honour her new adopted Parents, the *Vulg.* adds, that she was directed

and instructed further, *Diligere maritum, regere familiam, gubernare domum, & seipsam irreprehensibilem exhibere.* Duties of the utmost Importance in the conjugal State, the Observance of which comprizes and finishes the Character of a good and accomplished Wife. The Direction is not unlike that of *St. Paul*, 1 *Tim.* v.

*Ibid.* *Edna* also said to *Tobias*, the Lord of Heaven restore thee, my dear Brother.] i. e. Grant thee a prosperous Journey, see c. xi. 1. and a safe Return. And thus *Calmet* expounds *Que le Seigneur vous fasse heureusement arriver chez vous*, which I presume is the Sense of *Munster's* Version, *Mi fili, Dominus Caelorum conducat te in pace.* *Junius's* Rendering is obscure and indeterminate, *Constituatur te dominus Caeli.* It may perhaps seem strange and unusual that *Edna* should call her Son-in-Law, *Brother*; but this is to be considered only as an Appellation of Tendernefs. See more Instances in *Note* on c. vii. 16.

*Ibid.* *I commit my Daughter unto thee of special Trust, wherefore do not intreat her evil.*] *Edna*, the Mother of *Sara*, consenting to part with her to *Tobias*, and that she should accompany him home to his House, gives him a strict Charge to take great Care of her, as of some important and valuable Treasure committed to his Trust, and to give her no Occasion of Uneasiness, or of Complaint against him. *Fagius's* Version adds a very moving and substantial Reason for this Request, *nam in locum peregrinum, ubi hospita erit, ipsa proficiscitur*; and that upon saying this, *Sauciatum quodammodo fuit cor ejus intra eam.* *St. Paul* has enjoined the like, where he orders *Husbands* to love their *Wives* and be not bitter against them, *Col.* iii. 19. For the Sorrow which bad Husbands occasion their *Wives* through ill Treatment, renders them the more inexcusable in the Sight of God, as the Weakness of their Sex calls rather for Protection, and obliges them, according to *St. Peter*, to render Honour and Esteem to them, 1 *Pet.* iii. 7. This they have in Charge, not only from the Parent, who gives them away, but from God himself, whose Ordinance and Institution Marriage is, and as he has made it an Emblem of that divine Love and Union which he bears to his Church, will avenge all Harshness and Injustice, that is at any time offered in Violation of it. The *Alex.* and most Copies conclude this Chapter with the Verse succeeding, which our Translation, following the *Rom.* or *Complut.* makes the Beginning of the next.

#### CHAP. XI.

Ver. 3. **L**ET us haste before thy Wife, and prepare the House.] As *Tobias's* Parents were uneasy at his long Stay, and did not expect that a Wife would accompany him in his Return, it was seasonable Advice of *Raphael's*, that they should go before, as well to satisfy his Father and Mother, and to free them from their anxious Solicitude about him,



him, as to prepare the House to the best Advantage, and dispose all things for the Reception of the Bride, and the lodging and accommodating so many Servants and Cattle as came along with him, and were Part of her Dowry. The *Vulg.* makes *Tobias* to arrive seven Days before his Wife, *Ingressa est etiam post septem dies Sara uxor filii ejus, & omnis familia sana, & pecora, & cameli, & pecunia multa uxoris, sed & illa pecunia quam receperat a Gabelo.* The Greek takes no Notice of this, but intimates rather her Arrival on the same Day. It seems as if there was no Foundation for such a Surmise; *Tobias* now bringing his Wife home as a Bride, would never be so uncomplaisant and unkind, as to leave her on the Road for so long a Time as seven Days only to Servants, and with such a great Charge of Money with them. It is more probable that *Sara*, tho' she did not make such Haste, as her Husband thro' the Impatience of seeing his Parents, and acquainting them with his Success and happy Change of Condition, may be supposed to have done, as being fatigued with so long a Journey, and unaccustomed to travel, at least so far, and hindered too by the long Train of Servants and Cattle accompanying her, and therefore obliged often to stop and refresh herself, notwithstanding these Remora's, I say, it is more probable that she arrived happily on the Evening of the same Day. When it is said in our Version, that they went on their way till they drew near unto *Niniveh*, the Meaning may be, that they all went together, till they approached so near that Place, as to be within a Day's or a few Hours Journey of it, and that then *Tobias* and *Raphael*, seeing them so far safe, and as it were in their own Neighbourhood set forward to give Notice of, and prepare for their coming.

Ver. 5. *Anna* sat looking about towards the Way for her Son.] *Vulg.* *Anna sedebat secus viam quotidie in supercilio montis*, see c. x. 7. This shews her great Eagerness and Impatience, which is well expressed by περιελεπομένη and προσεβόησεν, which follows, implies more than εἶδεν, viz. her seeing him at a Distance, and knowing him, *vidit a longe et illico agnovit*, for as Love is said to be blind upon occasion, so is it quick-sighted, ὁξυδερκής, in espying and discovering the beloved Object. This is finely represented in the Parable of the Prodigal Son, where the Father is described as seeing him, when he was yet a great Way off, and upon his Approach falling on his Neck, and kissing him, *Luke* xv. 20. As his Mother expresses the like Tenderness to *Tobias* ver. 9. *Horace* feelingly describes the Uneasiness arising from the Absence of a favourite Child, when he says,

*Ut mater juvenem, quem notus invido  
Flatu Carpathii trans maris aquora  
Cunctantem spatium longius annuo  
Dulci distinet a domo,*

*Votis omnibus hunc & precibus vocat,  
Curvo nec faciem littore demovet.*

*Carm. L. iv. Od. 5.*

and it is very observable, that a learned Annotator on the Passage illustrates this by the very Instance of *Tobias* and his Mother. *Desprez. in loc.*

Ver. 10. *Tobit* also went forth towards the Door, and stumbled: But his Son ran unto him. Ver. 11. And took hold of his Father, and he strake off the Gall on his Father's Eyes.] *Tobit's* hurrying out, or, as the *Vulg.* has it, running to meet his Son upon Notice of his Arrival, or probably hearing his Voice, and in his Haste forgetting his Blindness, and stumbling at the Threshold; and *Tobias's* running to him, not merely to pay his Duty to him, but to catch hold of him to prevent his Falling, and to support him while he embraced him, are Circumstances extremely natural: His Impatience likewise for his Father's Cure, whose Blessing he had just received, and instantly putting the Gall on his Eyes, from a Confidence in what *Raphael* assured him of its sovereign Efficacy, without asking, or staying for his Leave, and postponing the Relation of his Journey, and the Success attending it, to administer to the Help of a blind and aged Father, are uncommon Instances of filial Tenderness.

Ver. 13. And the Whiteness pilled away from the Corners of his Eyes; and when he saw his Son, he fell upon his Neck.] See *Acts* ix. 18. where *St. Luke*, the beloved Physician, speaking of *Saul's* recovering his Sight, says, that, upon *Ananias's* putting his Hands upon him, immediately there fell from his Eyes, as it had been Scales, and he received Sight forthwith. The *Vulg.* is very particular in the Description of this Cure, *Sustinuit quasi dimidiam fere horam, & cepit albugo ex oculis ejus, quasi membrana ovi, egredi; quam apprehendens Tobias traxit ab oculis ejus, & statim visum recepit.* It is a Matter of Dispute whether *Tobit* recovered his Sight by the natural Effect of the Medicine, or by a Miracle. Many assert the Cure to be purely natural. It does not appear that *Tobit's* Eyes were hurt inwardly, or that the Pupil, or Optic Nerve were damaged; or the Humours any way altered: The Accident is supposed to consist in a white Speck, Pearl, or Film that was formed on the Cornea, or the outward Coat of the Eye (through an Inflammation arising from the Dung of Swallows, which is of a hot and caustic Quality) which hindring the Rays of Light from falling on the Retina, suspended the Use of that Organ. Now the Gall of some Fishes, being very good, say they, against Distempers in the Eyes, and especially to remove Whiteness, or Pearls in them, in the Opinion of many Naturalists and Physicians, there is no Necessity to have Recourse to a Miracle to account for this Cure, as the Gall of this might have that Virtue: Indeed there is an Objection as to the Time, it being



ing scarcely possible that the Gall of any Fish should naturally produce such an Effect in about half an Hour, the Time assigned by the *Vulgate*. But if we consider that the Prescription was communicated by the Angel *Raphael*, who taught *Tobias* the Virtue of the Remedy, and the Method of applying it, unknown, perhaps, before; if it be not miraculous on that Account, it may at least intimate, that some supernatural Power or Blessing went along with the Use of the natural Means, and principally effected the Cure; as the mere washing in the Pool did not of itself cure the impotent, but the Angel that attended, and first troubled the Waters, *John v. 4.* There is an Instance of as great a Cure, and mentioned to be founded on this of *Tobit's*, recorded by *Gregory of Tours*, concerning his own Father, *Florentius rediivo calore captatus est, accenditur febris, intumescunt pedes, dolor pessimus intorquet: Perendinata pestis hominem contriverat, jam pene conclamatus jacebat. Interea puer (filius Gregorius Turon.) vidit iterum in somno personam, sese, utrumne librum Tobiae cognitum haberet, interrogantem. Respondit, Nequaquam. Qui ait, Noveris hunc fuisse cæcum, atque per filium ex jecore piscis, Angelo comitante, curatum. Tu ergo fac similiter, & salvabitur genitor tuus. Hæc ille matri retulit, quæ confestim pueros ad amnem direxit: Piscis capitur, quæ de extis jussa fuerant, prunis imponuntur; non fefellit virum eventus, ut enim primo fumus odoris in naribus patris reslavit, protinus omnis ille tumor, dolorque recessit. De Gloria Confess. c. xl.* If this has the Appearance of the marvellous in it, yet doubtless the Relation of a Son, and of such a Son, concerning his own Father, deserves some Credit; and as it is grounded manifestly on the History of *Tobit*, it is no small Testimony of the Reality and Worth of it. And perhaps his Design, as well as that of the Writer of *Tobit*, might be to advance the Belief of angelical Visions, and Communications with good and holy Men.

Ver. 18. *And Achiacharus, and Nasbas his Brother's Son came.*] *ὁ ἐξάδελφος αὐτοῦ.* *Druſius* thinks the true Reading is, *οἱ ἐξάδελφοι αὐτοῦ*, from the Authority, I presume, of the *Vulg.* which has *venerunt Achior & Nabath consobrini Tobie.* *Grotius's* Conjecture seems preferable, *ὁ ὁ Ναββάς, i. e.* he who was called also *Nasbas*; for it was not unusual for a Person to have two Names, especially in a Time of Captivity. It is certain that *Achiacharus* was *ἐξάδελφος αὐτοῦ*, *Tobit's* Brother's Son, *i. e.* his Brother *Anael's* Son, c. i. 21. and it appears from the Singular Number here being used, that only one Person is spoken of. *Junius* is of the same Opinion, as the Margin acquaints us.

Ver. 19. *And Tobias's Wedding was kept Seven Days with great Joy.*] It is improperly here called *γάμος*, which was celebrated at *Raguel's* House Fourteen Days, c. viii. 19. This rather refers to the *τὰ ἐπαύλια*, or as the *Latins* term it, *repositia*, an Entertainment

made at the Bride's Return, or bringing home. It is no Wonder that the Wedding was kept with uncommon Joy, considering the Advantage arising to *Tobias* by marrying such an Heiress, and the many concurring agreeable Circumstances which fell out at this Time, as his Son's safe Return, his receiving the Ten Talents by him, and which was of greater Consequence, and more acceptable to him, the Recovery of his Sight at his Age, after being deprived of it Eight Years, c. xiv. 2. As Weddings were attended with extraordinary Demonstrations of Joy, the *Hebr.* Word, which signifies a Wedding, is sometimes rendered by the *Lxx*, *δοχὴ*, a Banquet, *Gen. xxvi. 30. Esth. i. 3. v. 4, 8, 12, 14.* sometimes a Feast, and once *χαρὰ*, Joy itself, *Esth. ix. 17.* And in the Gospel the partaking of the Marriage Feast or Supper, is called entering into the Joy of his Lord. The Wedding House was called *Beth-Hillula*, the House of Praise, and the Marriage Song, *Hillalim*, Praises. And so *Pf. lxxviii. 63.* the Words, *Their Maidens were not given to Marriage*, are by the *Chaldee* Paraphrase rendered, *are not celebrated with Epithalamiums*, and by *Aquila*, *ἐκ ὑμνήσεων*.

## CHAP. XII.

Ver. 3. **F**OR he hath brought me again to thee in Safety, and made whole my Wife, and brought me the Money, and likewise healed thee.] The *Vulg.* reckons up Seven good Offices which *Raphael* brought to pass. 1. Carrying *Tobias* into *Media*, and reconducting him safely. 2. Providing him with a good and virtuous Wife. 3. Chasing away the evil Spirit *Asmodeus*, and preventing his hurting *Tobias*. 4. Occasioning great Joy to the Parents on both Sides. 5. Delivering *Tobias* from the Jaws of the great voracious Fish. 6. Restoring Sight to *Tobit*. 7. Instructing *Tobias* by wise Counsels, and enriching him with things spiritual. The extraordinary Care which the Angel *Raphael* took of the Person under his Guidance and Direction, is generally understood as a Figure of the invisible Care, which the Angels take of good Men, and as a Pattern of the Zeal and Diligence, where-with the Ministers of God ought to watch over the Souls committed to their Charge.

Ver. 5. *So he called the Angel, and he said unto him, Take half of all that ye have brought, and go away in Safety.* Ver. 6. *Then he took them both apart, and said unto them, Bless God, and praise him for the things which he hath done unto you in the sight of all that live.*] *Tobit* would have acted like a just Man in paying only the Wages at first agreed on, *viz.* a Drachm, or two Drachms a Day, but as *Tobias* was thoroughly convinced, that he could not do too much to recompence the Services done him by *Raphael*, he moves his Father for a much greater Allowance: And he could not certainly testify his Acknowledgment in a more generous Manner, than in offering him the Half of what they had brought



brought back, and he had been chiefly instrumental in procuring, and to divide the Inheritance with him like a Brother. After this great Offer made him both by Father and Son, he immediately takes the Opportunity privately to make himself known to them, and to acquaint them that he had no occasion for any Part of their Substance; that he was pleased with this Proof of their Gratitude, and the Sense they had of the great Mercies shewed them, but that the Acknowledgment and Praise was due only to that great God which sent him, who hath Power over unclean Spirits, can give Sight to the Blind, and bring about the great Purposes of his Will by Means seemingly the most unlikely and improbable.

Ver. 7. *It is good to keep close the Secrets of a King, but it is honourable to reveal the Works of God.*] The Counsels of Princes should be inviolable and impenetrable, and the Secrets of the Soul locked up both in themselves and Ministers; without this Caution their Enemies will have a great Advantage against them, and the wisest and best concerted Schemes will fail of Success. Where the great Affairs which pass in the Cabinets of Princes are suffered to transpire, and get abroad thro' Weakness or Treachery, in vain does the Politician lay Schemes, or the General receive Orders; foreign Courts soon get the Intelligence, and the Design proves abortive. The Emperor *Tiberius*, being asked why he was so reserved and cautious in consulting with Friends in Matters of Importance relating to the State, wisely answered, "That a Prince's Mind should be known to none, or but a very few; for the Generality of Persons consulted with, had not the Gift of Secrecy, and could not refrain talking of what was under Agitation, whereby a Prince was disappointed of his Aims, and his Counsels frustrated." *Dio in Tiber.* Nor was *Metellus's* Answer to an inquisitive Friend less to be admired, *I would burn my very Shirt, if I thought it was privy to what passed in my Breast.* *Pliny c. lxi. De viris illustr.* But the Works of God the more they are made manifest and revealed, the more they promote his Honour and Glory. Neither the Malice, Power, or evil Designs of Men can frustrate his Intentions. He would not be jealous or uneasy least any should discover his Designs, or penetrate into his Views, even tho' the human Spirit was capable of entering into and searching the deep Things of God. He rather encourages a modest Enquiry into his Works, and the more they are understood the more they proclaim his Glory, and call for a larger Tribute of Praise and Thanksgiving. And accordingly the Saints both of the *Old* and *New Testament*, as *Moses*, *Debora*, *David*, *Hezekiah*, *Zachariah*, the Father of *John the Baptist*, devout old *Simeon*, and the Blessed *Virgin* herself, have left behind them eternal Monuments of their Praise and Acknowledgment, in the exalted Songs composed by them.

In ver. 11. following this Apothegm, *It is good to keep close the Secrets of a King, but honourable to reveal the Works of God*, is repeated: If it was there enclosed in a Parenthesis, the Sense would be better connected. It is observable, that the *Vulg.* *Syr.* and *Munster's* Version omit it in that Place.

*Ibid.* *Do that which is good, and no Evil shall touch you.*] The Sentiment is somewhat like that of *St. Paul*, *We know that all things work together for good to them that love God*, *Rom. viii. 28.* To the same Purpose the wise *Son of Sirach*, *There shall no Evil happen to him that feareth the Lord*, *Ecclus xxxiii. 1.* Tully comes near these Writers, when he says, *Nunquam viro bono quicquam mali evenire potest, nec vivo, nec mortuo; nec unquam ejus res a Diis immortalibus negliguntur.*

Ver. 8. *Prayer is good with Fasting, and Alms, and Righteousness.*] Not that Prayer is indifferent, or unavailable without Fasting and Alms, but the Meaning is, that Prayer is better, or more prevalent, when joined with the other. *St. Austin* says, that Fasting and Alms are like two Wings to Prayer, wafting it up to Heaven. Our Saviour joins all three together, *Matth. c. vi.* as Duties equally to be observed, and helping one another. *Δικαιοσύνη*, or Righteousness, seems to have come in here, either from the following Sentence, or from the *Margin*; it is omitted by *St. Cyprian* and other *Fathers* quoting this Passage. *Ελεημοσύνη* and *δικαιοσύνη*, are often in the *Greek* exegetically put, the one to expound the other, and so we find it in this and the following Verse: But in the *Hebrew* there is but one Word for both. Thus in that known Place of *Daniel c. iv. 27.* where the *Vulg.* reads, *Peccata tua elemosynis redime, & iniquitates tuas misericordiis pauperum*, (and the rendering of the *LXX* is in the same Manner.) Our Version, following the *Hebrew* has, *Break off thy Sins by Righteousness, and thine Iniquities by shewing Mercy to the Poor.* And so in the *Syr.* and *Arab. Translation* of the *New Testament*, Alms is expressed by a Word signifying Righteousness; and the *Latin Interpreter* renders it by *justitia*. See also *Matt. vi. 1.* where the *Vulg.* has, *Attendite ne justitiam vestram faciatis coram hominibus; take heed that you do not your Righteousness, i. e. Alms, before Men; and* and some *Greek Copies* favour this Rendering. For this Acceptation of Righteousness, see *Pf. xxxvii. 21, 25, 26. cxii. 6. Prov. x. 2. xi. 4. xxi. 26.* and *Mede's Works, B. i. Disc. 22.*

Ver. 9. *For Alms doth deliver from Death, and shall purge away all Sin: Those that exercise Alms and Righteousness, shall be filled with Life.*] Though Life eternal is not mentioned, yet it is here meant, and is the true Sense of the Passage. The *Vulg.* accordingly expresses it, *Facit invenire misericordiam & vitam eternam.* Alms certainly are not a natural Means to procure a long and happy Life, tho' God, by blessing the charitable Man, is pleased often so to order it. *Tabit* him-



himself is an Instance of the Poverty to which those are sometimes reduced, who shew most Zeal in exercising Works of Charity. The Verse following confirms this Sense, *They that sin are enemies to their own Life, i. e. they bring upon themselves Death and Destruction; or they expose themselves to eternal Misery.* If we understand this of the natural Term of Life only, or of the certain Happiness of it, the Observation is not just, as the Wicked and Undeserving often enjoy a longer and more prosperous State of Life, than the Righteous; as the *Psalmist*, and holy Prophets, frequently complain in their Writings, and even expostulate with God upon the Occasion. When it is here said, that Alms shall purge away all Sin, we are not to understand these Words in so extensive and absolute a Sense, as if they implied, that Charity shall purge away, or cover all manner of Sins and Transgressions, how gross, and heinous soever, but in such a limited Sense, as that Passage, *1 Pet. iv. 8.* is generally interpreted, *Charity shall cover the multitude of Sins, i. e. it shall cover many lesser Failings and Neglects, many Sins of Infirmary, Surprise, and daily Incurfion, which are properly enough for their Number styled the Multitude of Sins.* Solomon has the like Observation, expressed almost in the same Words, *That by Mercy and Truth Iniquity is purged, Prov. xvi. 6.* and the Son of Sirach explains the great Efficacy of Charity, by a very apt Comparison, *As Water quenbeth flaming Fire, so Alms maketh an Atonement for Sins, Eccles. iii. 30.* See also *Dan. iv. 27.*

Ver. 12. *When thou didst pray, I did bring the Remembrance of your Prayers before the Holy One.*] The Notion that the Angels, as Ministers of God, presented to him the Supplications of Mankind, was very ancient; the Heathens themselves thought, that the Office of Angels was to serve as Messengers between the Gods and Men, to present to the former the Prayers and Sacrifices of Men, and to bring back to them Orders from above, and to return the Fruits of their Petitions. The *Platonists* in particular held, that Demons, or Angels were of a middle Nature betwixt Gods and Mortals, that they brought our Prayers and Offerings to them, and their Commands to us, *Plato in Convivio. Inter homines, says Apuleius, cœlicolasque vectores hinc precum, inde donorum, qui ultro citro portant hinc petitiones, inde suppetias, ceu quidam utriusque interpretes & salutigeri. De Deo Socrat.* So *Lucian* describes *Mercury* as attending upon *Jupiter* for the like Purpose, τῷ Διὶ παριστάται, καὶ διαφέρειν τὰς ἀγγελίας, τὰς παρ' αὐτοῦ, ἄνω καὶ κάτω. *Philo* gives us the Sentiments of his Nation on this Subject, describing them, as Messengers of good Things from God to his Creatures, and carrying back to God their Exigencies and Wants. *De Gigant.* Indeed all among the Jews, except the *Sadducees*, embraced this Notion, and from this Opinion probably sprung that *θεσηκεία τῶν Ἀγγέλων*, or Worship of Angels, condemned by *St. Paul, Col. ii. 18.* And not

only the Fathers, but even the Scriptures seem to represent the Angels as thus commissioned, and employed. When *Gabriel* tells *Zachariah*, that his Prayer was heard, *Luke i. 13.* and the Angel, *Cornelius*, that his Prayers and Alms were come up for a Memorial before God, it seems no improbable Conclusion, that they have some Knowledge at least of the Success of the Prayers of the Saints. But *St. John's* Vision, if we may argue from thence, and the Angel there mentioned, was indeed one merely of their Order, most strongly countenances what *Raphael* here mentions of himself, *I saw another Angel standing at the Altar, having a golden Censer, and there was given unto him much Incense, that he should offer it with the Prayers of all Saints upon the golden Altar, which was before the Throne. And the Smoke of the Incense which came with the Prayers of the Saints ascended up before God, out of the Angel's Hand, Revel. viii. 3, 4.*

Ver. 13. *And when thou didst not delay to rise up, and leave thy Dinner, to go and cover the Dead, thy good Deed was not hid from me; but I was with thee.*] Something further must be contained in these Words, than what is expressed, or else the Sense will be the same with the End of the foregoing Verse. *St. Cyprian (De mortalitate)* reads, *Quia non es cunctatus derelinquere prandium tuum, abiisti, & condidisti mortuum, missus sum tentare te.* The *Vulg.* renders in like manner, or rather more fully, *Quando mortuos abscondebas per diem in domo tua, & nocte sepeliebas eos, ego obtuli orationem tuam Domino; & quia acceptus eras Deo, necesse fuit ut probatio tentaret te.* *Munster* reads yet more explicitly, *Because of your good Deeds in burying the Dead, therefore God has tried you by this Blindness, for so God chuses to prove his faithful Servants.* The *Syr. Version* is to the same Purpose. What makes this Interpretation the more probable is, that after the mention of *Tobit's* great Zeal in burying the Dead, c. ii. 7, 8. immediately follows the Account of his Blindness, as if by the Infliction of it, a further Proof was required from him of his Faith and Patience under Afflictions. And it should seem from the Context, that his Blindness was not by mere Accident, but by God's Order and Appointment, and perhaps thro' the Ministry, and by the Hand of this very Angel. This Interpretation at least has some Countenance from the Beginning of the next Verse.

Ver. 14. *And now God hath sent me to heal thee, and Sara thy Daughter-in-law.*] i. e. God having visited you with Blindness, hath sent me now to restore you; or having proved you by this great Affliction of Blindness, and found you perfect, has sent me again to heal you; for so *St. Cyprian* reads the Passage, *iterum me misit Deus curare te,* as if the Copy he used had, καὶ πάλιν, instead of καὶ νῦν, the present Reading. With Respect to *Sara's* Cure, the *Vulg.* is very explicit, *Ut Saram uxorem filii tui a demonio liberarem.*



Ver. 15. *I am Raphael one of the Seven holy Angels which present the Prayers of the Saints, and which go in and out before the Glory of the Holy One.*] This Expression, like that *Matth. xviii. 10.* seems only to signify their Intimacy in the Court of Heaven, and their Attendance upon God, as his Retinue, Servants, or Messengers to do his Pleasure. *Munster's Hebr. Copy* makes no mention of Seven Angels. Some Interpreters maintain, that we are not to understand the Passage of Seven distinct Angels precisely, but that Seven is put for an indefinite Number; as in some Places of holy Scripture. For it is certain, that there are infinitely more than Seven Angels before the Throne of God. In *Dan. vii. 10. Rev. v. 11.* mention is made of Thousand thousands, ministring unto him, and Ten thousand times ten thousand, standing before him. Others are of Opinion, that there are Seven principal Angels, the most exalted, most glorious, and chief of the heavenly Host, that hold the first Rank in the Hierarchy of Angels, and are as Princes in the Court of the sovereign Lord of the Universe. That some Angels were under the Command of others, seems probable from *Zechar. ii. 3.* The Jews have an ancient Tradition, that there are Seven principal Angels, which minister before the Throne of God, and are therefore called *Archangels*, some of whose Names we have in Scripture; as *Michael*, whom *Daniel* styles one of the chief Princes, *c. x. 3. Gabriel ix. 21. Luke i. 19.* here we have *Raphael*, and *2 Esdras iv. 36.* mention is made of *Uriel*, or as others read, *Jeremiel*, the Archangel. *Clemens Alex.* says expressly, ἐπὶ αὐτῶν εἰσὶν οἱ τὴν μεγίστην δύναμιν ἔχοντες, πρωτόγονοι ἀγγέλων ἀρχόντες, i. e. *Principes primarii, seu primogeniti angelorum principes.* There are several Passages in the Book of *Revelations*, which seem to confirm this Tradition, *c. i. 4. iv. 5. and v. 6.* but the most express is, *c. viii. 2. I saw the Seven Angels, οἱ ἐνώπιον τοῦ Θεοῦ ἑστῆ- κασι, an Expression very much resembling this of Tobit, I am Raphael, one of the Seven Angels which stand and minister before the Holy Blessed One, i. e. God.* For this, according to a very learned Writer, is the true Rendering. The Greek indeed hath, οἱ προσά- ναφύουσι τὰς προσευχὰς τῶν ἁγίων, κ. τ. λ. but neither *St. Jerom*, who translated it out of the *Chaldee*, nor *Fagius's* ancient *Hebr. Copy*, perhaps translated from the same *Chaldee* Original, hath any such Reading, and therefore it seems an Addition or Liberty of the Greek Translator, who thought their Ministry to consist in presenting the Prayers of the Saints, and translated accordingly. *Mede's Works, Disc. x.* The Notion of Seven supreme Angels *Grotius* conceives to be drawn from the Seven chief Princes of the *Persian Empire*: And indeed the Number Seven has given Rise to some other Conjectures, as that they have the Charge over the Seven principal Parts of the World, as some are pleased to divide it; that they preside over the Seven

Planets, and direct the Influences of them, &c. which are Speculations rather curious than useful. One of the considerable Objections against the Authority of this Book, is the representing the Angel *Raphael* here, as offering up the Prayers of the Saints before the Throne of God, which has been thought an Invasion upon *Christ's* mediatorial Office: But if we allow guardian Angels, that they pass from Heaven to Earth, and from Earth to Heaven, and make a Report of their Charge to the Deity, as our Saviour's own Words seem to intimate, the Passage may then be defended, so that we attribute to the Angels, such Offering of the Prayers of good Men, as is merely ἱκετικὴ, not ἱλαστικὴ.

Ver. 16. *Then they were both troubled, and fell upon their Faces, for they feared.* Ver. 17. *But he said unto them, Fear not, for it shall go well with you.*] It is easy to imagine their Fright upon hearing so surprizing a Relation, and probably seeing, upon their Eyes being opened and rightly disposed, that he, whom they had hitherto took for a Man, and had entertained as a Hireling, was a quite different sort of being, and that it was an Angel of God, whom they had so long conversed with. Upon this Discovery, the Text says, that they fell on their Faces; and no Wonder that they were so affected, as it was an Opinion among the Jews in those Days, that if they saw apparently an Inhabitant of the other World, he came to call them away from this; as appears fully from the Story of *Manoah* and his Wife, *Judg. xiii. 22.* See also *Gen. xxxii. 30. Exod. xxxiii. 20.* but the Angel comforts them, by bidding them fear no Harm, or, as others explain it, by wishing them all manner of Happiness; as another does *Gideon*, who cried, *Alas, O Lord God, for I have seen an Angel of the Lord Face to Face*; by saying, *Peace be unto thee, fear not, thou shalt not die, Judg. vi. 23.* It is an Observation of some of the Fathers, that good Angels comfort those in the Event, whom at first they frightened by their Appearance; but evil Angels on the contrary fill those with Horror and Trouble, whom they appear to.

Ver. 18. *For not of any Favour of mine, but by the Will of our God I came; wherefore praise him for ever.*] The Notion of Angels presenting Prayers to God, has given Rise to the Invocation of them. See *Chemnit. Exam. p. 3. de Sanct. Invoc.* and, amongst other Passages, the foregoing Verse is brought to countenance this Error. But what *Raphael* here says of himself, that he came not out of any Favour of his own, but by the Will of God, the God of Angels, and of Men, who sent him on this Commission, seems to destroy what has been wrongfully built upon it. For tho' he mentions his high Dignity and Office, at the same Time he acknowledges himself but a Servant; that the Commission he was now executing, was not by his own Choice; neither his Affection, nor Power had any Concern or Direction in it; but God's good Pleasure.



Pleasure. He seems to guard against their paying him any Tribute of religious Thanks, as being only a Messenger in the Court of Heaven, and by directing them to praise God *only* for the Mercies received; not unlike that Exhortation to St. *John*, who fell down to worship before the Feet of the Angel, *Worship God*, Revel. xxii. 8, 9. It may be presumed, indeed, that in that State of Blessedness, which they enjoy in the heavenly *Jerusalem*, from which we are at a great Distance, these loving Spirits look upon us favourably, as Persons travelling thither; that they are touched with a Concern and Compassion for us, and, by the Will and Appointment of God, aid and assist us in our Return towards our common Country, that we may be blessed and happy with them in the Communion of the Saints triumphant; but we are no where warranted to pray to them to conduct us thither. Thus St. *Austin*, *Attendunt nos peregrinos, & misereantur nos, & jussu Domini auxiliantur nobis, ut ad illam patriam communem aliquando redeamus, & ibi cum illis fonte Dominico veritatis & eternitatis aliquando saturemur.* In Psal. lxxii.

Ver. 19. *All those Days I did appear unto you, but I did neither eat nor drink, but you did see a Vision.*] The Geneva Version seems preferable, *I did neither eat nor drink, but you saw it in Vision.* The *Vulg.* here renders, *Videbar vobiscum manducare & bibere, sed ego cibo invisibili & potu, qui ab hominibus videri non potest, utor.* See Gen. xviii. 8. xix. 3. where, though the Text says of the Angels, which were Guests unto *Abraham* and *Lot*, that they did eat, that must be, and is generally understood by Interpreters, to be done only seemingly, or in Appearance. And thus also some would understand *Luke* xxiv. 43. *ἐνώπιον αὐτῶν ἔφαγεν*, but it seems most probable, that our Saviour did really eat before them after his Resurrection, to prove to them, that his Body was truly raised, and that he was not a Phantom or Spirit. St. *Austin* indeed says, “That we ought not to believe “that Angels eat only in Appearance, when “we read of their being entertained hospitably; though it may be true that Men are “often deceived in supposing them to eat out “of Necessity, like themselves, as *Tobias* “was in supposing *Raphael* to eat through “Necessity like others, and for the Support “and Nourishment of his Body. The Bodies of the Just, when they shall be raised, “will have no need of bodily Nourishment, “as they will have no Hunger nor Thirst, “and though they may have the Power to “eat, yet will they not be forced to it by any “Necessity. After this sort we are to conceive of Angels eating, when at any time “they have appeared under the sensible and “visible Figure of a human Body; not that “they then eat through any Necessity or Want, “but because they chose to do it to familiarize and ingratiate themselves with those “for whose Service God sent them. The “Difference between them and Mortals in

“this respect, continues he, may be exemplified by Water drawn up, and exhaled by “the Sun, or sucked in by the parched and “thirsty Earth; the former does it wholly “by his Power, the latter through Necessity, “and the want of such a Refreshment, *aliter “absorbet terra aquam sitiens, aliter solis “radius candens; illa indigentia, ista potentia,*” Epist. 99. But this Explanation will not prove the Point it was brought to illustrate; for if by eating we understand either the putting Meat into the Mouth, chewing it, and its going into the Stomach, or else the nourishing, and turning into the Substance of the Body what is eaten; in either of these Senses, it is certain Angels do not really eat, for it is inconceivable how they can perform the first, as what they assume is only an aerial Appearance of a Body, not gross or carnal, or having any Parts proper for Mastication or Digestion. 2dly, Allowing that Angels have no occasion for Nourishment, as they perceive no Decay of their Substance, nor want to repair their Strength, as Bodies do, through the Loss by Exercise and Perspiration, yet, upon the Supposition that they eat, what becomes, it may be asked, of the Viands which they partake of? *Calmet* therefore, as if sensible of these Objections, supposes *Raphael* to make, what he seemingly carries to his Mouth, to vanish in an instant, and to disappear to the Eyes of all present. And indeed though it may with some carry the suspicious Air of *Legerdemain*, yet how shall we account for what the Scripture affirms on this occasion, without supposing some *deceptio visus*, or Illusion on the Senses?

Ver. 20. *Write all Things which are done in a Book.*] ’Tis commonly believed that *Tobit* and *Tobias* wrote their own History. This Opinion is principally founded upon the Angel’s commanding them to *write all Things that were done in a Book.* In the *Vulg.* it is only, *Narrata omnia mirabilia ejus*, but in the *Heb. Gr.* and the older *Latin* Version it is, *ye shall write, &c.* A second Argument is, because in the *Gr. Syr.* and *Hebr.* Copies, they speak of themselves *ἀποστολῶντες*, or in the first Person. See *Dupin’s Prelim. Dissert.* p. 20. *Huetius* thinks the Twelve first Chapters were wrote by *Tobit* the Father; the whole Thirteenth Chapter, and Part of the Fourteenth, all but the last two Verses, by *Tobias* the Son, and that these, as mentioning his Death, were added by some uncertain Author, probably one of the Family, *Demonstr. Evangel. Prop.* 4. After this *Eclaircissement* and Explanation, the ordering what passed to be noted in a Book, was doubtless to advance and propagate the Belief of angelical Visions, and Communications with holy Men, according to received *Jewish* Notions; as what follows in the Remainder of the Chapter, of future glorious Times, and of the last and most distinguished State of the Church in the new *Jerusalem*, built as of God with precious Stones, was to comfort the afflicted and persecuted *Jews*, with a Prospect of the approaching Ruin



Ruin of their Persecutors, and their certain Deliverance and Exaltation.

Ver. 22. *Then they confessed the great and wonderful Works of God, and how the Angel of the Lord had appeared unto them.*] The Rendring of the *Vulg.* here is very observable, *Tunc prostrati per horas tres in faciem benedixerunt Deum.* I shall conclude this Chapter with a fine Reflection from the *Port Royal* Comment, upon the devout Behaviour of these Persons for Mercies purely temporal: "How ought the Consideration of this to affect such who know and are persuaded, that not one particular Angel, but the Lord of all those blessed Spirits hath conversed with them, not for the Space of a few Months, but for Thirty-three Years; and during all that Time laboured by the Example of his Life, Words, and Sufferings, not to cure one or two particular Persons only, but to save a lost World! How great ought their Tribute of Thanksgiving to be, and with what Prostration of Soul and Body should they appear before his Throne, from a Sense of the far greater Things done for them; when they consider this surprising Mystery, this most exalted Instance of Love and Philanthropy, God emptying himself of his Majesty, for the Redemption of his Creatures!" *Comm. in loc.*

#### CHAP. XIII.

Ver. 2. **F**OR he doth scourge, and bath Mercy, he leadeth down to Hell, and bringeth up again.] We meet with the like Sentiment *Wisd. xvi. 13. Thou hast Power of Life and Death, thou ledest to the Gates of Hell, and bringest up again.* The Expression in both Places seems to be taken from *1 Sam. ii. 6. The Lord killeth and maketh alive, he bringeth down to the Grave, and bringeth up.* "What Consolation do these Words administer to one of sound Faith; and how refreshing is it to the afflicted Servants of God, to be assured, that the Chastisement by which he proves their Virtue tendeth to their good, and will end happily at the last! To murmur at God's Dispensations, is a sure Mark of a weak Faith, since the same Hand that leadeth down to the Gates of Death, is as mighty to save, and to bring from thence him that is ready to perish. A Consideration that should induce us under all Afflictions, to cast our Care upon him who careth for us." *Port. Roy. Comm. in loc.* This Prayer of *Tobit's*, in which he foretells not only what should happen to *Israel*, and to the holy Temple at *Jerusalem*, but also the future triumphant State of God's Church, was probably inserted by his Son *Tobias*, who, from the Beginning of this Chapter, continues the History to the two last Verses. *Munster's Hebr. Copy* has at the Entrance of it, *In tempore illo scripsit Tobias omnes sermones istos cum gaudio, dixitque Tobæus, Benedictus Dominus, &c.*

Ver. 3. *Confess him before the Gentiles, ye Children of Israel, for he hath scattered us among them.*] The Jews were carried away from their own Land by *Salmanassar*, and *Tiglath Palassar*, Kings of *Assyria*, and dispersed in all the Provinces of the Kingdom of *Babylon*, *Esth. iii. 8.* and through various Parts of the *East*; this was done, says the *Vulg.* that they might publish the wonderful Works of God in the Land of their Captivity, and convince the Heathen, *Quia non est alius Deus omnipotens præter eum.* As the Wisdom of God knows how to raise his own Glory from Events seemingly indifferent, so the Captivity of the *Israelites* contributed to spread his Honour among the Nations in several Respects. 1st, They were, or might be, convinced of the Power and Justice of God, in that they saw almost an entire Nation delivered over to Captivity, and reduced to a State of Slavery and Bondage, as a Punishment for their Sins, even by the Confession of the Captives themselves. 2dly, Hereby the Law of the Lord, the Scriptures his Word, and the Prophecies contained in them, were spread and propagated through all *Asia*, which would one Day dispose that People to know and turn to the Lord God, and embrace his true Worship: Which was the more probable, as many of the Captives were likewise Persons of great Note and Authority. See *c. i. 13. 21, 22.* And that they wanted neither Care nor Diligence to improve every Opportunity to recommend their Religion, we may learn from the Books of *Daniel*, *Ezra*, *Nehemiah*, and *Esther*. 3dly, God wrought special Miracles in Favour of his People, in Countries where his Name was unknown, in order to affect the Minds and Senses of the Heathen, and to render them inexcusable in their Excesses, which were so many Witnesses and Arguments in Behalf of the true Religion against Error and Idolatry. 4thly, The Almighty, in thus dispersing his chosen People, thereby fulfilled the Prophecies which he had pronounced by the Mouth of many of his Prophets, that he would thus deal with them, if they persisted in their Iniquities. See also *Joseph. Antiq. Lib. viii. 2.* Lastly, The firm Attachment of the Prophets, *Ezekiel* and *Daniel*, to the Law of their God, and the solid Piety of *Tobit*, *Mordecai*, *Esther*, the Companions of *Daniel*, and many others, in their Captivity, as it did Credit to their Religion, so was it as signal a Rebuke, and a publick Condemnation of the reigning Vices of the *Assyrians* and *Babylonians*.

Ver. 6. *Therefore see what he will do for you.*] The *Vulg.* has, *Aspicite ergo, quæ fecit nobiscum*; to which agrees the *Syriac*. The *Gr. αὐτὸς ὁ θεὸς ὁ ποιῶν μεθ' ὑμῶν, sed contemplabimini quæ facturum est erga vos, i. e. If you turn to him with your whole Heart, then will he turn to you, and ye shall see what great Things he will do for you.* *Fagius's Hebr. Copy* has, *Adeo ut demiremini multitudinem miraculorum, & rerum mirabilium quas faciet vobiscum*; μεθ' ὑμῶν, may mean, Ye shall see what



what he will do *with you*; i. e. he will shew his Power in gathering you out of all Nations, and bringing you back to your own Country. Our Version here is flat, and wants the Spirit of the other. That of Geneva is preferable, *If you deal uprightly before him, he will not hide his Face from you, and ye shall hear what he will do with you.*

Ibid. *In the Land of my Captivity do I praise him, and declare his Might and Majesty to a sinful Nation.*] Whom are we to understand by a sinful Nation, either the *Israelites* or *Assyrians*? The *Vulg.* seems to point out the *Israelites*, now Captives on Account of their Sins. According to this Acceptation, *Tobit* blesses God, and magnifies his Justice and Power, not for Favours to, but his Chastisement of, an ungrateful People, laden with Iniquity, who had rendred themselves unworthy of his Mercy. Herein *Tobit* acted agreeably to the Character of the true Servants of God, who bless him even in, and for the Afflictions he is pleased to visit them with, and acknowledge the Justice of his Conduct towards them, though he distinguishes not between them and Sinners by any particular Exemption. If they are Fellow-sufferers with the Ungodly in any national Calamity, they are not so conceited of their own Righteousness, as to complain of any hard Lot, or to think that their Innocence ought to have protected them from sharing the common Fate with the rest. As applied to the *Assyrians*, the Meaning either is, That he took a Pleasure to publish the noble Acts of the Lord, and to shew forth all his Praise, amidst that idolatrous People, with whom he was in Bondage; or he here refers in particular to that signal Overthrow of the *Assyrians* some few Years before, when the Angel of the Lord went out and smote in the Camp of the *Assyrians* an hundred fourscore and five Thousand, 2 Kings xix. 35. an Event, in which the divine Majesty and Omnipotence most conspicuously appeared, by the uncommon Vengeance taken on that sinful Nation. Or *Tobit* may be considered as speaking here prophetically, as he does in several Parts of this Hymn, regarding the future as if it was the Time past, and foreseeing that which would come to pass a long Time after, when God, taking Pity upon his People, shall cause them to return to their own Land. He blesses God even in his Captivity, as if the Restoration was already accomplished, and, anticipating his Mercy, blesses God for the Greatness of it. See *Lee's Dissert.* on the 2d Book of *Esdr.* who makes the two last Chapters to be both prophetic and cabbalistical, p. 21. and observes farther, that there is such an Agreement in several Particulars between the two last Chapters of *Tobit*, and the two last of the *Revelations* (cap. xiii. xiv. to the End, and xiv. 5—8 comp. Rev. xxi. 10. to the End, and xxii. 10. to the End, and xxii. 3—6.) as it is not easy to know which hath been taken from the other, or alludeth to the other, p. 64.

Ver. 10. *Praise the everlasting King, that his Tabernacle may be builded in thee again with Joy.*] If this is to understood literally of the Destruction of the City and Temp'le, as all the Interpreters expound it, it must refer to that in the Reign of *Zedekiah*, King of *Judah*, when *Nebuchadnezzar*, King of *Babylon*, came up against *Jerusalem*, and took it, and burnt it with the Temple, 2 Kings xxv. Now this did not happen till above an hundred Years after the History here related: To prevent therefore so great an Anachronism, it will be more consistent to understand *Tobit* here as speaking prophetically, that the Ruin of the House and Kingdom of *David*, should precede the coming of the *Messias*, but that the Breaches thereof should be repaired, and built again at his coming. The Captivity of *Zedekiah* by the *Chaldeans*, perfected the Fall of *David's* Kingdom, which could not rise before the Return from that Captivity, and was to rise, as seems to be implied, before a new Captivity began. But after the *Babylonian* Captivity was over, none of *David's* Race was of any great Account: This therefore most probably relates to the Days of the *Messias*; and the Meaning seems to be, that God would restore the Kingdom to the House and Family of *David* in the Person of the *Messiah*, and recover that Family, which for several Years before his coming, was reduced to a mean and obscure Condition, *Micah* v. 2. *Luke* i. 48. to its ancient Splendor and Dignity. *Tobit* here seems to refer to *Amos* ix. 11. *In that Day I will raise up the Tabernacle of David which is fallen down*; and keeping to the Metaphor of a Tabernacle or Building, prays, that God would raise up this Tabernacle or Building, and close up the Breaches of it; that at a certain future Time he would again exalt *David's* Kingdom, which for a while had lain in a desolate and forsaken Condition; or, in other Words, he prays for, or foretells, the happy Days of the *Messiah*, when the Time of that Age they were then under being fulfilled, the miserable and captive *Jews*, whose Condition answered to the ruinous Materials in the Prophet, will have great Reason to rejoice in the blessed Change. See *Bishop Chandler's Def.* p. 175, &c. and that the Accomplishment of this long wished for Event, viz. another and more compleat Return, than that from *Babylon*, made a Part of their Prayer, whilst the Sacrifice was consuming, see 2 *Maccab.* i. 26, 27, 29. and ii. 17, 18.

Ver. 11. *Many Nations shall come from far to the Name of the Lord, with Gifts in their Hands, even Gifts to the King of Heaven.*] This relates to the calling of the *Gentiles*, as does c. xiv. 7. who shall embrace the true Religion, that of *Jesus Christ*, as should seem from the Mention of Gifts, by way of Homage, which probably has a distant Glance at the Offering of the wise Men, *Matt.* ii. 11. or thus, God shall call the *Gentiles* to enter into Covenant with him, and make those of them that shall be called by his



his Name, to become his People and Possession, see Bishop *Candler's Def.* p. 112. and to be Part of the restored Kingdom of *David*, to supply the many Families that were lost from his Heritage, and the Place of the Ten Tribes that fell off first from *David's* Kingdom, and of many of the Two Tribes that never returned from their Dispersion. This *Amos* expresses by the *Remnant of Edom*, and of all the *Heathen* being possessed by the Lord, and called by his Name, *Amos ix. 12.* It is very observable, that in *Fagius's Hebr. Copy*, the very Words of *Pf. lxxii. 10.* to which likewise *Tobit* may probably allude, are inserted at length. *Calmet* understands this, as connected with the two foregoing Verses, of the great Respect paid to the holy City after the Captivity by the greatest Princes of the World, *Cyrus, Darius, Artaxerxes, Alexander the Great*, the Kings of *Egypt* and *Syria*, and even some of the *Roman Emperors*, testified their Value for it, and the Temple, by great Presents and Offerings sent thither; that since the Establishment of Christianity, the great Regard for this holy Place has not diminished; many Emperors and Kings have contributed to enlarge its Beauty or Privileges, and have prided themselves in being styled its Protectors. Hence the several Crusades and holy Wars, which Catholick Princes have engaged in, to rescue the *Holy Land* from the Possession and Profanation of Infidels: Hence those many Voyages and Pilgrimages, which Christians of all Ranks have taken, merely to have the Pleasure to see that holy City, which *Jesus Christ* honoured with his Presence and Miracles. Hence the great Care to preserve its venerable Remains, and to consecrate even the very Dust. See *August. De Civit. Dei, l. xxii. c. 8.* but the first Sense is most natural.

Ver. 16. *For Jerusalem shall be built up with Sapphires, and Emeralds, and precious Stone: Thy Walls, and Towers, and Battlements, with pure Gold.* *Tobit* having prefigured, under the Image of rebuilding the Temple of *Jerusalem* after the Captivity, the far more glorious Establishment of the Christian Church, immediately passes on to the Description of the new and heavenly *Jerusalem*, or the Church triumphant above. The Magnificence and Pompousness of the Expressions leave no room to doubt that this is not to be understood literally, but of that spiritual Building, built upon the Foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, *Jesus Christ* himself being the chief Corner-Stone, *Ephes. ii. 20.* This Description very much resembles that, *Rev. xxi. 10. 18. 23.* of the new *Jerusalem*, so called to distinguish it from the earthly City of that Name, and is there described as coming down from God, and adorned with all those Gifts and Graces which can render it glorious and durable, which are metaphorically represented under the Figure of a solid, foursquare, and beautiful Structure, consisting all of Gold and precious Stones; having the Glory of God upon it, and ap-

pearing with so remarkable a Difference, that as that to the *Israelites* was like devouring Fire, terrible to behold; this should have nothing of Terror in it, but only a pleasing delightful Splendor, like unto that of the most beautiful Jasper, clear as Crystal, whose Glory and Lustre shall be so constant, as not to need either the Sun or Moon to enlighten the said City. To this the Writer to the *Hebrews* probably refers in those Words, τὴν τὰς θεμελίων ἔχσαν πόλιν, xi. 10. i. e. the City which hath the Foundations, or the new *Jerusalem*, the Foundations of whose Walls were garnished with all manner of precious Stones. *Plato* seems to have borrowed these Figures, when he sets forth the Beauty and Felicity of the paradisiacal Earth, by the Stones of several Colours and Brightness which it abounded with, "In this pure Earth, (which he supposes to be quite different, as well as far removed from this of ours) the true Light is always to be seen, and the Appearance admirable and surprising; all things there shine with the glittering Lustre of Gold, Jaspers, Sapphires, and Emeralds, and those that inhabit it enjoy a long Life, free from Accidents or Afflictions," *In Phæd.* Who does not discern the Style of the Prophets in this Passage, or can any way doubt, that this Notion of his was borrowed from their lofty Description of the glorious *Jerusalem*, and that the Names of the precious Stones are particularly taken from *Is. liv. 11, 12, 13.* where God promises to lay the Foundations of his future Church in the latter Times with Sapphires, and all her Borders with pleasant Stones; or from *Ezek. xxviii. 13.* where the Glory of *Eden* is represented by the Plenty and joint Lustre of Gems of various Kinds. From these fine Images of the Prophets, which *Tobit* adopts into this Hymn, he encourages his Nation in the Hopes and Expectation of the *Messias*, when great shall be the Peace of the once afflicted Children, see Bishop *Candler's Def.* p. 52. *St. Austin* alluding to, and charmed with, this glorious Description, in pious Rapture breaks forth, *Felix anima mea, semperque felix in sæcula, si intueri meruero gloriam tuam, beatitudinem tuam, pulchritudinem tuam, portas, & muros, & plateas tuas, & mansiones tuas multas, nobilissimos cives tuos, & fortissimum regem tuum in decore suo. Muri namque tui ex lapidibus pretiosis, portæ tuæ ex margaritis optimis, plateæ tuæ ex auro purissimo: in quibus jucundum alleluja sine intermissione concinnitur: mansiones tuæ multæ quadris lapidibus fundatæ, sapphiris constructæ, laterculis coopertæ aureis. In quas nullus ingreditur nisi mundus, nullus habitat inquinatus.* *Medit. c. xxv.*

Ver. 18. *And all her Streets shall say, Hallelujah, and they shall praise him, saying, Blessed be God which hath extolled it for ever.* In *Fagius's Hebr. Copy* it is, *Blessed be God who hath exalted the Horn of his Kingdom for ever, i. e. made the Horn of David to bud forth.* And accordingly the Streets did sing *Hallelujah,*



*Hallelujah*, when the blessed *Jesus*, as the *Messias*, was conducted triumphantly into *Jerusalem*; for then the Multitude cried aloud, *Hosanna, blessed be the Kingdom of our Father David that cometh in the Name of the Lord, Hosanna in the highest*, *Mark xi. 10*, See *Is. lx. 18, &c.* from whence this Verse, at least the Beginning of it, seems to be taken.

CHAP. XIV.

Ver. 2. **A**ND he was Eight and Fifty Years old, when he lost his Sight, which was restored to him after Eight Years.] The *Vulg.* has only Fifty-six Years, and that he recovered his Sight when he was Sixty, being blind only Four Years. There is the like Disagreement in the Versions about the Time of *Tobit's* Death, the *Vulg.* makes him 102 Years old, the *Gr.* 158, Fifty-six Years Difference. And so with respect to *Tobias*, the former supposes him 99 at his Death, and our Version, following the *Gr.* 127. This Uncertainty makes it difficult to fix the determinate Time of *Tobit's* Age, when he prophesied of *Nineveh's* approaching Ruin, or to ascertain the particular Year of its Destruction, as happening just before *Tobias's* Death. And indeed that great Event is a Point far from being agreed and settled among Chronologers, Archbishop *Usher* placing it Fourteen Years earlier, in the 15th Year of *Josiah*; *Newton*, *Prideaux*, *Whiston*, &c. Fourteen or Fifteen Years later, about the 29th of that Prince's Reign, which was the Twenty-third of *Cyaxares*, in the Kingdom of *Media*. What is most certain, says *Calmet*, is, that there is a Mistake crept into one or both the Texts, with respect to the Years of *Tobit* and his Son, and the Diversity in the Versions confirms this.

Ver. 4. *I believe those things which Jonas the Prophet spake of Nineveh, that it shall be overthrown.*] *Grotius* contends, that both here, and ver. 8. the true Reading of the *Gr.* is, *Ναυρός ὁ προφήτης*, and *Junius* seems of the same Opinion. That Prophet indeed, c. ii. and iii. did foretel the Revenge which God would take of the *Assyrians* for their repeated Provocations, and for all the Wrongs done to the Ten Tribes whom they had carried away captive, by making an utter End of *Nineveh*, that once famous City of three Days Journey; but there seems no Necessity for such an Alteration of the Text, if the Prophecy of *Jonah* did really extend to and include the Destruction of *Nineveh* by the *Medes* and *Babylonians*; and that it did so, seems probable from the following Reasons; 1st, Though it is well known, that, upon the Humiliation and Repentance of the Inhabitants, the first Prediction of *Jonah* against *Nineveh*, that it should be destroyed in Forty Days, was not at that Time fulfilled, yet it seems necessary to infer, that the like Judgments hung over that City, to be executed at such a Time hereafter, when the People were

equally wicked and abandoned. The Sentence therefore against it seems only suspended, and its Destruction, as *St. Jerom* observes, *Præfat. in Jon.* deferred, till those who before had found Mercy, should, by a Relapse into the like vicious Courses, make it necessary for God to bring upon them those Judgments, which had been only respited for a Time, and lay as it were dormant, till the Encrease of their Wickedness should again make them ripe for Destruction. 2dly, And more particularly, it seems not improbable, that a Clause in the present Copies of *Zephaniah*, c. ii. 13, 14, 15. c. iii. 1. which foretels the Destruction of *Nineveh*, does not belong to that Prophet, but to the Prophecy of *Jonah*, though now dropp'd; in which he foretels afresh the final Destruction of that City; and to this *Tobit*, as having another and better Copy of *Jonah's* Prophecy, may probably allude. See *Whiston's Authen. Record.* Vol. ii. Appendix iv. and indeed his Reasons for this Suspicion, from *Zephaniah* iii. 1. where Woe is denounced against *Nineveh*, called, according to the *Lxx.* the famous redeemed City; and by the *Syriac*, emphatically, the City of *Jonah*; and from ver. 6. as referring to the Destruction of *Nineveh* as already past, are strong Arguments in Favour of his Opinion. The like Interpolation of a Prophecy, and upon the very same Occasion, he suspects to be, 2 *Esd.* ii. 8, 9. 20—23.

*Ibid.* *Jerusalem shall be desolate, and the House of God in it shall be burned.*] This Passage, as it occurs in the *Vulg.* and most of the *Latin* Versions, has been objected to as a Mistake in Point of Time, as making mention of the Temple of *Jerusalem* as then burnt, which being inconsistent with the Times in which it is placed, has given occasion to some to overthrow the Authority of this Book. But the *Gr.* Version, and the *Eng.* which is taken from it, speak prophetically of it, as an Event which was still to happen, and not historically, as of that which was already done. But there is no Necessity of supposing with some, that *Tobit* had the Gift of Prophecy, he rather grounds his Observation on the Prophecies of others, *Mic.* iii. 12. *Jerem.* xxvi. 18. which expressly foretold this Desolation of *Jerusalem*, and the House of God, in the Days of *Hezekiah*, King of *Judah*, and so it continued for Fifty-two Years after; till, by the Favour of *Cyrus*, the *Jews* being released from their Captivity, and restored again to their own Land, repaired these Ruins, and built again their holy City, 2 *Kings* xxv. 8. *Jer.* lii. 12.

Ver. 5. *And that again God will have Mercy on them, and bring them again into the Land, where they shall build a Temple, but not like to the first, until the Time of that Age be fulfilled; and afterwards they shall return from all Places of their Captivity, and build up Jerusalem gloriously, and the House of God shall be built in it for ever, with a glorious Building, as the Prophets have spoken thereof.*] *Tobit* here prophesies of three Periods, which



should fall after his Time. First, The rebuilding of the Temple, which should continue to the Conclusion or the Consummation of the Age, i. e. the Jewish State; for the Words, *ἕως πληρωθῶσι καιροὶ τοῦ αἰῶνος*, are here to be rendred, till, or when the Seasons of the Age be fulfilled, called, *Matt. xxiv. 3.* *συνέλευσις αἰῶνος*, the Consummation or Conclusion of the Age, or, as *Fagius's Hebr. Copy* has it, till the first Age was out. For the Jews were wont to distinguish their State under the Law, which they called the present Age, from the Period of Time after the coming of the *Messiah*, which they called the Age to come. Thus *Daniel* seals his Prophecy to the Time of the End or Consummation, as the *Gr.* renders it, not the End of all Time, but of the Jewish Oeconomy. And so the Destruction of the Jewish State, may be styled the Consummation, fulfilling, or the shutting up that Age, which is the second Period. And then after, in the third Period, follows the State of Christianity, the glorious *Jerusalem*, that Building spoken of by the Prophets, and in the *Apocalyptical Visions*, *xxi. 18, 19.* and described here, *ver. 6.* by the turning of the Nations, converting of the *Gentiles*, serving God truly, and burying their Idols, which clearly is the State of Christianity. The learned *Mr. Mede* conjectures from the Words, *and afterwards they shall return from all Places of their Captivity*, that the Sense is very imperfect, and that there is an Hiatus here of a whole Sentence both in the *Gr.* and *Jerom's Version*; for, according to the present Reading, he says there is no Connection of the Parts, Mention being made of a Return from Captivity, different from the former, and yet their going into that Captivity is omitted. From the Authority therefore of *Fagius's Hebr. Copy*, he would have this Sentence inserted, *And they shall go again into another very grievous Captivity, beyond all the former in its Greatness and Duration*; and then what follows comes in very naturally, *And afterwards they shall return from all Places of their Captivity*, *De duplici Judææ captiv. p. 580.* for the mention of a Return cannot be Sense, without a preceding one of a Captivity. And that it belongs to the Destruction of the Jews by the Romans, appears by another Passage added also in that *Hebr. Copy*, and directly parallel to *Matt. xxiv. 31.* for as there after the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, *v. 29.* mention is made of the Angels sent to gather the elect Jews from the four Winds, so it follows in that *Hebr. Copy*, *But God, holy and blessed, shall remember and gather them from the four Corners of the World*, see *Dan. xii. 1.* We have in *Jeremiah* an eminent Prophecy of the Restoration, and final happy State of all the Twelve Tribes, with the mention of the horrible Distress they were in before, *Jer. xxx. 1—24. xxxi. 1—14. 23, 24, 25. 27. —40. c. l. 4—7. 19, 20. c. li. 5—10. 15. —19.* This is also agreeable to what the Prophet *Micah* says, *c. v. 3, 4.* "Although

" God will send his Ruler or *Messiah* into  
" *Israel*, yet he will let *Israel* remain in Cap-  
" tivity, till *Sion* hath gone the full Time of  
" her Travel, and then her Sorrows shall  
" have a joyful Issue; then the Remnant of  
" his Brethren shall return with the Children  
" of *Israel*, and he (the *Messias*) shall stand  
" and feed in the Strength of the Lord, &c.  
" and they shall be converted, and he (the  
" Christ) shall be great unto the Ends of the  
" Earth, and he shall be the Peace." See  
*Bishop Chandler's Def. p. 158.*

*Ver. 6.* And all Nations shall turn, and fear the Lord God truly, and shall bury their Idols.] The learned *Prelate* above quoted says, that in this, and the foregoing Verses, *Tobit* mentions four great Events which he took from the Prophets, viz. The End of the Jewish Age or State, and a long Captivity of his Nation ensuing it. 2dly, A general Return from the Captivity. 3dly, The Rebuilding of the City and Temple gloriously. And lastly, The Conversion of all the Gentile Nations from Idolatry, when the Horn or Kingdom of his People should be exalted. *Ibid. p. 50.* With respect to this last Particular, we may in general take Notice, that the Destruction of Idolatry is often mentioned in the Prophets, as a principal Circumstance in their Description of the flourishing State of the Church, which should come to pass in After-times, See *Is. i. 29. Jer. iii. 17. xvi. 19. Zach. xiii. 2.* but that of *Micah, v. 12, 13, 14.* is most clear and full, *And it shall come to pass in that Day, saith the Lord, that I will cut off all Witchcrafts out of thine Hand, and thou shalt have no more Soothsayers. Thy graven Images also will I cut off, and thy standing Images out of the midst of thee, and thou shalt no more worship the Work of thine Hands. And I will pluck up thy Groves out of the midst of thee, &c.* And it appears to have been the Sentiment of the ancient Jews themselves, that the utter abolishing of Idolatry, should attend the happy Times of the *Messias*.

*Ver. 10.* Remember how *Aman* handled *Achiacharus* that brought him up, how out of Light he brought him into Darknes, and how he rewarded him again: Yet *Achiacharus* was saved, but the other had his Reward: For he went down into Darknes. *Manasses* gave Alms, and escaped the Snares of Death, which they had set for him; but *Aman* fell into the Snare, and perished.] *ἐν τῷ φῶτι ἦγαγεν αὐτὸν εἰς τὸ σκότος*, i. e. he endeavoured, according to *Drusus*, to take away his Life, or, from a flourishing Condition, to bring him into Poverty or Banishment. Who *Achiacharus* was is uncertain; probably it is *Tobit's* Nephew mentioned, *c. i. 21. xi. 18.* Much less do we know who *Aman* or *Manasses* is. There is no Reason, but the mere Name, to suppose the latter to be *Judith's* Husband; it is more likely to be, as *Junius* conjectures, another Name for *Achiacharus*, and that *Nasbas* should be inserted in the Text instead of it. See Note on *c. xi. 18.* Nor is *Aman* here that



that *Haman* who was *Mordecai's* and the *Jews* Enemy, whose History we have in the Book of *Esther*; for this is utterly incompatible with the Times which *Tobit* is supposed to live in. The Elevation of *Mordecai* to his great Dignity, and the Fall and Disgrace of *Haman*, happened after the Captivity of *Babylon* was ended, and after the Time of *Darius the Mede*. This therefore is either an Interpolation, as some suppose, in the History, and indeed it is wholly omitted by the *Vulg.* or it refers to some Accident or Charge against *Achiacharus*, which *Tobias* was acquainted with; possibly brought against him by some haughty ungrateful Courtier, whom he had contributed to raise. However, from his happy Escape, through God's Blessing on his good Deeds, from the Perfidiousness and Treachery of *Aman*, we are furnished with a fresh Instance of the Power and Reward of Charity, and of the Truth of *Tobit's* Observation, c. iv. 10. *That Alms deliver from Death, and suffer not to come into Darkneſs*; the very Phrase used here.

Ver. 15. *But before he died, he heard of the Destruction of Ninive, which was taken by Nabuchodonosor and Assuerus.* Uſher in his Annals, A. M. 3378. *Prideaux Connect.* p. 47, 48. and other learned Men, understand this of *Nabopolassar*, Father to *Nebuchadnezzar* (called in the Gr. *Nabuchodonosor*) and *Cyaxares*, King of *Media*, called by *Daniel Abaſuerus*, c. ix. 1. This remarkable Transaction is generally placed in the 29th Year of King *Joſiab*, and the fixing it to this Time, exactly agrees with the Account given by the heathen Historians, *Herodotus*, *Strabo*, *Alexander Polybiſtor*, and others. *Eusebius*

places the Time of the taking of *Nineveh* in the 22d Year of *Cyaxares*, and the *Hebrews* in the 1st of *Nabuchodonosor*, both which Accounts agree; for, according to *Eusebius*, this 22d Year of *Cyaxares* falls in with the 1st of *Nabuchodonosor*. These two Princes entering into an Alliance together, by means of a Marriage between *Amyitis*, Daughter of *Aſtyages*, and *Nebuchadnezzar*, Son of *Nabopolassar*, marched with their combined Forces against *Ninive*, and besieged *Ciniladanus* in it; and after the City was taken, his Dominions were shared between the two Conquerors; *Nabopolassar* became Master of *Ninive* and *Babylon*; and *Cyaxares*, of *Media*, and the bordering Provinces. Some learned Men have started an Enquiry, how *Cyaxares* and *Assuerus* can be the same Person? Sir *Isaac Newton* gives the following Solution of it, "That *Assuerus* is the same Name with *Achſuerus*, *Oxyares*, *Axares*, and *Cy*, in the *Persian* Language, signifying a Prince or Ruler, *Cyaxares* means Prince *Axares*, *Chronol.* See also *Drusii Quæſit.* p. 17, 18. It is uncertain who inserted the two last Verses of this Book; *Tobias* is generally supposed to have continued the History from the End of the xiith Chapter, to ver. 14th of this, but he could not write the Account of his own Death. It was added probably by one of the Family, as what relates to *Moses's* Death, at the End of the *Pentateuch*, was inserted by *Joſhua* his Successor, or some other Hand. I shall only observe, that though the *Syr.* concludes as our Version, yet *Munſter's* and *Fagius's Hebr.* Copies omit the Mention of the Death both of Father and Son.



# COMMENTARY

ON THE

## Book of *JUDITH*.

### CHAP. I.

Ver. 1. **I**N the twelfth Year.] How is this consistent with what is mentioned ver. 13. where it is said that he marched in Battle-Array in the seventieth Year? *Vatablus*, and others to avoid this Difficulty, suppose the War to have begun in the twelfth Year of *Nabuchodonosor*, and to be finished in the Seventieth. But this is more than they have Authority for, the Account being rather of a particular Battle, than of a continued War. Possibly this is one of those various Readings which *Jerom* professeth to have cut off, as Corruptions of the Text; for it does not occur in his Translation. And agreeably his Version placeth the Expedition of *Holofernes*, that was the next Year after this Battle of *Ragau*, in the thirteenth Year of *Nabuchodonosor*, which *Dr. Prideaux* says is the Truth of the Matter, *Connect.* vol. i. p. 29. It is remarkable that the Greek Text of this Book precedes the Latin one five Years, as appears from the Instance above, and from *ψ* 1. of the next Chapter, where the Greek has the eighteenth Year, which in *Jerom's* Version is only the Thirteenth. Some account for the Difference this Way, that *Nabuchodonosor*, the adopted Son or Grandson of *Asarbaddon* reigned jointly with him five Years, and sole thirteen Years, to the Time of his Army being cut off with *Holofernes* before *Bethulia*, c. xv. In the last Year but one of his Reign *Nabuchodonosor* overcame *Arphaxad*, and destroyed *Ecbatane*, and in his last, *Holofernes* was beheaded by *Judith*. The *Vulgate* begins this Book with, *Itaque Arphaxad, &c.* which looks as if this was a Continuation of something preceding. *Calmet* says, "It may be joined to the History of *Tobit* without any great Inconvenience, or much breaking in upon the regular Series of Events. For the

"Building of *Ecbatane*, and the War between *Arphaxad* and *Nabuchodonosor* mentioned here, follow closely enough the taking of *Ninive* by *Assuerus*, i. e. *Cyaxares*, or *Astyages*, which *Tobias* lived long enough to hear of, and the taking of *Ninive* is the last Event mentioned in the Book of *Tobit*." But it cannot be inferred from this connective Particle, that *Judith* is a Continuation of the preceding History, because these two do not synchronize, if that of *Judith* is rightly placed, A. M. 3348. and the taking of *Ninive*, according to *Usher*, be in 3378. Nor ought this to be joined to *Tobit*, or necessarily to follow it, because so placed in most Editions, the placing thereof probably being accidental, and arbitrary: Nor do their Subjects agree, the History of *Tobit*, being the Memoirs of a private Family, and *Judith* that of the Jewish Nation. It seems more probable, as *Calmet* conjectures, either that this History made a Part of, and was taken from some Publick Registers, wherein the most remarkable Events are entered and recorded, in a regular Series and Order; or that the Particle here is superfluous, as a like one, *et*, is placed at the Head of several Books of Scripture, where it has nothing to do with the Sense. But the best way to solve this, is to observe, that the Greek and other more correct Versions wholly omit it.

*Ibid.* Of the Reign of *Nabuchodonosor*, who reigned in *Ninive* the great City.] The *Medes*, after subduing several of the neighbouring Nations, under the Conduct of their second King *Pbraortes*, invaded *Assyria*. *Saosduchinus*, or *Saosduchius*, called here *Nabuchodonosor*, raised a powerful Army to oppose them, summoning the whole Force of his wide-spreading Dominions, and inviting all the Nations of the East to his Assistance. Most of those which were summoned, received his Ambassadors with Contempt, upon which he resolves



resolves on nothing less, than being avenged on the whole Earth, and chusing *Holofernes* for the Instrument of his Vengeance; as he was Commander in Chief of his Forces, he orders him to put all to the Sword, who should oppose him, c. ii. 11. As to the Cruelty with which these Orders were executed, the Dread and Terror that merciless General struck into the Countries thro' which he marched, the couragious Resolution taken by the *Jews* to withstand the mighty Conqueror, the great Streight to which the City of *Bethulia*, and their whole Nation were reduced, and their miraculous Deliverance; and lastly, the great Slaughter, of the *Assyrian* Army: These Particulars we have a distinct and minute Account of in the following Chapters. *Herodotus* confirms the Main of this History, telling us, that *Phraortes*, the *Mede*, made War against the *Assyrians*, "Those I mean" (says he, l. i. c. cii.) who lived at *Ninive*, "who had formerly been the chief of all, "but now were deserted by their Friends or "Vassals, tho' nevertheless in a good Condition to defend themselves." No two Historical Pieces can, so far as they are concerned together, more illustrate each other than *Herodotus*, and this Book of *Judith*, see *Montfaucon Hist. Ver. Judith*. It hath been objected that the King of *Ninive* is here called *Nabuchodonosor*, which is the proper Name of the Kings of *Babylon*; to this it may be answered, that we find not only in Writers of different Characters, the *Greek* and *Hebrew*, the Sacred and Prophane, but even in Writers of the same Nation, the same Person under different Appellations: tho' therefore in Strictness of Speech it may be counted an Error in History, to call the King of *Ninive* by the Name of *Nabuchodonosor*, yet as it was the Style and Manner of the *Jews* to denote any Prince who lived beyond the *Euphrates* by that Name, see *Tobit* xiv. 15. we need not wonder to find this Writer, who wrote either at *Babylon*, or in *Chaldea*, and lived in an Age, when the Fame and Reputation of *Nabuchodonosor the Great* had quite eclipsed the Name of all his Predecessors, calling another Prince, who lived at a far Distance, viz. *Saosduchinus*, the King of *Assyria*, by the Name of the King of *Babylon*, which perhaps at that Time, might be the standing Name of every great and distant Monarch. Others say, that this *Nabuchodonosor*, then King of *Assyria*, sprang from the Royal Line of the Kings of *Babylon*, and that he chose to retain the *Chaldee* Name of the Kings of *Babylon*, viz. *Nabuchodonosor*, as a standing Memorial of his Extraction, and that it might appear he was King of *Babylon* as well as of *Assyria* and *Ninive*.

*Ibid. In the Days of Arphaxad, which reigned over the Medes.* *Arphaxad* seems to be a common Name of all the Kings of *Media*, as *Merodach* was of those of *Babylon*, and *Pharaoh*, or *Ptolemy*, of those of *Egypt*. The Question is, what *Arphaxad* is here meant? As *Arphaxad* is said to be that King who was

the Founder of *Media*, *Prideaux* contends that *Deioces* must be the Person, *Connect.* vol. i. p. 28. But *Calmet* and many others are of Opinion, that by *Arphaxad* is not here meant the *Deioces* in *Herodotus*, but his Son *Phraortes*, who succeeded him in the Kingdom of *Media*; which seems more probable, as the History informs us, that this *Arphaxad* was overcome by *Nabuchodonosor*, or *Saosduchinus*, King of *Assyria*, and slain in the Mountains of *Ragau*, by the *Assyrian* Archers, c. i. 15. which even *Herodotus* himself makes to be the Fate, not of *Deioces* the Father, but of his Son *Phraortes*, l. i. c. xcvi. who having subdued the *Persians*, as he tells us, and made himself Master of almost all *Asia*, was not content therewith, but coming at last to attempt *Ninive*, and the *Assyrian* Empire, was himself defeated, and killed in the bold Attempt.

*Ibid. In Ecbatane.* This City is by the Ancients constantly called *Ecbatan* of *Media*, to distinguish it from another in *Syria*, bearing the same Name. For Beauty and Magnificence it was little inferior to *Babylon*, or *Ninive*. In Compass, it is said to have been near Two hundred Furlongs. It was the Metropolis of all *Media*, and the Seat both of the *Median* and *Persian* Monarchs, their ordinary Residence in the Heat of Summer, as *Susa* was in the Winter Time. The Royal Palace was about seven Furlongs, or a Mile in Compass, and built with all the Cost and Skill, that a stately Edifice did require, *Polyb.* l. x. Some of its Beams are said to be of Silver, and the rest of Cedar strengthened with Plates of Gold.

Ver. 2. *And built in Ecbatane Walls round about of Stones hewn three Cubits broad, and six Cubits long.* *Prideaux* says of *Deioces*, that having repaired, beautified, and enlarged the City of *Ecbatana* (which according to *Diodorus*, l. ii. had been built from the Times of *Semiramis*, 1300 Years before) he made it the Royal Seat of his Kingdom, and reigned there with great Wisdom, Honour, and Prosperity, fifty-three Years; during which Time, it growing to be a great City, he is for this Reason reckoned by the *Greeks*, to have been the Founder of it, *Connect.* vol. i. p. 20. but as the Writer of this History does not mention the Founding of this City here, tho' the *Vulg.* without Authority, does, but the adding new and magnificent Fortifications to it, it is probably to be understood of *Phraortes* his Son, who being a Prince of warlike Spirit, and having many Forces under his Command, may not improperly be supposed to delight in Works of this Nature. His Father indeed might lay the Foundation of some great Designs, and during his Lifetime carry on the Buildings, and leave the Completion of them to his Son, as Undertakings of this kind are not so soon completed; and in this Sense he may be considered as a Joint-Founder, and what is here said of *Arphaxad* be applied to him. Particular Mention, we may observe, is here made of



the Largeness of the Stones employed in the Works, as the Ancients placed a great Part of the Magnificence of their Buildings herein, as appears from the Description of old Monuments in History, and from the Ruins of such antique Buildings, as have in some measure escaped the Injury of Time, and the Rudeness of past Ages.

Ibid. *And made the Height of the Wall seventy Cubits, and the Breadth thereof fifty Cubits. Ver. 3. And set the Towers thereof upon the Gates of it, an hundred Cubits high, and the Breadth thereof in the Foundation, threescore Cubits.*] The Walls of this City are much celebrated by the Ancients, and minutely described by *Herodotus*, l. i. c. xcvi. They were seven in Number, all of a circular Form, and gradually rising above each other by the Height of the Battlements of each Wall. The Situation of the Ground, rising by an easy Ascent, was very favourable to the Design of building them, and perhaps first suggested it. The Royal Palace and Treasury were within the innermost Circle of the seven. The first of these Walls was equal in Circumference to the City of *Athens*, i. e. according to *Thucydides*, l. i. One hundred and seventy-eight Furlongs, and had white Battlements, the second black, the third of a purple Colour, the fourth blue, and the fifth of a deep Orange. But the two innermost, as serving more immediately for a Fence to the Royal Person of the King, and within one of which was his Palace, were embellished above the other, the one being covered, or gilt with Silver, and the other with Gold. Each of them being higher than the other, and distinguished by the Colour of their several Pinnacles, gave unto the Eye a most agreeable Prospect. *Herod. ibid.* This Description indeed of *Herodotus*, favours somewhat of Romance, but the uncommon Height, and superb Magnificence of the Walls is confirmed by other good Authorities. It should seem as if the Walls of *Ecbatane* were each of them seventy Cubits high, fifty Cubits broad, and the Towers upon the Gates an hundred Cubits higher; but this is to be understood only of the innermost Wall. And this is the more probable, because the Description in these Verses is of the Height and Breadth  $\tau\acute{\epsilon}\varsigma\ \tau\epsilon\iota\chi\epsilon\varsigma$ , the Wall, not Walls, as if a particular one was only meant. The *Vulg.* is faulty in rendering, *Fecit muros ejus in latitudinem cubitorum septuaginta, & in altitudinem cubitorum triginta.* *St. Jerom's* Version agrees with our Translation, and understands the seventy Cubits of the Height, which seems the true Rendering, and is confirmed by the *Greek* and *Syriac*.

Ver. 4. *And he made the Gates thereof, even Gates that were raised to the Height of seventy Cubits, and the Breadth of them was forty Cubits.*] It is to be presumed, that this extraordinary Height takes in all the Embellishments over and about the Doors, and not that the Gates themselves opened to such an

exact Height. We shall the less wonder at the extraordinary Grandeur of the Towers and Gates here mentioned, if we reflect upon what is related of *Ninive*, that it had fifteen hundred Towers upon the Walls of it, each of them an hundred Feet high: And on what *Josephus* says of the Gates of the Temple of *Jerusalem*, that they were sixty Cubits high, and twenty broad.

Ver. 5. *In the great Plain, which is the Plain in the Borders of Ragau.*] The Plains of *Ragau* are very probably those which lie about *Rages*, a Town of *Media*, standing upon the Mountains of *Ecbatana*, and distant about a small Day's Journey from that City.

Ver. 6. There is a great Difference between the *Greek* and *Latin* Version of this Book, particularly as to the proper Names. Probably both the great Plain itself, and the Rivers had different Names. What is called here, and in the *Greek Hydaspes*, is styled *Jadason* in the *Latin* Versions. *Calmet* observes, that the *Syriac* is most exact as to the Names of Places; it reads here, that *Nabuchodonosor* engaged with *Arphaxad* in the Plains of *Dura*, mentioned *Dan. iii.* and instead of the River *Jadason*, it puts *Ulai*, which occurs likewise in *Dan. viii. 21.*

Ver. 7. *Sent unto all that dwelt in Persia.*] The Mention of the *Persians*, as a distinguished People at the Time of this Transaction has been thought inaccurate, as the Name of the *Persians* was hardly, if at all known before *Cyrus*, at least they were till then an obscure People, and included under the Name of *Elam*, or *Elamites*. See *Boch. Geogr. l. iv. c. x.* But this Objection, supposing it well-grounded, is not particular to this Writer. Inaccuracies in Geography and Chronology are found in almost all ancient Writers; and even the Sacred Text is not free from them, at least according to our Version.

Ver. 10. *Until you come beyond Tanis and Memphis, and to all the Inhabitants of Egypt.*] The *Vulg.* only mentions *terram Gessen*, which *Calmet* expounds the Land of *Goshen*, in the lower *Egypt*, called the Land of *Gesem*, I presume, in the preceding Verse. Probably by *Synecdoche*, a Part was designed for the Whole. It should seem from this, and  $\S$  12. that *Nabuchodonosor* did command in *Egypt* before the Conquest of *Judea*, which yet was a necessary Passage for the invading of *Egypt*: What is mentioned therefore here of *Egypt*, has been condemned by *Diodate* and others, if not as false, at least as pre-mature. But allowing this, might not such an imperious and conceited Prince, as *Nabuchodonosor* is here described, send his Orders to those beyond *Tanis* and *Memphis*, and to all the Inhabitants of *Egypt*, tho' he had no Power or Command in *Egypt*, to attend his Summons, and to accompany him to the Battle? which indeed appears from the following Verse, to have been the very Case. He who expected the whole Earth should submit to him, might easily flatter himself that *Egypt*, a small Part of



of it, would not dispute his Orders. The like Answer may serve for his Message into Persia, v. 7.

Ver. 11. *But all the Inhabitants of the Land made light of the Commandment of Nabuchodonosor, neither went they with him to Battle, for they were not afraid of him: Yea, he was before them as one Man, and they sent away his Ambassadors from them without Effect, and with Disgrace.*] It may seem surprising and strange, that the Inhabitants of the Land should dare to behave in the Manner here related, except they thought that Nabuchodonosor could not stand against Arphaxad, a valiant Prince, and at the Head of a numerous and powerful Army. The Truth is, after the Destruction of Sennacherib's Army by the destroying Angel in Judaea, the Power and Credit of the Kings of Assyria began to dwindle; and among others who broke from that Government, was Merodach-Baladan, King of Babylon, who before was tributary to the King of Assyria. Or probably, the Nations mentioned in the foregoing Verses, instructed by the Misfortunes of others, and seeing that their Submission served only to render the Conqueror more fierce and insolent, might take the Resolution here mentioned, tho' seemingly rash and imprudent. It seems most probable that this Message and Invitation to the Inhabitants of the several Places here mentioned to come to his Assistance, was before the Engagement with Arphaxad, as our Version, following the Greek, represents it; but the Vulg. makes it to be after that Battle, to induce them by a Sense of his Conquests, and the Terror of his Arms, to submit to his Dominion and Empire; or whether he sent to the same People twice, as some have conjectured, both before and after the Engagement: However this be, it is certain that his Pride was very sensibly piqued at the Disappointment, when he found so many People, whom in his own Mind he looked upon as already vanquished and subdued, daring to dispute his Orders, and affronting him in the Persons of his Ambassadors. They regarded him, says the Text, only as one Man, i. e. as a private Man, without respecting his publick Dignity or Character, as one that had no Right or Business to command them to attend, and therefore as their equal, *ὡς ἀνὴρ ἴσος*, as some Copies have it, or being but a Man, no better than themselves.

Ver. 12. *Therefore Nabuchodonosor was very angry, and swore by his Throne and Kingdom.*] This was anciently esteemed a most solemn, sacred, and inviolable Oath. Herodotus says, that the Scythians, whom the older Latin Version mentions here instead of the Syrians, particularly used this Form, when a more solemn Oath than ordinary was to be taken, l. iv. c. lxviii. It appears from the Gospel, Matth. v. 34. xxiii. 22. that the Jews sometimes swore by Heaven, or God's Throne, which was virtually swearing by God himself, who sat upon it. And the Per-

sians use it to this Day. See Tavern. Voyag. B. i. And may not Nabuchodonosor, in like manner swearing by his Throne and Kingdom, be conceived as swearing by himself, as he owned no Superior either in Heaven or on Earth? Homer introduces Achilles swearing by his Sceptre, Il. Δ. And it is observed by Aristotle, that when Princes swore, they usually held up their Sceptre.

Ibid. *That he would slay with the Sword all the Inhabitants of the Land of Moab, and the Children of Ammon, and all Judaea . . .*] In judging of Nabuchodonosor's Behaviour, a great Difference is to be made between those who were subject to him, and those whom he intended to make so. The former in refusing to obey his Orders, and send their Troops to his Assistance against the Medes, were doubtless Rebels to their Sovereign, and deserved his sharpest Resentment: But such as were free, and unsubdued, were at Liberty to act as they pleased; as they were under no Ties of Duty, Policy and Prudence alone were to direct them. This seems to have been the Case of the Jews in particular, they were independent of him, nor had he any Right over them or their Country. It does not appear that they owed him either Services, or Tribute; or if some small Acknowledgments of this sort were due from them, they did not imply such Vassalage as to oblige them to be Auxiliaries upon every Occasion. The Justice of their Refusal will appear yet further, if we consider that Nabuchodonosor, besides his Scheme of universal Dominion, intended likewise to oblige the several Nations to acknowledge him only to be God, c. iii. 8. vi. 2. which the Jews could not submit to without a Renunciation of their Religion. And God seems to have approved the Conduct of his People by the miraculous Deliverance wrought in their Favour.

Ver. 15. *Mountains of Ragau.*] It is no improbable Conjecture, that this City, the same with Rages, Tobit i. 14. was built by Reu the Son of Peleg. For not only the Descendants of Arphaxad (of whom came Peleg, the Father of Reu) settled in these, and the adjacent Parts, but Reu is called by the LXX Ragau. And as to the Posterity of Arphaxad settling here, it is remarkable that in the Beginning of this Book, mention is made of Arphaxad, who reigned over the Medes in Ecbatane. This Name being probably given to the said King, in Memory and Honour of their Fore-father Arphaxad, the Son of Shem, and Grandson of Noah, who probably, upon the Dispersion of Mankind, settled himself in these Parts of Asia, whence we find here a whole Country retaining plain Footsteps of his Name, it being called Arrapachitis in Ptolemy, probably for Arphaxaditis. See Wells's Geography, vol. iii. p. 196.

## CHAP. II.

Ver. 1. **A**ND in the eighteenth Year . . .] The placing the Expedition of Holofernes in this Year seems to be in Consequence



sequence of the former Mistake, c. i. 13. and a Continuation, says *Prideaux*, of the same Blunder, *Connect.* vol. i. p. 29. *Jerom's* Version has the thirteenth Year here, the Expedition of *Holofernes* being the Year after the Battle of *Ragau*, which, according to that Version, was in the Twelfth of *Nabuchodonosor*. And with this agrees *Usher* in his *Annals*, A. M. 3348. It is said here to be in the Two and twentieth Day of the first Month, i. e. in that Part of the Month *Nisan*, or in the Beginning of Spring, called in the *Hebr.* The Return of the Year; which the Scripture takes Notice of, as the usual Time when Kings go forth to Battle, 2 *Sam.* xi. 2.

Ver. 2. *And concluded the afflicting of the whole Earth out of his own Mouth.*] Καὶ συνεκάλεσε τὴν κακίαν τῆς γῆς ἐκ τῆς στόματος αὐτοῦ. This Verb seems to have crept in from the Beginning of this Verse, and to have no Place here. Other Copies have συνέλεξε, which our Version follows; but it will be difficult to fetch the Sense given in it from the present *Greek*. As it now stands, it differs very little from what goes before, and what follows. *Badwell's* Sense of the Place is new and agreeable: "he declared to, and laid before his Nobles whom he had convened, all the Rudeness offered to him from the Nations he had sent to, and the contemptuous Treatment his Ambassadors met with." The Authors of the *Geneva* Version manifestly understood it in this Sense when they rendered, *He communicated with them his secret Counsel, and set before them with his own Mouth all the Malice of the Earth.* And *Junius's* rendering is to the same Effect, *Colligens omne malum regionum istarum ore suo.* And so *Calmet*, *Nabuchodonosor representa lui même la malice de toute la terre.* When it is here said that he meditated Revenge on the whole Earth, this is not to be understood absolutely, but includes such People and Nations only, as refused to attend his Summons, those mentioned in the former Chapter *7, 8, 9, 10.* γῆ and οἰκισμένη are both taken frequently in Scripture in a restrained Sense to signify a particular Country; *Judea*, especially, is often so denominated.

Ver. 4. *Called Holofernes . . .*] Some Annotators are of Opinion, that the Word *Holofernes* is of *Persian* Extract, in the same Manner as *Tisaphernes*, *Intaphernes*, &c. but others imagine, that this General was a Native either of *Pontus* or *Cappadocia*. *Polybius* makes Mention of one of that Name, who having conquered *Cappadocia*, soon lost it again by endeavouring to change the ancient Customs of the Country, and to introduce Drunkenness, together with Feasts and Rites to *Bacchus*. Whereupon *Casaubon* conjectures, that this was the same *Holofernes* that commanded *Nabuchadnezzar's* Forces; as it must be owned, that his Riot and Debauchery, as well as the Rapidity of his Conquests, makes him not unlike him. *Polyb.* l. x. c. xi. and *Casaub.* in *Athen.*

Ver. 4. *The chief Captain of his Army, which was next unto him.*] By *Zonaras* he is

called *Archisatrapas*, by *Tertullian* and *St. Austin*, *Rex*; on account probably of the supreme Power and Command which he had. He seems to have been in the same Favour, Dignity, and Power with *Nabuchodonosor*, as *Joseph* was with *Pharaoh* in *Egypt*, and *Haman* with *Affuerus* in *Persia*, *Esth.* c. iii. and *Acchiacharus* with *Esharaddon* in *Assyria*, *Tob.* i.

Ver. 5. *And the Number of Horses with their Riders, Twelve thousand.*] Here our Translators have with great Judgment followed the *Alexand.* Copy, which has χιλιάδας, instead of the other Copies μυριάδων. No doubt μυριάδων δέκαδύω is a Mistake here, and seems to have been the Gloss to the Number in the Line above, χιλιάδας ἑκατὸν εἰκοσι, over-against which, some Hand had put the usual way of expressing that Number, viz. 12 Myriads; and this by Mistake afterwards crept into the Text in the Line below.

Ver. 7. *Thou shalt declare unto them, that they prepare for me Earth and Water.*] This, according to the Margin, is after the Manner of the Kings of *Persia*, to whom Earth and Water was wont to be given, in Acknowledgment of their being Lords of Land and Sea. Thus *Darius*, to make Trial which of the *Grecians* would submit to him, and which would not, sent Heralds to all their Cities to demand Earth and Water: On the Arrival of these Heralds, several of the *Grecian* Cities, dreading the Power of the *Persians*, did as was required of them; but when those who were sent to *Athens* and *Lacedæmon*, came thither with this Commission, they flung them, the one into a Well, and the other into a deep Pit, and bid them fetch Earth and Water thence. But this being done in the Heat of their Rage, they repented of it, when come to a cooler Temper, and would gladly have made any Satisfaction for the Wrong that would have been accepted of; and the *Lacedæmonians* sent a proper Person on Purpose to *Susa* to make an Offer hereof, *Herod.* l. vii. From the Tribute here demanded, some have inferred, that it was a *Persian* Monarch that gave these imperious Orders, and they confirm this Opinion from these further Reasons: 1. The *Apostolical Constitutions* mention what is here recorded to have happened ἐπὶ Δαρείω, l. viii. 2. The Name of *Holofernes*, the General of this Army, and next in Power to the King, like those of *Tisaphernes*, *Artaphernes*, *Intaphernes*, *Barzaphernes*, is known by its Termination to be of *Persian* Extraction. 3. It appears from *Josephus*, *Antiq.* l. xi. 5. that *Jocim*, mentioned in this History, c. iv. 6. was not High Priest till the End of *Darius's* Reign. 4. The Hymn of Thanksgiving upon the wonderful Deliverance God had vouchsafed his People, mentions particularly that the *Persians* quaked at her Boldness, and the *Medes* were daunted at her Hardiness, which seems to imply their having a principal Share in this War. This History cannot be assigned to the Times of *Nabuchadnezzar*, who carried



ried the two Tribes Captives, inasmuch as it is declared therein, c. v. 18, 19. that it happened after the Return of those Tribes out of Captivity, long after the Death of that King. A learned Writer, and a great Stickler for this Opinion, surmises, that the Jews changed the Name of *Darius* into *Nabuchodonosor*, when they set up their spurious Messias *Bar Chocab*, and that the true *Æra* of this History is in the 36th Year of *Darius*, *Whiston's Hist. of the Old Test.* vol. i. p. 369. Others, without having any Recourse to the Corruption of the Text, suppose, that some *Persian* King, who resembled *Nebuchadnezzar* in his Designs and Actions, is here called by his Name, in like manner as any noted Conspirator may be called a *Catiline*. *Sulpicius Severus*, from the Likeness of the two Characters, will have *Ochus*, the Successor of *Artaxerxes*, to be the Person, who was very cruel, and fond of going to War, *Sacr. Hist.* l. ii. c. 22. Some have fixed upon *Cambyfes*, particularly *Eusebius in Chron. St. Austin*, l. xviii. c. 16. *de Civit. Dei & Venerab. Bede*, and have assigned it as the Reason why *Cambyfes* opposed the Building of the Temple, *Ezra* iv. because the Jews killed *Holofernes*. But this History of *Judith* cannot fall in with the 12th of *Cambyfes*, see ver. 1. as that Prince lived but seven Years and five Months, *Herod.* l. iii. but whoever is fixed upon, there seems to lie this Objection against the Conjecture in general, that the *Nabuchodonosor* here mentioned, is all along particularly characterized as King of the *Assyrians*, c. i. 7. 11. ii. 1. 4, &c. and his General, as chief Captain of the Army of *Assur*, c. ii. 4. 14. v. 1. vi. 1. &c. As this Particularity therefore seems necessarily to confine it to a *Babylonian* or an *Assyrian* Monarch, and as the Times of *Nebuchadnezzar* suit not with those of this History, might we not rather imagine, if a Change of Names through any *Jewish* Corruption of the Copies is to be suspected, or admitted, that they changed the Name of the King of *Assyria* or *Babylon*, *Saosduchinus*, or some other, into *Nabuchodonosor*? Further, if the Demand of Earth and Water was not peculiar to the *Persians*, but in use among other Nations, and is only a common Form of acknowledging Subjection; and if the *Persians* are to be considered here only as Auxiliaries, as seems most probable from c. i. ver. 7. and were, among others, summon'd themselves to assemble at *Nabuchodonosor's* Command, then what is here recorded should seem to belong to the Times before *Darius*, or even the very Establishment of the *Persian* Empire; for it cannot be supposed, that when that was in its Glory, the *Persians* under *Cambyfes*, *Darius*, or *Xerxes*, or indeed any of their Kings, then Lords of the *East*, should be so obsequious to the Commands of the proud *Assyrian*, as to assemble at his Summons; or so void of Policy, as to join their Forces to subdue the Earth to him; to enlarge his Power and Dominion, and in effect to lessen and diminish their own: Be-

sides, "Did any of these *Persian* Monarchs," says *Calmet*, reign at *Niniveh*? Did they declare War against a King of the *Medes*? Were they ever Kings of *Assyria*? Did they conquer *Cappadocia*, *Cilicia*, *Syria*, *Arabia*, *Mesopotamia*, and *Phœnicia*? Or rather, did not all these Provinces make Part of the Empire, which they received from their Ancestors?"

Ver. 11. *But concerning them that rebel, let not thine Eyes spare them.*] i. e. Either through a Motive of Compassion, or a Principle of Avarice, as *Saul* did, when, instead of obeying the Commandment of God, to smite *Amalek*, and utterly to destroy all that they had, out of a false Compassion he spared *Agag*, and the best of the Sheep and the Oxen, and all that was good, 1 Sam. xv. 3. 9.

Ver. 12. *For as I live, and by the Power of my Kingdom, whatsoever I have spoken, that will I do by mine Hand.*] When we consult that divine Light which teaches us, that Men can do nothing but as God shall please to enable them, or shall allow to be done, one cannot help being surprized, and scarce forbear laughing, at the Vanity of the *Assyrian* Prince, who, flushed with the Conceit of his Victory over *Arphaxad*, and the Advantages hitherto gained, resolves upon the vast Attempt of subduing the whole Earth, as if his Power was invincible, and his Project, founded either on Pride, Ambition, or Resentment, could not fail of Success. From the Secrecy and well concerted Measures of his Expedition, and the Number of Forces ready to engage in it, he assures himself of Conquest, not considering, that Success depends upon God's good Pleasure, who often delights to defeat the unjust Designs and unwarrantable Enterprizes of such Princes, who aim at establishing their own Glory and Greatness upon the Ruin of innocent and less powerful States. Especially such it is his Will to bring low, who pride themselves in their own Sufficiency and Strength, ver. 5. and, without asking his Leave, or seeking for his Assistance or Blessing, are confident of Victory, that their Counsels cannot be disappointed, nor their combined Forces overthrown and defeated. From the authoritative Manner and lofty Language of this Verse, one would have thought that it was God himself that was speaking, he who has the sovereign Dominion over all Creatures, and whose Decrees and Orders are always infallible and irresistible; who never commissions a *Moses* or a *Joshua* to go and fight their Enemies with a Promise of Success, but the Event is always answerable, and the Attempt successful. But what a prodigious Difference is there between the precarious Resolutions of vain Man, and the unerring Decrees of an all-wise God; between a Prince who has nothing of his own, but his Pride, and an all-powerful Being, to whom Kings, even in the Summit of their fancied Greatness, are subject and accountable! The Event of this History in particular shews the Vanity of such presumptuous Boasting, in Defiance of the



Most High; that even weak and inconsiderable Means shall have the Power, by God's Appointment, to stop the Career, and confound the Pride of the Mighty; and a *Judith* unarm'd, if sent by the Lord of Hosts, and inspired with Resolution by him, shall perform Wonders for the Deliverance of his People, against the whole Force of an insulting Enemy, *who took not God for their Strength, but trusted in the Multitude of their Hosts.*

Ver. 21. *Near the Mountain, which is at the Left-hand of the Upper Cilicia.*] It is probable that *Taurus* and *Antitaurus* are here meant, as these are large Mountains bordering on *Cilicia*.

Ver. 23. *And destroyed Phud and Lud.*] i. e. *Egypt* and *Lydia*; for *Lud* cannot mean here *Ethiopia*, because the *Ethiopians*, c. i. 10. had no Concern in this Affair, the *Assyrian* Monarch had received no Affront or contemptuous Answer from them. If what *Grotius* observes of the Geography of this Writer be true, that it is *παχυμερής*, *crassoque filo*, one shall the less wonder, that *Phud* and *Lud*, i. e. *Egypt* and *Lydia*, *Rasses* and *Ismael*, i. e. *Tarsus* and *Arabia*; *Mesopotamia* and *Cilicia* are connected together, without a proper Regard to the Order or Situation of Places.

Ver. 27. *Then he went down into the Plain of Damascus.*] If we do not suppose *Holofernes* to have been assisted in extending his Conquests, and to have executed Part of what is mentioned in this, and the foregoing Verses, by several large Detachments from the general Army, under the Conduct of other Generals and Lieutenants, the Rapidity of his Conquests is almost incredible. He seems to conquer more Places in less than two Months, than another could even visit with so numerous an Army as his in so short a Time; for in about six or seven Weeks time he conquered *Cappadocia*, *Lydia*, *Cilicia*, *Mesopotamia*, from the River *Chabor*, which empties itself into the *Euphrates* to the *Persian* Gulph; as likewise *Arabia*, and the Country of the *Madianites*, towards the *Dead Sea*; and, last of all *Damascus*: Which makes it the more surprising, that, after having run through so many Provinces, and subdued so many Nations, by the mere Terror of his Name, a little insignificant Town in comparison should stop his Progress, and oblige him to stay before it a Month or two without making any Assault upon, or executing any thing considerable against it, except seizing on the Aqueducts, and by rendering them useless and unserviceable, depriving the Inhabitants of *Bethulia* of the Convenience of Water. Our Translators here scarce reach the Force of the Verb *ἐξελίχθη*: 'tis an elegant Expression, and means, that he winnowed their Countries, i. e. he took their Substance, and left the Chaff.

## CHAP. III.

Ver. 1. *SO they sent Ambassadors to him to treat of Peace.*] i. e. the Inhabitants of the Sea Coasts, mentioned in the last Verse of the foregoing Chapter, and People very remote, made solemn and respectful Application to him to avert the Danger and Mischief that might otherwise befall them. *Curtius* mentions the like formal Address made by the most distant Nations to *Alexander the Great*, to intercede for Peace, and to engage his Favour, l. x. Thus the *Gibeonites*, knowing the Success usually attending such dutiful and early Application, to save themselves from Danger, craftily said to *Joshua*, *We be come from a far Country, we are thy Servants, now therefore make a League with us*, *Josh. c. ix.*

Ver. 2. *We the Servants of Nabuchodonosor the great King.*] These People surrendered themselves as Vassals to the King of *Assyria*, called here *the Great King* by way of Eminence. This was the usual Title given to this Monarch. Thus *Rabshakeh*, speaking of his superior Power, addresses himself to *Hezekiah*, *Thus saith the Great King, the King of Assyria, what Confidence is that wherein thou trustest?* 2 Kings xviii. 19. *Daniel*, speaking to *Nebuchadnezzar*, c. ii. 37. applies to him the like august Terms of Sovereignty, *Thou, O King, art a King of Kings; for the God of Heaven hath given thee a Kingdom, Power, and Strength, and Glory.* And *Cyrus* in his Epitaph, is complimented in the like manner as βασιλεὺς βασιλέων, *Strabo*, l. xv.

Ver. 4. *Behold even our Cities, and the Inhabitants thereof, are thy Servants, come and deal with them as seemeth good unto thee.*] As nothing very material occurs in the literal Sense of this Chapter, *Messrs. of Port Royal* have drawn the following allegorical one from the great Power of the King of *Assyria*, represented above in all its Terror on the one Hand, and the vast Panick and abject Obsequiousness of the neighbouring Nations on the other; "that by *Nabuchodonosor*, who "had decreed to subdue the whole Earth, "and would be acknowledged and adored as "a God by all the Nations whom he had "conquered, we may pertinently understand "the Devil, whose grand Design is, ever since "the withdrawing his own Allegiance, and exalting himself as God, to seduce Mankind, "and to persuade them to desert the free and "happy Service, in which they live under "their great Creator, and to transfer their "Obedience to him, as their only Lord and "Master." By *Holofernes* his General, they conceive, may be aptly meant, "All the "Agents and Emissaries of the Devil, who "in Compliance with his Suggestions or Orders, labour through unjust Means and "wicked Arts to establish his Empire. Such "were those idolatrous Princes, who persecuted with Fire and Sword the true Servants of God, to oblige them to submit to "the Power and Dominion of the Devil, "and



“and to renounce *Jesus Christ*. And to say  
 “nothing of the World itself, whose Threats,  
 “as well as Caresses, are alike successful in  
 “drawing Men from their Duty, such espe-  
 “cially are all those, who, thro’ the Exam-  
 “ple of a bad Life, or the Poison and Infe-  
 “ction of evil Principles, seduce others from  
 “their Duty and Stedfastness, to leave the  
 “true Way of Salvation, and to walk in the  
 “Paths, which lead to Perdition, and Death.”  
*Comm. in loc.*

Ver. 7. *So they, and all the Country round about received them with Garlands, with Dances, and with Timbrels: Yet did he cast down their Frontiers.] i. e.* Their Frontier Towns, Forts, and strong Holds which might otherwise give him Opposition and Disturbance. The *Vulgate* is more explicit in rendering the last Clause, *Nec ista tamen facientes, ferocitatem ejus pectoris mitigare potuerunt, nam & civitates eorum destruxit*. It should seem from this Account, that it would have been more safe and glorious for these Princes and People, to have united their Forces, and to have joined together to defend themselves against a Barbarian, without any Bowels of Tendernefs and Compassion, and with whom the greatest Submission was unavailable any ways to move or affect him. If their Villages had been sacked and plundered, they would however have had the Glory to have defended their Liberties at the Expence of their Lives. But Fear seldom reasons truly, *Wisd.* xvii. 12. and those who are seized with it, without weighing the Consequences, follow implicitly what it suggests and dictates. The learned *Expositors* above, here again strike out an allegorical Sense, and apply it to the Conduct of the Wicked; “The Wicked (say they) when  
 “they surrender to, and enter upon the Ser-  
 “vice of, Sin and Satan, propose advantage-  
 “ous Things to themselves; ’tis their Aim  
 “and Intention, like the People here men-  
 “tioned, to procure Safety and Happiness  
 “to themselves in this Life; but herein they  
 “are miserably deceived, since the Devil  
 “in the End, is really more cruel and mis-  
 “chievous to those that submit to him, than  
 “to those who have the Virtue and Resolu-  
 “tion to oppose him. For should this Evil  
 “Spirit, like the enraged *Holofernes*, threaten  
 “and do all the Evil imaginable to the lat-  
 “ter, should he by Violence take away their  
 “Lives, a Death so precious before God,  
 “will be rewarded by an immortal Life, and  
 “eternal Felicity: Or should he aim at,  
 “what is more dear to them, the Subversion  
 “of the true Religion, his Attempt would  
 “be fruitless against its great Protector. But  
 “with the Wicked it is not so, those who  
 “go out to meet this Fiend, as these Na-  
 “tions did *Holofernes*, and who willingly  
 “submit to his Empire, and even rejoice,  
 “and take a Pleasure in his Service, prove  
 “often unhappy, even in this Life, and have  
 “a terrible Prospect of Ruin before them  
 “for the Time to come. For they are in the

“Service of a Master, who being, accord-  
 “ing to the Account given of him in Scri-  
 “pture, a *Murderer from the Beginning*,  
 “continues his implacable Hatred against  
 “Mankind, and is so false a Friend, that he  
 “gives the most deadly Wound to the Soul,  
 “at the same Time that he outwardly ap-  
 “pears to be the most kind and favourable;  
 “cunningly advancing the temporal Interest  
 “and Fortunes of those, whom he means  
 “eternally to ruin. As he makes no Ac-  
 “count of Riches, or any of the transitory  
 “Goods of this Life, he is disposed to give,  
 “if he had it in his Power, all the King-  
 “doms of the World, as he once pretended  
 “to offer even to our *Saviour*, provided he  
 “could induce any thereby to fall down and  
 “worship him, and, by so doing, to be eter-  
 “nal Partners with him in Misery and Pu-  
 “nishment.”

Ver. 8. *Cut down their Groves . . .]* Where they used to offer Sacrifice to their Gods, or Idols, under green Trees for the greater Solemnity and Reverence, as well as the greater Secrecy of their Mysteries. That among the Heathens Trees and Groves were the Temples of their Gods, appears from innumerable Passages in Sacred and Profane History. And in the *Roman Laws* of the Twelve Tables, in the Second Law of Religion, it was commanded to have Groves in the Fields. From this idolatrous Use of them among the Heathens, the *Israelites* were bidden in the Course of their Conquests to cut them down, and *Deut.* xii. 3. to burn them; and this Law was executed by the good Kings of *Judah*, in Obedience to the Commands of the true God, *2 Kings* xviii. 4. xxiii. 6, 14. They were also forbidden to plant any Grove, or Tree near unto the Altar of the Lord, *Deut.* vi. 21. Under *Groves*, probably all other Monuments of religious Use are comprehended, as Houses, High-places, Temples, see c. iv. 1. Pillars, Statues, and the like. All of which *Nebuchadnezzar* ordered to be destroyed, as so many Rivals of his Majesty and Greatness.

*Ibid.* For he had decreed to destroy all the Gods of the Land, that all Nations should worship *Nabuchodonosor* only, and that all Tongues and Tribes should call upon him as God.] The *Assyrian* Princes, when they rose to the Sublimity of Empire, were not only despotic in their Government, but affected even divine Honours, as may be seen in their History, and set themselves above all the Gods of the People they vanquished; and not only presumed to pass Sentence by the Word of their Mouth upon the whole World, but sometimes required that none other under Heaven should be worshipped but themselves. We find in the Account here given of *Nabuchodonosor*, that he was resolved not only to subdue the several Nations from the *Euphrates* to *Ethiopia*, but intended likewise to oblige them to adore, and acknowledge, him only to be God. Accordingly his General, *Holofernes*, did not content himself with demolishing Idols and false  
 I Gods,



Gods, but he would remove the True God likewise, and set up *Nabuchodonosor* in his stead. This appears to have been the avowed Purpose of his sending his great Armies, not merely from a Spirit of Resentment, but rather of Ambition to be acknowledged the King among Gods. And, indeed, as if he had been a professed Atheist, as some have represented him, the Sense of his great Success in Life had so intoxicated his Reason, as to forget that he was a Man, or that there was a God that could controul him. But the King of *Ninive* was not the only Prince that we find infected with the Folly and Impiety of desiring to pass for a God; the Flatterers of *Darius*, who reigned over the *Medes* and *Persians* in the Time of *Daniel*, proposed to him to make a Decree, under Pain of being cast into the Den of Lions, that no one should dare to ask a Petition of any God, or Man, but of him only, for the Space of thirty Days, *Dan. vi. 7.* Nor was *Sennacherib* less insolent, who boasted, *2 Kings xviii. 35.* that he had not yet met with any God, that could withstand his Power, *Who are they among all the Gods of the Nations, that have delivered their Country out of mine Hand?* And from thence vainly infers, that neither would the Lord be able to deliver *Jerusalem* out of his Hand; exalting himself above all that is called God, or is worshipped. *Alexander the Great*, and many of the *Roman* Emperors, had the like Ambition of passing for Gods. Nor is it very surprizing, that those whom the Devil had thus taken Possession of, should, like him, aspire to be equal with God. For that proud Spirit, however jealous of his Honour, is not averse, for special Ends, to communicate Part of it to his Favourites, and willingly allows that they shall be looked upon and treated as Gods, if he can by such Superstition tempt any to leave the Service of the True God, and by Consequence become his Slaves.

Ver. 9. *Over-against the great Strait of Judæa.*] Called the *Hill Country*, *Luke i. 39.* It is particularly described *7.* of the next Chapter.

#### CHAP. IV.

Ver. 2. **T**herefore they were exceedingly afraid of him, and were troubled for *Jerusalem*, and for the Temple of the Lord their God.] It is not to be wondered at, that the People of the *Jews* should be much afraid of, and tremble at, so great a Force coming against them, to which so many Nations, from an Apprehension of greater Evils, had submitted, and notwithstanding had been treated with great Severity. Their Fear therefore was the more excusable, and had this good Effect, that through a Distrust of themselves, and their own Sufficiency, it put them upon applying to God for his Assistance, and asking of him in their Distress, the Help of his All-powerful Arm. It is observable, that the *Jews* are not represented here, as concerned for, and afraid of the

Loss of their Goods, their Liberty, or Lives, but the Occasion of their Uneasiness was the Apprehension they were under, that the Holy City of *Jerusalem*, and the Temple of the Lord, should be profaned, and treated as other the like Places had been, where *Holofernes* with his Army had passed. The *Jews*, it is well known, had a profound Veneration for their Temple, and on many Occasions have shewed themselves ready to undergo a thousand Deaths for the Preservation of that Holy Place, which distinguished them from all other Nations; and therefore their Thoughts at this Time were chiefly fixed, and their Wishes and Prayers confined to their beloved Sanctuary. "What they did from a pure Zeal and Spirit of *Judaism*, and to preserve so glorious a Monument of their Religion, we should be equally zealous to do, say *Mess. of Port Royal*, from a truer Principle, and a more excellent Religion. It becomes us to be always more sincerely concerned for, and affected with, what any ways reflects Dishonour upon, or is injurious to the Glory of God, and the Interest of his Church, than for any thing that can happen to ourselves. We find that even the meek *Jesus* was affected with Passion upon observing the Sanctity of his Father's House profaned by Merchandise, and the Place of Prayer changed into a Den of Thieves: But one does not read of any Resentment he expressed, all the Time that he was in the Hands of his bitterest Enemies, and exposed to their outrageous Insults; tho' his Body was without Comparison a Temple far more glorious and precious, than that material one, for which the *Jews* testified so much Respect, and shewed so much Concern for its Safety."

Ver. 3. *For they were newly returned from the Captivity, and all the People of Judæa were gathered together: And the Vessels, and the Altar, and the House were sanctified after the Prophannation.*] It is a great Dispute among the Learned, whether what is related here happened before or after the Captivity, and where the Date of this Transaction is to be placed. Those who maintain the latter Opinion, ground it chiefly upon this Passage, wherein the Author, according to the *Greek* Version says (for the *Vulg.* wholly omits it) that the *Jews* were newly returned from Captivity, and the Vessels, and the Altar, and the House were sanctified after the Prophannation. And *c. v. 18, 19.* it is farther affirmed, that they were led Captives into a Land which was not theirs, that the Temple of their God was cast to the Ground, and their Cities taken by the Enemy, but now are they come up from the Places where they were scattered, and have possessed *Jerusalem* again. The bare reading of these Passages, say they, naturally leads one to conclude, that what is here mentioned, was not transacted till after the Return from the Captivity; which is confirmed by the Opinion of many of the Ancients, as well



well as Moderns. See *Calmet's Pref. sur le Liv. Judith*, and *Stackhouse's Hist. of the Bib.* Those who maintain that this Transaction happened before the Captivity, are divided, some placing it under *Manasses*, and others under *Zedekiah*; but the Difficulties on either Hypothesis, possibly may be adjusted, if we be careful to distinguish the slight and particular Dispersions and Captivities of the *Jews*, from the long and more general one: and if we understand the Captivity here referred to, not of the grand Captivity of *Babylon*, but of one that was slight in Comparison of it, that in the Time of *Manasseh* seems most probable to be meant. When that Prince was carried Captive to *Babylon*, what is here mentioned of the Country being desolate, the People dispersed, and the Temple prophaned, really happened; and upon his Return from thence with some of his Subjects, and being restored to his Kingdom thro' God's Blessing upon his exemplary Penitence, the Temple, by as great a Zeal for the true Religion, was purified again, and the Service of the Sanctuary restored to its ancient Dignity, 2 *Chron.* xxxiii. 12, 13, 14. But it must be acknowledged that in *St. Jerom's* Version, made from the original *Chaldee*, as is supposed, this Verse, on which the Controversy is founded, is wholly left out; and it is no improbable Conjecture of a very learned Writer, that it was put into the *Greek* Version (from whence the *English* is taken) from some of those corrupted Copies of the Original, which *St. Jerom* complains of. *Prid. Connect.* vol. i. p. 32. As the Authority therefore of this, and that other Passage, c. v. 18. is so dubious, nothing certain can be concluded from either, or both of them, as to the Point in Question.

Ver. 4. *Therefore they sent into all the Coasts of Samaria, and the Villages, &c.* Nothing could have induced these two irreconcilable Enemies, the *Jews* and the *Samaritans*, who had a mutual Aversion to each other, see Note on *Ecclus* i. 25, 26. to act jointly, and to be Confederates, but the Sense of the common Danger which threatened them from the Expedition of *Holofernes*.

Ver. 5. *And possessed themselves before-hand of all the Tops of the high Mountains, and fortified the Villages that were in them.* As *Jonathab* the High Priest did against *Apollo-nius*, 1 *Maccab.* x. 70. being by the Nature of their Situation more tenable and less easy of Access. During the Captivity, and some time after, not Villages only, but almost all the Cities, lay defenceless, and even *Jerusalem* itself was without sufficient Walls for its Security, as may easily be imagined in such a Time of Desolation and Distress.

Ver. 6. *Joachim the High Priest which was in those Days in Jerusalem.* He is sometimes called *Eliakim*; accordingly *St. Jerom's* Version promiscuously uses both Names for this High Priest. The *Syriac* also does the like: And indeed they are both Names for the same Person. And so *Luke* iii. 23. Some Co-

pies have *Joachim*, instead of *Heli*, which according to *Chemnitius*, is *Eliakim* contracted; and *Philo* makes *Joachim*, *Heli*, and *Eliakim* to mean the same Person. See 2 *Kings* xxiii. 34. 2 *Chron.* xxxvi. 4. It has been objected against this History, that none of the Name of *Joachim*, or *Eliakim*, is to be found either in the Scriptures, or in *Josephus*, that was High Priest before the Captivity. As to that Part of the Objection from the Scriptures, it may be answered, that the Succession of the High Priests is so imperfectly recorded there, that *Joachim* might easily be omitted: For whoever examines the Successions of the *Jewish* High Priests, as we have them delivered to us in the first Book of *Chronicles*, and in the Books of *Ezra* and *Nehemiah*, will find them so intricate and perplexed, so many Omissions and Dislocations, such a Diversity of Names and Numbers, and such seeming Contrariety in the several Accounts, as will cost no small Pains to reduce them to any tolerable Regularity. The Reason is, because the Scripture no where professes to give an exact Catalogue of all such as had been admitted to that Office and Dignity until the Captivity. And in such Catalogues as are delivered, several are inserted that never were High Priests, and several are omitted, that were. The High Priests of the Family of *Eli*, are Instances of the latter; for they are left out of that Pedigree, and those of the true Race who were excluded by them, are Instances of the former, for they are in it, tho' they never were High Priests. It is very likely, as *Prideaux* observes, that from the time of *Solomon* to the Captivity, many more such Instances might have happened to hinder that Pedigree, from being an exact Catalogue of the High Priests. But it is not certain that *Joachim*, or *Eliakim* is not named in Scripture, for several learned Men are inclined to think, that what is said of *Eliakim*, the Son of *Hilkiah*, *Isai.* c. xxii. doth very well agree with that Part which *Joachim* is said to have acted in this Book, *Connect.* l. i. As to the Catalogue of *Josephus*, that too is so imperfect and corrupt, that scarce five Names in it agree with the Scripture Account. For several are in his Catalogue who never were High Priests, and several are left out that were; particularly *Amasiah* in the time of *Jehosaphat*, *Jehoiada* in the Reign of *Joash*, and *Azariah* in that of *Uzziah*: And therefore *Joachim* might have been High Priest at this time, tho' there be no Mention made of him as such, either in the Scriptures, or the History of *Josephus*.

Ver. 8. *And the Children of Israel did as Joachim the High Priest had commanded them.* One is surprized to find in this important Juncture, and indeed throughout this History, the High Priest *Joachim*, giving all the Orders, and no Mention in any Respect made of the King, tho' this was an Affair of State, rather than Religion, and the supreme Power was doubtless in him; as if he had no Concern in or for the Event of this War, nor



for the Danger threatned to his People, and his Duty did not call upon him more loudly to do, and order, what the High Priest is here represented as doing. But the Conjecture of very many learned Men is not at all improbable, that at this time *Manasseh* dwelt at *Jerusalem*, being just returned from the *Babylonish* Captivity, and being deeply affected with that Calamity, and with the Mercy shewed to him in his Deliverance, cared not to concern, or interest himself with publick Affairs, being wholly intent upon serving God. And it is not unlikely, that from his long Confinement, and the Miseries he underwent, he might so have impaired his Health, as to be hindered from acting in a publick Sphere: Or it is possible that he might then be engaged in the Defence of some other Part of his Kingdom, and so devolved the Care of publick Business upon the High Priest, and Senate who had acted during his Absence. *Josephus* informs us, *Antiq.* l. x. c. iv. from the Time that *Manasses* returned from *Babylon*, he spent the whole Remainder of his Time in the Service and Worship of God with the greatest Strictness, being a sincere Penitent for the many Abominations he had committed. And the Scripture intimates the same, *2 Chron.* xxxiii. 13. where it is said of him, that he *humbled himself greatly before the God of his Fathers, and took away the strange Gods, and the Idol out of the House of the Lord.* And tho' it is said *14.* that he built a Wall without the City of *David* for its Defence, and put Captains of War in all the fenced Cities of *Judah*, yet in the general, after he was humbled by his great Affliction, he committed the Management of publick Business, and especially the fortifying frontier Places, to the High Priest, and other great Men. On the other hand it is said, that allowing him to be greatly intent on Devotion, and not to concern himself with publick Business, yet in such a Case, the Name and Authority of the King had not been dropt, nor is usually, tho' the Act was the Act of the Minister. And as to the Possibility of *Manasses* being engaged in the Defence of some other Part of his Kingdom, or in some foreign Expedition, neither the Concurrence of History, Sacred or Profane, nor *Manasses's* own Circumstances, are thought to countenance such a Supposition: And had it been so, might it not have been expected that the Author of this very History should have dropt some Notice of it, as the Reason of *Joachim's* acting on this Occasion with an absolute and independent Power?

Ver. 9. *Then every Man of Israel cried to God with great Fervency, and with great Vehemency did they humble their Souls.*] It is not to be doubted but that the *Israelites*, by fortifying the Hills, and guarding the Passages, and the like necessary Provision in a Time of Danger, used all the Precautions possible to prevent any Surprise from their Enemies; but it is manifest that they did not place their whole Confidence in human Policy, or Foresight. They did all

that was in their Power for their Security, because God allows his Creatures to employ all lawful Means for that Purpose; but being convinced of the Truth of *David's* Observation, *Pf.* cxxvii. 2. *Except the Lord keep the City, the Watchman waketh but in vain,* they had Recourse, according to the Direction of the High Priest, to Prayer, Fasting, and Humiliation, as to Arms, which alone could render them invincible. And presuming these Instances of Mortification to be well-pleasing to, and successful with God, they continued them for many Days in all *Judea* and *Jerusalem*, *13.* waiting for God's Protection and Assistance at the Time, and in the Manner, he should please to send it; and it was this Perseverance that at length procured them Victory. The *Vulgate* puts the following Speech into the Mouth of *Joachim* the High Priest, *Scitote quoniam exaudiet Dominus preces vestras, si manentes permanseritis in jejuniis & orationibus in conspectu Domini. Memores estote Moysi servi Dei, qui Amalec confidentem in virtute & potentia sua, & in exercitu suo, & in clypeis suis, & in curribus & in equitibus suis, non ferro pugnando, sed precibus sanctis orando dejecit. Sic erunt universi hostes Israel, si perseveraveritis in hoc opere quod capistis.* One cannot but observe, how different the Conduct and Behaviour of the *Israelites* was upon this Occasion, from that of common Armies. They thought the Help of Man was but vain, and therefore their Trust was in the Lord of Hosts. Instead of the Sound of Trumpets, and other warlike Instruments, they poured forth their devout Supplications to him, that was able to save, accompanied with strong Crying and Tears. Instead of outward Pomp, and the Pride of Dress, they were distinguished by Sackcloth and Ashes, and lowly Prostrations. And who among the proud *A Syrians*, seeing such Instances of Dejection, would not have despised and laughed at these *Israelites*, as a People half dead with Fear, and even almost below their Notice to engage with? And yet it was this profound Humiliation, that was alone available to oppose and subdue the Haughtiness and Pride of *Holofernes*. Other Nations hastily submitted thro' the very Terror of his Name, but this People, providing better for their Safety, humbled themselves under, and thereby obtained the Help of the mighty Hand of God, and triumphed over him, who threatned Revenge upon the whole Earth.

Ver. 14. *And Joachim the High Priest, and all the Priests that stood before the Lord, and they which ministred unto the Lord, had their Loins girt with Sackcloth, and offered the daily Burnt-offerings, with the Vows and free Gifts of the People.* Ver. 15. *And had Ashes on their Mitres, and cried unto the Lord with all their Power.*] The *Vulg.* is more emphatical than our Version, *Etiam hi qui offerebant Domino holocausta, praeincti ciliciis offerrent sacrificia Domino.* Only it is observable that it omits the Mention of the High Priest.

And



And indeed the Occasion must be more pressing and calamitous than ordinary, for the High Priest himself, if not to put off his glorious Apparel altogether, at least to appear in the Time of the publick Ministrations in the Habit of a Mourner, who might not mourn, according to the Law, for the Death of his nearest Kin, *Levit. xxi. 10, 11.* but publick Calamities, such as affected the very being of the State, admitted of an Exemption from the ordinary Rule. Accordingly the Prophet *Joel*, in such a Time of Distress, exhorts, that the Priests, the Ministers of the Altar, should gird themselves, lament, and howl, and lie all Night in Sackcloth, *c. i. 13.*

CHAP. V.

Ver. 1. **A**ND had laid Impediments in the champain Countreys.] The Word *συνάδαλον* here used has many Significations: It sometimes signifies in general any Obstacle or Hindrance laid in a Man's Way, by which a Passenger is detained or stopped: Here it is peculiarly taken to signify those sharp Stakes, or other Instruments, which in Time of War Men were wont to put in the Fields, where the Enemy was expected to follow, to wound their Feet or Legs with, and thereby to retard their Passage, and therefore here properly called Impediments. Against which Accident, being so usual and ordinary in War, anciently they used Greaves of Brasse to defend their Feet or Legs. See *1 Sam. xvii. 6.*

Ver. 2. *Wherewith he was very angry, and called all the Princes of Moab, and the Captains of Ammon.*] He applied to these more particularly, says *Calmet*, as he presumed that the *Moabites* and *Ammonites*, being Neighbours to the *Hebrews*, could better inform him of the Truth than any other Persons.

Ver. 3. *Tell me now who this People is that dwelleth in the Hill Country.*] It may seem strange, and scarce to be credited, that a General of the *Assyrians*, such a one as *Holofernes* was, should be ignorant of the People of the *Jews*, and ask the Questions which are here mentioned concerning them; but it is probable that *Holofernes* was not of the Number of those Captains of the King of *Assyria*, whom the Lord sent to carry *Manasseh* into Captivity, and therefore possibly he might not understand either their Constitution and Discipline, or the Situation and Extent of their Country, much less the Genius of the People, their Original and Genealogy, since even *Tacitus* the Historian, who had conferred both with *Titus* and *Vespasian*, who overthrew *Jerusalem*, seems unacquainted with their Genealogy, when he affirms, that they came from *Ida*, a Mountain of *Crete*, *Hist. l. v.* The Questions here proposed to the Princes of *Moab*, and the Captains of *Ammon*, seem not to have proceeded from any Ignorance of this People,

nor to have been really asked for Information sake; for considering the Trophies and Spoils, and Number of Captives brought from *Judea* not very many Years before by those powerful Kings of *Assyria*, *Tiglatb-Palasser*, *Salmanasor*, and *Sennacherib*, such Particulars relating to the *Jews* could not but be known. But they are Questions rather of a sneering and insulting General, despising the Enemies he had to deal with, as of no Note or Consequence, and not worthy of any Regard. Not unlike that Expression of the proud *Pharaoh*, speaking of the God of *Israel* with great Contempt, *Who is the Lord that I should obey his Voice?* *Exod. v.* and that of *Nabuchodonosor*, *Dan. iii. Who is that God that shall deliver you out of my Hands?* But that of churlish *Nabal*, *1 Sam. xxv. 10.* comes nearest the Point, *Who is David?* and *who is the Son of Jesse?* But the more the *Assyrians* despised the *Jews*, the more must they be surprized, and the greater their Confusion, when they beheld their proud and insulting General vanquished and killed, with the far greater Part of his Army, by the Means of one single Woman among that People, whom they would seem even not to know, in order to depress and undervalue them the more.

*Ibid.* *What King is set over them, or Captain of their Army?*] The *Vulgate* has only *Quis rex militie illorum*, without the Distinction. The latter Clause seems exegetical of Part of the Office of a King, *viz.* his leading out, and going forth before his People to Battle, *2 Sam. xxi. 17.* *Holofernes* might possibly ask the Question, who was their King, as *Manasse's* Captivity might be a Secret to him, who was not carried to *Nineve* or *Susa*, but to *Babylon*.

Ver. 5. *I will declare unto thee the Truth; . . . and there shall no Lye come out of the Mouth of thy Servant.*] Such Instances as these are not to be considered as Tautology; they are used to shew the Earnestness of the Speaker, and to gain an easier Belief by a more vigorous Manner of Expression. There are many Instances in Scripture of this Manner of Reduplication. See *Deut. ix. 7.* *2 Kings ix. 3.* *Matt. xxviii. 14.* *Mark xiv. 61.* *Luke i. 20. ix. 45.* *John i. 20.* *Acts xiii. 11. xiv. 8. xviii. 9.* *1 Thess. v. 5.* *Apoc. iii. 16.* and particularly *1 John ii. 27.* which very much resembles the Passage before us; as does that of *Plato*, *ψεύδεσθαι, ἢ μὴ τ' ἀληθῆ λέγειν*, who has also, *ἀπειθῆναι, ἢ μὴ πεθόμενοι*; and so *Virgil*—*Non adversata petenti annuit*; and Instances are still more frequent among the Greek Poets, particularly *Homer*, *Euripides*, *Sophocles*, and *Aristophanes*.

*Ibid.* *Captain of all the Sons of Ammon.*] Under the general Title of the Sons of *Ammon*, some conceive to be comprized the *Edomites*, or *Idumeans*, who may be considered as Brethren of the *Jews*, being descended from *Esau*, the Brother of *Jacob*; and that they chose to pass under that Name at this Time, to avoid the Odium of being engaged



engaged against, and invading the *Israelites* their Kinmen. *Achior*, the chief of these People, it may be presumed, was an *Idumean* likewise, and having a perfect Knowledge of all that concerned the *Jews*, was the Spokesman to *Holofernes*, and gave him all the Light and Intelligence concerning them, that is mentioned in this Chapter; and from the Detail here given of them, it appears, that he very well understood their History. One cannot but take Notice of the open Manner in which he speaks to the *Assyrian* General of the People of the *Jews*, and of the God of *Israel's* impartial and just Dealing with them, according as their Conduct deserved; an Observation tending greatly to his Glory, and scarce to be expected from this *Ammonite*. And there seems to be something providential in it, and not merely Chance, that he should find Admittance and Protection among this People, and even be made one of them by the Rite of Circumcision, where in all human Appearance he might rather have expected to have been evil entreated, or to have suffered Death as a Spy, or an Enemy in Disguise.

Ver. 6. *This People are descended of the Chaldeans.*] We read, *Gen. xi. 31.* that *Terah* took *Abraham* his Son, and *Lot* the Son of *Haran* his Son's Son, and *Sarai* his Daughter-in-Law, his Son *Abram's* Wife, and they went forth with them from *Ur* of the *Chaldees*, to go into the Land of *Canaan*. Hence the Children of *Israel* are said here to be descended of the *Chaldeans*, as claiming *Abraham* for their Father, who was a *Chaldean*: And probably it was with Design to render *Holofernes* favourable to the *Jews*, that *Achior* represents to him, in the Beginning of his Speech, that they were descended of the *Chaldeans*, as *Holofernes* himself was a Subject of the *Assyrian* Monarch, the Prince of that Country.

Ver. 8. *For they left the Way of their Ancestors, and worshiped the God of Heaven, the God whom they knew; so they cast them out from the Face of their Gods, and they fled into Mesopotamia, and sojourned there for many Days.*] As these Nations had been long infected with Idolatry, and were under a Government that established and supported idolatrous Worship, the Ancestor of *Abraham*, and his Family, were expelled this Land for worshiping the God of Heaven, and leaving the Way of their Forefathers; a Land so famous for Superstition and Idolatry, that *Chaldeans* and *Magicians* were synonymous Terms. From hence they passed into *Mesopotamia*, i. e. into a Province so called from its Situation between the two Rivers, *Tigris* and *Euphrates*; and on account of their Relation to *Abraham*, the *Jews* are said to sojourn with him there. For as they are mentioned in the foregoing Verse to be descended from the *Chaldeans*, because *Abraham*, from whom their Stock was derived, was a *Chaldean*, so are they here represented on the same Account, as accompanying him, and settling

with him in *Mesopotamia*. *St. Stephen, Acts vii. 2, 3, 4.* greatly illustrates what *Achior* here adds, when speaking to the *Jews*, he says, *The God of Glory appeared unto Abraham, and ordered him to depart this Country, &c. Then came he out of the Land of the Chaldeans, and dwelt in Charran; and from thence, when his Father was dead, he removed into the Land of Canaan.* *Abraham's* Stay at *Charran* is supposed, by the most exact Chronologers, to be about two Years; but *Achior's* Expression, *He sojourned there many Days*, seems to imply a much longer Time, as appears from the same Phrase, ver. 16.

Ver. 10. *But when a Famine covered all the Land of Canaan, they went down into Egypt.*] *Calmet* observes, that *Achior* in his Narration, seems to confound the going of *Abraham* into *Egypt*, with that of *Jacob's* thither: But there is not much Weight in this Observation, as the Account here is of the *Jewish* People, and their Concerns collectively, rather than of *Abraham* personally. However this be, it reminds me to illustrate a like Instance, *Acts vii. 16.* where *St. Luke*, in reciting *St. Stephen's* Speech, either puts *Abraham* for *Jacob*, see *Vitring. in Isai. Prolegom. p. 23.* or *Abraham* must be used here patronymically, for *Jacob*, his Descendant; or possibly the Name *Abraham* crept into the Text, as *Beza* suspects, from a marginal Annotation.

Ver. 16. *And all the Gergesites.*] The *Gergesenes*, or *Girgashites*, were an ancient People of the Land of *Canaan*; their Habitation was beyond the Sea of *Tiberias*, where we find some Footsteps of their Name in the City of *Gergesa*, upon the Lake of *Tiberias*. The *Rabbins* inform us, that, when *Joshua* first came into the Land of *Canaan*, the *Gergesenes* took a Resolution rather to forsake their Country, than to submit to the *Hebrews*. They are also of Opinion, that *Joshua* proposed the following Conditions to the *Canaanites*, viz. Flight, Subjection, or War. The *Gergesenes* resolved to fly, and accordingly retired into *Africk*; and to this Flight possibly that Inscription in *Phœnician* Characters, which *Procopius* mentions, may refer, *We are some of those People who fled before that Robber Joshua, the Son of Nun.* Though the Tradition be very old, that the *Gergesenes* fled out of the Land of *Canaan*, when *Joshua* entered it; nevertheless it is certain, that a good Number of them staid behind; since *Joshua* himself informs us, that he subdued the *Girgashites*, *Josh. xxiv. 11.* and they whom he overcame were certainly on this Side *Jordan*. It may be therefore, that they who fled into *Africk* were the *Gergashites*, who dwelt beyond the Sea of *Tiberias*, and that the others continued in the Country; and both these may be meant and included in the Expression here, *All the Gergesites*. By the *Sychemites* mentioned just before, the *Hivites* seem to be intended.

Ver. 17. *And whilst they sinned not before their God, they prospered, because the God that hateth Iniquity was with them.* Ver. 18. *But*  
when



when they departed from the Way which he appointed them, they were destroyed in many Battles very sore.] This Observation of Achior's, was framed according to the known Experience of those Times; for the Rise and Fall, the Prosperity or Adversity of the Jewish People, was in the Apprehension of other Nations, as well as their own, always proportionable to their own religious Behaviour, and not to be measured by any Rules of Policy, or the Effect of it. The Ground of this Observation was God's first Promise to Abraham, Gen. xii. 2, 3. which Promise, as it principally concerned the temporal State of the Jews, was to be limited according to the Tenor of Achior's Speech, and did then only take Effect, when they followed Abraham's Footsteps, and lived in a faithful Obedience to God's Laws; or having transgressed them, did turn again with their whole Hearts to seek the God of their Fathers. And it was their Love of Sin, so displeasing unto God, which brought them so often into Subjection unto their Enemies, according to that of the Psalmist, lxxxi. 14, 15. *O that my People would have hearkened unto me; for if Israel had walked in my Ways, I should soon have put down their Enemies, and turned my Hand against their Adversaries; and that of Solomon, Prov. xvi. 7. When the Ways of a Man please the Lord, he maketh his Enemies to be at Peace with him.* As the Nations round about Judaea waited all such Opportunities to take Revenge of the Jews, when God by their Misery and Calamities seemed to forsake them, so for the same Reasons, were the Nations round about as earnestly bent to hinder the re-edifying of Jerusalem after their Return from the Captivity, as fearing lest this People's good Fortune should rise again with their City Walls, as Nehemiah expressly intimates, c. vi. 16. *That after the Enemies had heard that the Wall was finished, they were afraid, and their Courage failed them, for they knew that this Work was wrought of God.* See Jackson's Works vol. I. p. 86. Hence did the wise Men of Chaldaea, upon the first Notice of the Jews beginning to recover themselves, and Fortune turning for them, read Haman's Destiny, but too late, if Mordecai be of the Seed of the Jews before whom thou hast begun to fall, thou shalt not prevail against him, but shalt surely fall before him, Esther vi. 13. See also Ezra viii. 22. which comes nearer this Place. A very learned Prelate observes of this Speech of Achior's to Holofernes (whether truly uttered or feigned, says he, by the Penman of the History) that it was framed and grounded upon the confessed Observations of those Times, and contained such Advices as a faithful Counsellor, well acquainted with the Affairs of the Jews, should have given to his Lord, who did not so well understand them. Patrick's Comm. on Esth. vi. 13.

Ver. 18. *They were destroyed in many Battles very sore, and were led Captives into a Land that was not theirs.* Some would have

the Captivity here referred to, to be that under Nabuchodonosor, and the Restoration from it here mentioned, to be that under Cyrus: Plantin's Bibles manifestly take it in this Sense, referring in the Margin of this Place to 1 Esdr. c. i. 2. Others understand it of that under Salmanassar; but it seems less liable to Exceptions, to explain the Place of the Assyrian Captivity in the Time of Manasseh, 2 Chron. xxxiii. 11. when Judaea was wasted by the Chaldeans, than of the Babylonish one, which happened after. The Vulgate seems to take it in this Sense, rendering here, *Exterminati sunt praeliis a multis nationibus, & pluri eorum captivi abducti sunt, &c.* If Achior had been here speaking of the Jews carried Captive to Babylon by Nabuchodonosor, he would not have said, "Many of them, but all;" nor that they were destroyed in Battle by many Nations; for in that grand Captivity they were oppressed only by one Nation, viz. the Chaldeans.

Ibid. *And the Temple of their God was cast to the Ground.*] As this Particular is not in St. Jerom's Version, and probably was put into the Greek from some corrupted Copy of the Original, nothing certain can be concluded for or against this History, or the true Time of it, from this Passage of the Speech of Achior. See Note on c. iv. 3. and Dupin's Prelim. Dissert. p. 20. Perhaps by the Words, as they now stand in the Gr. and Eng. Versions, nothing more is intended or meant, than a Profanation of the Temple, and its Dignity being thereby brought low. That the Temple may be said to be in a manner destroyed by a Profanation of it, see 2 Kings xxi. and 2 Chron. xxxiii. that it was destroyed actually by the Chaldeans in the Time of Manasseh is not true, which happened in the Reign of Zedekiah by Nebuchadnezzar, and so must be a great Mistake if understood strictly: And besides, the whole Tenor of this Book intimates the Temple then to be standing, see c. iv. 2. viii. 24. or these Words may be considered as spoken by a Stranger, an Ammonite, who might possibly without Grounds alledge the Destruction of the Temple, as Rabshakeh does, 2 Kings xviii. 22. with regard to Hezekiah's taking away the Altar of the Lord.

Ver. 19. *Now are they returned to their God, and are come up from the Places where they were scattered.*] As what is said in the foregoing Verse seems best understood of the Assyrian Captivity in the Time of Manasseh, when the Jews were dispersed into different Parts, and left their Country desolate, so the Return from their Dispersion here mentioned, seems better to be referred to the Restoration of that Prince, when Jerusalem, which had been for a Time in the Hands of the Assyrians, was restored to him, and the Temple, which was desolate, and in a manner destroyed, recovered its former Lustre, being again frequented and purified, and its holy Service re-established. There is nothing in this Exposition but what is agreeable to the History



History of *Manasseh*, as far as can be collected from the short Account which we have in the Books of *Kings* and *Chronicles*, and it is liable to fewer Objections, than understanding the Place of the Restoration of the *Jews* to their own Land, after the *Babylonish* Captivity which happened later.

Ver. 20. *If there be any Error in this People.*] This is better expressed in the next Sentence, which fixes and determines the Sense of this Passage. The *Hellenists* often express Sins by Errors or Ignorances. See *Numb.* xii. 11. *Ezra* viii. 22. 1 *Esdr.* viii. 77. *Ecclus.* xxiii. 2, 3. and many others in the canonical and apocryphal Writings, where Error and Ignorance plainly mean Sins and Transgressions.

Ver. 23. *We will not be afraid of the Face of the Children of Israel, for so it is a People that have no Strength nor Power for a strong Battle.*] This Boast of *Holofernes's* Officers, and their contemptuous Scorn of the *Jews*, as a People having no Strength nor Power for War, shews their Ignorance of the true God, the God of *Israel*, who, to display his own Almighty Power, and what little Strefs is to be laid on the Arm of Flesh, often interposes in Behalf of his Chosen in a Way not usual nor expected. To give Peace to a favourite Land, he will enable Five to chase an Hundred, and an Hundred to put Ten thousand to Flight, *Levit.* xxvi. 8. *Deut.* xxxii. 30. *Josh.* xxiii. 10. The more unprovided the *Israelites* were of military Strength, the more Room was left for the invincible Arm of the Almighty to appear with uncommon Glory in their Behalf; the less they knew of the Art of War, the more their Enemies ought to admire, in the Victories gained by them, the all-powerful Hand of him, who declared for them, and who supplied, in a manner so extraordinary, what was wanting either in Strength or Policy.

Ver. 24. *Now therefore, Lord Holofernes, we will go up, and they shall be a Prey to be devoured of all thine Army.*] Messrs. of *Port Royal* conclude this Chapter with the following fine Reflection upon the abject Obsequiousness of *Holofernes's* Minions: "Such generally is the false Wisdom and servile Complaisance of those who think they cannot please their Princes, or ingratiate themselves into their Favour so well, as by telling them, not what is most agreeable to Truth or right Reason, but that which most sensibly flatters their Pride, and soothes their Vanity. For what in Truth was more reasonable than *Achior's* whole Harangue? He does not attempt or presume to compare, in any respect, the Power and Force of the *Israelites* with that of *Nabuchodonosor*, but as if it was insignificant in itself, and not of Consequence enough to be mentioned, resolves their whole Strength, and the Success they were occasionally blessed with, into the Favour and Protection of their God. Could any thing be conceived in less offensive Terms, or even

"a *Jew* have expressed himself better? Or can there be a greater Instance of Presumption and Wickedness, than to think an Injury done to *Nabuchodonosor*, by setting God above him, or preferring him only before him?" *Comm. in loc.*

## CHAP. VI.

Ver. 2. *Hirelings of Ephraim.*] *Calmet* suspects from *Achior* being called, & 5. an *Hireling of Ammon*, that this Reading is a Mistake; and indeed this Conjecture seems confirmed from the *Syriac* Version, which has *Mercenarii Ammon* in both Places. The Expression implies great Disrespect and Contempt; but the Sarcasm is much stronger upon the *Jews*, when *Holofernes* calls them, ver. 5. *The People that came out of Egypt*, intimating, that they were a Race of Slaves.

Ver. 2. *And who art thou, Achior, and the Hirelings of Ephraim, that thou hast prophesied amongst us as to-day, and hast said, That we should not make War with the People of Israel, because their God will defend them?* *Achior's* Speech in the foregoing Chapter is much to be admired for the Justness of the Sentiments, and the generous Disinterestedness with which he supports the Cause of the God of *Israel*: Though himself was one of the uncircumcised, he harangues like *Moses*, or *Joshua*, on the State of the *Jewish* People, their good or evil Success, according as they continued faithful, or otherwise, in the Service of the true God. To hear him thus speak of, and extol the mighty Power of the God of *Israel*, when he regarded, and would have all others likewise regard, *Nabuchodonosor*, as the most high God, and only invincible, grated the Jealousy and Ambition of the *Assyrian* General; and one would have expected from his Pride and Fury, that he would instantly have ordered him to be put to Death, for the Freedom with which he expressed himself. But this was not in his own or Master's Power, how great an Idea soever he had conceived of it; God had resolved to Reward a Declaration, so much to his Honour, from the Mouth of this Alien, and to reserve him to become one at length of his Chosen, whose Cause he had so signally vindicated. The honest Freedom of *Achior*, and the evil Return it met with, are not without Precedent in History; the following Extract bears a near Resemblance and Affinity to it. *Darius* being on the Point of giving Battle to *Alexander*, demanded of *Cbaridemus*, an *Atbenian* Captain, what he thought of his Army: The Stranger answered, That it might serve to frighten some neighbouring States, but it appeared to him not disciplined, or strong enough to oppose the Forces of *Alexander*, which he commended exceedingly, especially for their Experience and Discipline; "That to an Army of *Macedonians* equal Forces should be opposed, and the Silver and Gold which

" shone



“shone upon the Arms of his Soldiers, “would be better disposed of to levy Forces “in Greece. *Pari robore opus est. In illa “terra, quæ nos genuit, auxilia quærenda “sunt; argentum istud atque aurum ad con- “ducendum militem mitte.”* Darius, though naturally humane and good natured, was vexed with so free an Answer, and without any farther Consideration, ordered him to be killed on the Spot; but he was soon sensible of the Rashness of this Step; he lost the Battle, and lamented the hasty Sentence pronounced upon one who had given him so good Advice, *2. Curt. l. iii.* The Speech of *Holofernes* here, conceived in the Spirit of military Pride, and expressed in domineering and insulting Terms, and with a full Confidence of Victory, reminds one either of that of *Goliath* the *Philistine*, defying the Armies of the living God, and threatening to give the Flesh of *David*, whom he haughtily disdained, in Comparison of his enormous Self, unto the Fowls of the Air, and to the Beasts of the Field, *1 Sam. xvii.* or that of *Rabshakeb*, whom *Sennacherib* sent to reproach the living God; *Hear the Word of the great King, the King of Assyria, hearken not unto Hezekiah, when he persuadeth you, saying, the Lord will deliver us. Who are they among all the Gods of the Countries that have delivered their Country out of mine Hand, that the Lord should deliver Jerusalem out of mine Hand? 2 Kings xviii.* But the Event shewed, that the Confidence of such profane Boasters was but vain; their Blasphemies drew down upon them God’s Judgments, and their Overthrow made it appear, that the Lord be is the God, the Lord be is the God.

*Ibid.* And who is God but Nabuchodonosor? ’Twas thus his Sycophants flattered him. The Truth is, if we will credit the Account here given of this Prince, he was a professed Atheist: The Sense of his Success in Life, and of the wonderful Deeds performed by him, especially in a military Capacity, had so intoxicated his Reason; that the avowed Purpose of his sending his Armies under *Holofernes* was, that all Nations should worship him only, and that all Tongues and Tribes should call upon him as God. In like Manner a Successor of his, *Nebuchadnezzar the Great*, upon the Contemplation of his Magnificence and Greatness, grew so arrogant and elate, as to think himself equal at least to God: *Is not this great Babylon, which I have built by the Might of my Power, and for the Honour of my Majesty? Dan. iv. 30.* But they were both at length convinced, the former by the shameful Death of his General, and the Defeat of all his Forces, and the latter by being reduced to the Condition of a Beast, that the most High only ruleth in the Kingdoms of the Earth. ’Tis surprising to observe from this Instance, that of *Heliogabalus* and others, that such Princes as have been worst, and most abandoned, and have acted even below the very Character of Men, have

most affected divine Honours, and to be acknowledged and complimented as Gods.

Ver. 4. *For he said, none of my Words shall be in vain.* *ἡ μαλακωθήσονται τὰ ῥήματα τῶν λόγων μου.* As *Nabuchodonosor* would pass for a God, so he affected to talk like one, his Orders are absolute and uncontrollable, as if he was possessed of all Power both in Heaven and Earth. As *רַבִּי* signifies among the *Hebrews* both a Word and Thing, so *ῥήμα* hath the same double Meaning among the *Hellenists*; see particularly *Deut. xvii. 1.* *Luke i. 37.* *Acts x. 37.* accordingly *ῥήματα τῶν λόγων*, to avoid Tautology, must signify the Things, Matter, or Contents of his Speech.

Ver. 5. *And thou Achior, an Hireling of Ammon, which hast spoken these Words in the Day of thine Iniquity.* *i. e.* who hast been hired by the *Jews* to prophesy falsely, to discourage my Soldiers, and hast this Day betrayed thy Perfidiousness and Treachery. *Junius* accordingly has, *Qui prolocutus es sermones istos injustitiæ tuæ*; and the Margin, *Quum perfidiam tuam, ut mercenarius improbus, retexisti.* ’Tis an *Hebraism*, and means, that he had that Day spoken Words of Iniquity, *i. e.* of Baseness and Falshood, as would be proved by the Event.

Ver. 6. *And thou shalt fall among their Slain, when I return.* *ἔτιαν ἐπιστρέψω.* When I shall turn, or put, my Enemies to Flight, says *Badwell*, and so the *Geneva* Version has it, *Thou shalt fall among the Slain, when I shall put them to Flight*: Or the Meaning may be, which the Words seem more naturally to suggest, “When I return victorious and in Peace;” and in this Sense it reminds one of what the King of *Israel* said to *Micaiah* the Prophet, *Put this Fellow in the Prison, and feed him with Bread of Affliction, and Water of Affliction, until I come in Peace.* And the Answer there given is equally applicable, *If thou return at all in Peace, the Lord hath not spoken by me.* And he said, *Hearken, O People every one of you, 1 Kings xxii. 27, 28.*

Ver. 9. *And if thou persuade thyself in thy Mind, that they shall not be taken, let not thy Countenance fall.* See *Gen. iv. 5.* where the like Phrase is used to signify *Cain’s* Grief and Discontent; and *Job xxix. 24.* such a State of Mind is expressed by the Falling of the Light of the Countenance, as the lifting up of the Face on the contrary was a Token of Comfort, Joy, and Confidence, *Job xi. 15.* The Meaning here seems to be, “If thou art assured of the Truth of what thou sayest, do not betray any, or so much Concern and Fear, nor let Signs of conscious Guilt and Confusion appear on thy Countenance: If thou art indeed a true Prophet, there is no occasion for Fear; but if by the Event thou are detected to be a false one, thy Perfidiousness will draw on thee, thou must expect, a more severe Punishment.”

Ver. 10. *Then Holofernes commanded his Servants that waited in his Tent, to take Achior,*



*Achior, and bring him to Bethulia, and deliver him into the Hands of the Children of Israel.*] *Holofernes*, transported with Fury at *Achior's* open and free manner of speaking, says to him, "Since you have taken upon you to be a Prophet, in telling us that the God of *Israel* would be the Defender of his People, to shew you that there is no other God but *Nabuchodonosor*, my Master, when we have put these People to the Sword, we will destroy you likewise.— And that you may yourself experience the Vanity of your own Prophecy, I will have you carried to *Bethulia*, there to run the same Risk, and undergo the same Fate with them, whom you believe and pronounce to be invincible." *Propelli Accitor* (says *Sulpicius*, *Sac. Hist.* l. 2.) *in castra Hebraeorum jubet, ut cum his periret, quos vinci non posse affirmaverat.* The insulting General hereby intended no Favour to *Achior*; he spared his Life only that he might at length take it from him in a Manner that should most sensibly affect him, viz. after he had seen with his own Eyes the entire Ruin of a People, whose God he had so much extolled as their Protector. But how unsearchable is the Counsel, and adorable the Conduct of the most high, who knows how to confound the Blindness, and disappoint the Ambition of wicked enterprizing Spirits, and to procure Mercy and Deliverance for his chosen by those very Means, which short-sighted Wisdom had contrived most effectually to destroy them!

*Ibid. Bethulia.*] From what Quarter *Holofernes* attacked *Judea* is not certain, and much more uncertain where to fix this *Bethulia*, tho' it be the very Seat of the Siege itself. Many learned Men think they see Reason from c. iii. § 9, 10. and c. iv. § 6. and c. vii. § 3. to place it Northwards in the Tribe of *Zabulon*. But the following Difficulties attend this Opinion; *Bethulia* is said to be the frontier Town, and Entrance into the Hill Country, c. vii. § 1. But that the Hill Country lay at a Distance from this Tribe, is plain from *St. Luke* c. i. who tells us, the *Virgin Mary* arose from *Nazareth* (which was in the Tribe of *Zabulon*, and Neighbourhood of *Bethulia*) and went into the Hill Country; which plainly enough infers, the Hill Country was different from the Tribe of *Zabulon*; divided indeed from it at the Distance of many Days Journey, being on the South of the Tribe of *Judah*, *Initium sumpsit Mons Amorrhæus a Cadesb Barnea, limite terræ Israeliticæ Australi, ac se borrente gibbositate protrusit in Judæam, ultra Hebronem, mutato nomine tandem in montanum Judææ.* *Lightfoot*, *Cent. Chorog. in Mat.* p. 23. Again, all the Persons of *Bethulia*, whose Tribe is distinguished, were of the Tribe of *Simeon*; so *Judith*, *Manasseh* her Husband, and *Onias* the Governor, &c. the Town itself therefore cannot but be supposed to belong to that Tribe. How then shall we account for a Town of the *Simeonites* in another Tribe, and that not

near, but at a great Distance from the Tribe of *Simeon*? These Inconveniencies, I presume, have induced others to place *Bethulia* within the Limits of the Tribe of *Simeon*, which Tribe reached the Hill Country. In Favour of this Opinion, we find a *Bethul*, *Josh.* xix. 4. within *Simeon's* Division; and again 1 *Chron.* iv. 30. *Bethuel*; both which Names easily take the Greek Form, *Bethulia*. Yet this Situation seems not consistent with c. iii. § 9, 10. and c. iv. § 6. much less with its Neighbourhood to *Dothaim*, which last, it seems pretty clear, was in the Northern Parts of the Land. For when *Jacob* was at *Hebron* (which Town is known to be in that Part of the Country which was afterwards the Tribe of *Judah*, with the Tribe of *Simeon* to its South, and Southwest) his ten Sons went out to feed their Father's Flock to *Shechem*, which lies several Miles North of the Tribe of *Judah*; thither he sent their Brother *Joseph* to enquire after their Welfare, who found they were removed further into the Country, even to *Dothan*, or, as it is called in the same Verse, *Dothaim*, which is the same with *Dothaim*, the Difference only lying in the *Chaldee* Termination. This is again about Twenty Miles North of *Shechem*, and brings us into the Tribe of *Zabulon*; consequently *Bethulia*, which was in the Neighbourhood of *Dothaim*, that lay in one of the Northern Tribes, could not be in the Tribe of *Simeon*, which was the farthest of all the Tribes Southwards. *Eusebius de loc. Hebr.* has a Passage which confirms this, *Dothaim, ubi invenit Joseph fratres suos pecora pascentes, qui & usque hodie in duodecimo a Sebaste miliario contra Aquilonis plagam ostenditur; i. e. Dothaim* lay twelve Miles North of *Sebaste*, which was another Name for *Samaria*. Further, if *Holofernes* attacked the *Jews* on the North Side of the Land, as has been inferred from some Passages in the present History, then if *Bethulia* were in the Tribe of *Simeon*, and South of *Jerusalem*, he must, which is absurd, have left *Jerusalem*, the Capital of the Kingdom, behind him unsubdued, and be got to the End of the Country, where the History represents him as but at the Key or Entrance into it. It seems better therefore to acknowledge that this Writer was inaccurate in his Geography, which he has some Excuse for, as being the general Fault of his Countrymen, especially after the Captivity, than from some Difficulties about the Situation of the Place, to conclude against its Existence at all; especially if we credit what *Adricomius* affirms with much Confidence, *Extat etiam num in monte hoc quoddam castellum, & multa pulchra ædificia, plurimæque urbis ruinae; sicuti etiam in campo versus Dothaim, castrorum Holofernis adhuc vestigia quædam restare scribuntur. Theatr. Terr. Sanct.* p. 137.

*Ver. 15. Ozias of the Tribe of Simeon.*] Whether *Bethulia* was a City of the Tribe of *Zabulon*, or *Simeon*, *Ozias* probably was free of it; or when the Ten Tribes were carried away



away Captive to *Affyria*, he was perhaps, by Chance or Design, carried to *Bethulia*; or possibly upon this Expedition of *Holofernes* he was sent to *Bethulia* by King *Manasses*, or *Joachim* the High Priest, with a publick Character or Commission, as one who was capable of giving Orders, and commanding upon so important an Occasion. By the *Vulgate* he is called the *Prince of Judah*, c. viii. and *Prince of the People of Israel*, c. xiii. which makes it the more probable, that, being a Man of Authority and Consequence, he was sent to *Bethulia* to defend that Place against the Assault of *Nabuchodonosor's* Army, and was for that Time at least one of the Governors of the Place. They are called the Ancients of the City, c. viii. 10. x. 6.

Ver. 19. *And look upon the Face of those that are sanctified unto thee this Day.*] There are different Senses of these Words. Some understand them, as if the *Jews* prayed to God at this melancholy Juncture in the following manner: "Look not upon our Merit, which is as nothing, but upon the Merits of thy faithful Saints, *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, and others, who have distinguished themselves by continuing true and stedfast in thy Covenant; that we who labour under the Burden of our Sins, and are justly punishable for them, may on their account, and in regard to their Righteousness, be accepted by thee, and obtain the Deliverance we at present stand in need of." Or they may be understood of the *Jews* in general, urging before God their near Relation to him, as his Peculium, thus: "Regard, O Lord, the Prayers of thy People, whom thou hast separated from all other Nations, whom thou hast adopted in an especial manner, and chosen to be thine Inheritance." Or the Meaning may be, Hear the Supplications of those who have prepared and sanctified themselves in this Time of Calamity, to appear before thee, who join with most devout Affections in the holy Offices of fasting and praying, to implore thy Help and Mercy against an insulting and proud Enemy, defying even thy Almighty Power." Or lastly, we may, with *Grotius*, understand the Words of the Priests, and such Persons in particular, who are separated to a holy Ministry and Use, whose Prayers and Intercessions in Behalf of his distressed Chosen, they beseech God most graciously to accept. The Fomidableness of *Holofernes's* Army struck them with a Panic; They saw themselves in the most imminent Danger; and the Defeat of all the adjacent Countries, together with the Cruelties exercised upon them, was to them a certain Presage of what they might expect, and of the Mischief intended against them, if the Almighty did not interpose in their Behalf, as their Protector. On this Account they fell prostrate before him with the profoundest Humility; they fasted, they prayed, they passed whole Nights in solemn Supplications, to implore the Aid and Assistance of him, whom

they looked upon as only able to deliver them from so powerful an Enemy.

Ver. 20. *Then they comforted Achior, and praised him greatly.*] It may seem a little surprising, according to all human Appearance, that the Inhabitants of *Bethulia*, and those that had the chief Command among them, should so readily and easily give Credit to what *Achior* told them; for they might with good Reason have mistrusted him, as another *Sinon*, a suspicious Person, sent by *Holofernes* with an insidious Design, to make Observations to their Disadvantage; or to betray them to their Ruin. To this it may be answered, that though according to the ordinary Rules of judging, and the Maxims of common Prudence, they ought to have been more wary and cautious, and, in the Opinion of some, to have proceeded rather by Torture, yet possibly God might, in regard to the noble Testimony which *Achior* bore, influence the Hearts of this People to receive, and to take care of him: Or perhaps some among them might be affected with his Story, and the Circumstance of his being bound, or know and answer for the Probity and Integrity of this *Ammonite* Chief. However that be, it is certain, that though they received him with Humanity, and treated him with Honour and Respect, they were so careful as not to intrust him with any Share of the Administration of Affairs, contenting themselves with having afforded him a safe Retreat among them, and taking, without doubt, such wise Precautions as not to be surprized through too easy a Credulity.

Ver. 21. *Ozias took him unto his House.*] Not bound, or under Guard as a Prisoner, but, probably, watched a little, and observed. Hence when *Judith* returned in Triumph to *Bethulia*, bringing *Holofernes's* Head, and all the People ran together to the Sight, it is observable, that *Achior* comes not till called and sent for, c. xiv. 6. Ibid. *And made a Feast.*] How Persons attacked by a Power so formidable, and whom that fresh Insult of the Enemy, the sending *Achior* to be both a Witness and Sharer of their Ruin, would rather, it should seem, have intimidated more than ever, should on the contrary be so fond of, and rejoice with, their new Acquaintance, as to make a great Feast for him, at such a Time, and in such Circumstances, may probably be accounted for, without supposing, as some do, God to act upon, and influence the Hearts of the Inhabitants thus to behave. For it would have been highly disgraceful to the People of God, to have betrayed any Sign of Cowardice and Fear, in the Presence of that Stranger, who was not himself afraid, even in *Holofernes's* hearing, to dwell upon, and extol the Power of the Almighty God of *Israel*, and his frequent Interposition in their Behalf. Nor could they better, or more effectually testify to *Achior* their Sense of God's former Goodness, and their Hopes and Reliance upon his Mercies at this perilous Juncture, than by



such an Instance of Unconcernedness, as if they were confident of his Favour and Assistance. And the Entertainment itself was, according to the *Vulg.* that of sober and well-disposed Persons; for it was made after they had fasted strictly all the Day, and they continued, after the ending of it, the whole Night in Prayer.

*Ibid.* *To the Elders . . .*] By Elders we are here not to understand the Priests only, nor ancient People as such, but certain appointed Magistrates; for, according to *Josephus*, *Moses* appointed, that every City should have a Council of Seven Magistrates, Men of exemplary Virtue, and Lovers of Righteousness, *Antiq.* l. iv. c. viii. *Seld.* de Synedr. l. ii. c. vi. and this perhaps was the determinate Number in his Time. But anciently there seems to have been more, because *Boaz* mentions Ten Elders, who were probably the same with Judges, in the City of *Bethlehem*, *Ruth* iv. 2.

## CHAP. VII.

Ver. 1. *To take aforehand the Ascents of the Hill Country.*] The Town of *Bethulia* is represented in the History as a Place of prodigious Strength, either by Art or Nature, or both, nor was to be attempted by Assault, but by starving its Inhabitants: What Remains then or Marks do we hear of from Travellers of so wonderful a Place? If Time and Wars have destroyed all the Works of Art, yet would not Nature and Situation still continue the same? Its own natural Strength, and the ever memorable Deliverance wrought at it, must, one would think, have distinguished it to Posterity, and that there should have been some Tradition at least among the Inhabitants, or their Neighbours, to lead us to it. The *Phocian Thermopylae*, the *Porte Caspie*, are known and distinguished now as heretofore; but has any Man's Curiosity found out, or remarked here the Passes, which gave it the Command of the Country, and made it the Gate or Key of *Judea*, as represented in this History? The Place has been visited, and yet nothing extraordinary this way is observed of it. Mr. *Maunderell*, who was upon the Spot, and whose Accuracy and Fidelity may be depended on, says only of it, That it stands upon a very eminent and conspicuous Mountain, and is seen far and near, p. 115. He takes not the least Notice of any grand Defile, or particular Passes, which commanded the Entrance into *Judea*, which, if it had been so, could never have escaped his Observation, who attended to every Circumstance relative to the Descriptions or Allusions in Scripture. On the other hand, his Account rather supposes the Country to have been more a Plain, or Flat all about it, than mountainous. To this it may be replied briefly, 1. That some Works or Remains of Art, some Vestiges of Foundations and Ruins of Edifices, are, according to *Adrichomius* and others, still visible; and if there were none, this would no more

conclude against the *quondam* Being of such a Place, than against the Existence of *Babylon*, *Nineveh*, *Persopolis*, and other once famous Cities, which have little or no Traces now remaining. 2. That however the Surface of the Country about *Bethulia* was, which Authors have represented in a different Manner; yet as *Bethulia* is acknowledged to have been situated upon a very high and conspicuous Mountain, the very Situation itself, still to be discerned and admired, points out not merely the Probability of its being there placed, but the Propriety and Importance of such a Choice, which as it was more tenable by its natural Strength; so, 3dly, That it had uncommon Difficulty of Approach and Access, either by one grand Defile, or very strait and dangerous Passages, appears sufficiently from its foiling so great an Army as 180,000 Men so long before it; nor does there seem any Necessity or Occasion to transmit as particular what a rocky and perpendicular Situation naturally suggests.

Ver. 2. *The Army of the Men of War was an hundred and seventy thousand Footmen, and twelve thousand Horsemen.*] The Number of Warriors varies very considerably in the *Gr.* and *Lat.* Edit. It is not improbable, that there is some Mistake in the Numbers in the different Texts. The *Vulg.* has, *Erant autem pedites bellatorum centum viginti millia*, &c. and indeed with so many only the Army of *Holofernes* set forward from *Nineveh*, see c. ii. 5. but it had been increased by considerable Reinforcements which came from divers Provinces of *Affyria*, and by an Addition of Auxiliary Troops from the Countries newly conquered, which might raise the Number to that mentioned in the *Gr.* viz. 170,000. There is also a Difference between the *Gr.* and *Lat.* Copies with respect to the Cavalry. The *Vulg.* enlarges the Number to 22,000 which probably is right, as *Holofernes's* Cavalry at this Time had been augmented by 10,000 *Affyrian* Horse. The Difference in both Accounts seems, in short, to have arisen from the flux State of the Army encreasing and decreasing from many accidental Causes.

Ver. 3. *And they camped in the Valley near unto Bethulia by the Fountain, and they spread themselves in breadth over Dothaim.*] There is some Difficulty with respect to the Posts which are here assigned to *Holofernes's* Troops; the Village of *Dothaim*, or *Dothan*, as it is sometimes called, was, it is objected, too far from *Bethulia* for them to extend to it in Breadth, whether it is placed in the Tribe of *Zabulon*, or of *Simeon*. It is urged, that it was at least eight or ten Leagues from the Sea of *Tiberias*, and by Consequence, about an equal Distance from *Bethulia*, in the Tribe of *Zabulon*, and more than thirty Leagues from *Bethulia*, in the Tribe of *Simeon*. If this be so, and the Distance of *Dothaim* from the Place of the Siege was indeed so great, it is probable, that as there are many Villages in this History wrongly placed (for the Geography of it, it must be confessed, is far from



from being exact) so this of *Dotbaim* is here erroneously inserted; or perhaps by mistake one name is put for another, and it is difficult, says *Grotius*, in *Græcis adeo corruptis, ut est hic liber, locorum nomina restituere*. But on the other hand, there are Authorities which give some Reason to think, that the Situation of *Dotbaim* was contiguous to *Bethulia*, as is represented in the History. *Adricomius* makes *Dotbaim* to be *Oppidum quod a monte Bethulie miliario uno in terra campestri positum, utrinque montibus cingitur*. *Theatr. Terræ Sanctæ*, p. 139. The Writer of *Itinerarium Scripturæ*, p. 321. places *Dotbaim* four Miles from *Bethulia*, and at the like Distance from the Sea of *Galilee*. See also *Wells's Geography of the Old Test.* vol. iii. p. 197.

*Ibid.* And in length from *Bethulia* unto *Cyamon*, which is over-against *Esdraelom*.] *ἑως Κυάμωνος*. *Grotius* conjectures the true reading here to be, *ἑως Χέλμωνος*, which is confirmed by the *Vulg.* rendring. *Esdrelon* was a great Plain extending itself from the Cities of *Megiddo* and *Aphec*, to the Sea of *Gennesareth*, or *Galilee*. The Camp of *Holofernes* was so great, that it took up all this plain, which contained sixteen Miles in Length. See *Itiner. Sac. Script.* p. 320.

Ver. 4. Now the Children of Israel, when they saw the multitude of them, were greatly troubled, &c.] It may very pertinently be asked, why the *Bethulians* durst venture to oppose *Nebuchadnezzar*. The truth is, that King was resolved not only to subdue the several Nations, from the *Euphrates* to *Ethiopia*, but intended likewise to oblige them to acknowledge him only to be God, ch. vi. 2. and therefore the *Bethulians*, who could not without impiety and a renunciation of their Religion, submit to the Dominion of such a King, had good Reason to hope for Success against a Prince who had declared himself an Enemy to the God of Heaven.

Ver. 5. When they had kindled Fires upon their Towers, they remained and watched all that Night.] This signal was set up on the Mountains, on the Tops of which they made great Fires. There were also large Trees planted on purpose to spread and display some Ensign or Colour, that they might be seen at a great distance. Centinels also, or Watchmen, were generally placed in Towers, and on the Tops of Mountains, to sound the Trumpet, or make some Signal at the Top of a Pole at the Approach of the Enemy, to give Notice to the People to run to their Arms. See *Is.* xviii. 3. xxx. 17. and *Jerem.* vi. 1. where the Prophet says, *Blow the Trumpet in Tekoa, and set up a Sign of Fire in Beth-baccere, for Evil appeareth out of the North*.

Ver. 12. Let thy Servants get into their Hands the Fountain of Water which issueth forth of the Foot of the Mountain. For all the Inhabitants of *Bethulia* have their Water thence.] The *Idumæans*, or Children of *Esau*, as they are called *ῥ* 8. may be considered as Brethren of the *Jews*, being descended from

*Esau* the Brother of *Jacob*; it may therefore seem not only very surprizing, but unnatural, that they should, by giving such pernicious Counsel to *Holofernes*, betray the *Israelites* to the *Affyrians*, instead of protecting them as Relations, and speaking, as *Achior* their Chief did, in their Behalf and Favour. It should seem by this Instance, as if they inherited *Esau's* Spleen against his Brother: But however to guard against Censure, and to remain undistinguished and undiscovered, they chose to pass under the Title of *Ammonites*. See Note on ch. v. 5. One may observe from hence, says *Mess.* of *Port-Royal*, that false Brethren, such as these proved to the *Jews*, are more to be feared than open and declared Enemies, and that Treachery is often more dangerous than Force. As it does not seem probable that all the Inhabitants of *Bethulia* should fetch their Water at such a Distance, or that this Fountain at the Foot of the Hill should be sufficient for the general Use of the City; and as neither the Fountains mentioned *ῥ* 7. could afford a competent Supply, much less could their Waters be conveyed up in any large Quantity the steep Sides of the Hill, whose Height is represented here to be very great; we must necessarily suppose Cisterns for Rain Water likewise within the City; or probably they might be assisted also by some Springs, as many high Mountains are known to have, all of which were either rendered useless by the Enemy, or at last failed through the Length of the Siege. The *Vulg.* supposes the City to have been supplied by an Aquæduct, which to a Place otherwise situated than *Bethulia* was, would have been a great Convenience; but was it possible in so lofty a Site to have received any Advantage from thence, except Water should have forgot its own Nature, and move upwards?

Ver. 18. Then the Children of *Esau* went up with the Children of *Ammon*, and camped in the Hill Country.] The *Idumæans*, being the Posterity of *Esau*, bare an ancient Grudge against the *Jews*, upon Account of their Ancestor's losing his Right of Primogeniture, and the subduing of *Edom* by *David* afterwards, 2 *Sam.* viii. 14. Upon both these Accounts they took hold of all Opportunities of venting their Spite towards the Jewish Nation, particularly see 2 *Chron.* xxviii. 17. For this their Behaviour, they were often reproved by the Prophets, see *Ezek.* xxv. 12. xxxv. 5. The Ill Will that they bore them, not only appeared by the mischievous Advice given by them, *ῥ* 10, 11, 12. but by their being amongst the foremost, and particularly instanced in here as such, to encamp against them in the Hill Country. But the Spite that they shewed towards them was most remarkable at the Time of their Captivity, as appears by those pathetic Words of *Psal.* cxxxviii. 7. Remember the Children of *Edom*, O Lord, in the Day of Jerusalem; how they said, Down with it, Down with it, even to the Ground. The *Ammonites* too, tho' related likewise in Blood



Blood to the Jews, yet bore a constant Hatred towards them, which they took all Opportunities to shew, when the Jews were under any Distress, for which they are also often reprov'd severely by the Prophets, and threatn'd with Judgments, see *Ezek. xxi. 28. xxv. 2—6. Zeph. ii. 8, 10.*

Ver. 20. Thus all the Company of Assur remained about them four and thirty Days.] The *Vulg.* has *cumque ista custodia per dies viginti fuisset expleta, defecerunt cisternæ.* Making the Time to be only twenty Days. Another more ancient *Latin* Version has *diebus viginti & quatuor.* The *Syr.* makes the Siege to last two Months and four Days.

Ver. 26. Now therefore call them unto you, and deliver the whole City for a Spoil to the People of Holofernes, and to all his Army.] *Polybius* mentions many Cities otherwise well provided for a Siege, that were obliged to surrender, by being deprived of a Supply of Water; and adds, that when Matters come to that Extremity, that the People are necessitated to be stinted, and to have it delivered out in very small Quantity, the Anxiety is the greater as the Appetite generally craves most what is not allowed, or cannot be come at, *l. viii. ch. v.*

Ver. 27. For it is better for us to be made a Spoil unto them, than to die for thirst; for we will be his Servants, that our Souls may live, and not see the Death of our Infants before our Eyes.] *Josephus* observes of the *Arabians*, that being in a miserable Distress for want of Water, Four thousand of them came out to *Herod*, and offer'd themselves to Captivity and Chains, to avoid the more insupportable Calamity of a raging Drought; and that the rest made a Sally by Consent, and attacked the Besiegers, in which Encounter Seven thousand fell, choosing rather a present Certainty of Death, than to expose themselves to the lingering Torment of it, for want of Water. *Antiq. l. xv. ch. viii.* But how sad would have been the Condition of *Bethulia*, and indeed of all *Judea*, if *Ozias* and the Chief of the City had listened to the Clamour of the People, and through Impatience of Thirst had surrendered themselves! In what Misery would they have been involved, and what an Opportunity of Victory and Triumph would they have lost! *Lyfimachus*, King of *Macedonia*, was sensible of this too late, who being choaked with Thirst in *Thrace*, surrendered with his whole Army to the Enemy, and who, plentifully refreshed with Water so much longed for, cried out, For what a small Satisfaction and Pleasure have I, from the State of a King, reduced myself to be a Slave?

Ver. 28. We take to witness against you the Heavens and the Earth, and our God, and Lord of our Fathers, which punishes us according to our Sins, and the Sins of our Fathers, that he do not according as we have said this Day.] *Μαρτυρούμεθα ὑμῖν ὃ θεὸς καὶ ἡ γῆ καὶ ὁ οὐρανὸς ὑμῶν, ὃς ἐκδικεῖ ἡμᾶς κατὰ τοὺς ἀμαρτίας ὑμῶν, καὶ*

*κατὰ τὰ ῥήματα ταῦτα ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ σήμερον.* The latter Part of this Verse is obscure, and the several Versions and Expositors understand it differently. *Coverdale*, following the *Vulg.* has "We take Heaven and Earth this Day to recorde, and the God of our Fathers (which punishes us according to the Deservying of our Sins) and geve you Warning that ye geve up the Cytye now into the Power of *Holofernes* Hooft, that our Ende may be short with the Swerde, which else shall endure long for want of Water, and for Thyrst." The *Geneva Bible*, "We take to witness against you the Heaven and the Earth, and our God, and Lord of our Fathers, which punishes us according to our Sins, and the Sins of our Fathers, that he lay not these things to our Charge." The *Syriac*, *Contestamurque adversus vos Cælum & terram, Dominumque Deum Patrum nostrorum, qui vindictam exigit de nobis secundum ea quæ dicta sunt hodierno die.* *Junius* renders, *Videte ut non faciat quemadmodum diximus hodierno die.* To which agrees *Grotius* and *Badwell*, who suppose an Ellipsis here, as *Gen. iii. 22. xxxviii. 11. xlii. 4. Matt. xxv. 9.* and make the sense to be, "See that the Calamity which we have mentioned, and warned you against, of seeing our Wives and Children perish before our Eyes, come not upon us." Or understanding it of *Holofernes*, as the *Margin* does, "See that he bring not upon us the Evils which we have solemnly forewarned you of this Day." *Calmet* has, "We conjure you before Heaven and Earth, and the God of our Fathers, that Evil befall us not this Day, the Evil of seeing our Wives and Children die before our Faces." And the *Port-Royal Comment*, "We call Heaven and Earth to witness the earnest Supplication we made to deliver up the City to *Holofernes*, and to die instantly by the Sword, rather than by Thirst to undergo a lingering Death."

Ver. 29. Then there was great weeping with one Consent in the Midst of the Assembly, and they cried unto the Lord God with a loud Voice.] There seems to be a sort of Contradiction here with respect to the Context, at least there is in the *Vulgate*, *ŷ 24, 26, 27.* they murmur against *Ozias*, and charge him with the Evils they suffered, and beg importunately, that the City may be delivered for a Spoil to the People of *Holofernes*, and that they may be his Servants. And *ŷ 28.* they call God to witness the Sincerity of their Desire. Here they cryed unto him in the Words of the *Vulg.* *Miserere nostri, & noli tradere confidentes te populo, qui ignorat te, ut non dicant inter Gentes, Ubi est Deus eorum?* This Irresolution and sudden Change of Sentiments, will best be accounted for, probably, from their Fear, which at different times suggested different Means and Motives of acting to them: At one time the Thirst they laboured under induced them to wish and pray impor-



importunately, that they might live as Captives among the *Assyrians*; at another time the Reflection on *Holofernes's* Cruelty, and a strong Presumption, that he would use them worse for daring to resist his Power, threw them into Despair, and, changing their Minds on a sudden, they request that they may fall into the Hands of God, and not into the Hands of Men.

Ver. 30. *Then said Ozias to them, Brethren, be of good Courage, let us yet endure five Days, in the which Space the Lord our God may turn his Mercy towards us.* See Note on ch. viii. 12. *Sulpitius Severus* makes the time fixed for the Surrender to be fifteen Days, *Quinto decimo die deditionis tempus constituit. Sac. Hist. l. ii. ch. xxiv.* but this probably is a Mistake; the true Reading of the Place seems to be, as *Drusus* conjectures, *Quinto decimo die deditionis tempus constituit.* We meet with a like Instance, 1 *Sam. ii. 3.* where, upon the Threats of *Nabash*, King of the Children of *Ammon*, or, as others suppose, the Captain of his Host, the Elders of *Jabesh-Gilead* desire a Respite of seven Days to send Messengers into all the Coasts of *Israel*, and promise to surrender themselves, if in that time none came effectually to their Help and Relief. And the Event answered accordingly; for as the Text there says, *the Spirit of the Lord stirred up Saul* to come to their Assistance within the expected time, and they proved victorious.

Ver. 32. This Verse is entirely omitted by the *Vulgate*, but is retained in the other Versions.

#### CHAP. VIII.

Ver. 1. **N**OW at that time Judith heard thereof, which was the Daughter of *Merari*, the Son of *Oz*, the Son of *Joseph*, the Son of *Oziel*, &c.] The Versions differ greatly in the Names of the fifteen Descents here mentioned. The *Syr.* and *Gr.* particularly from the *Vulg.* One Reason of this Difference perhaps may be, that the same Person is here called by two different Names, one of which is mentioned in the *Greek*, the other in the *Latin* Versions: Or the Confusion which is observable in the Genealogy, may probably come from hence, that the Copyists have put all the proper Names, which were in different Verses, into one; and by that means have intermixed and confounded the Relations of *Judith*, with those of her Husband *Manasses*. What seems to confirm this strongly is, that the Genealogy of *Manasses*, which *Fulgentius* gives separately, and in a more concise Manner, *Epist. ii. ad Gall.* is ranked under, and connected with that of *Merari*, the Father of *Judith*, in the *Greek* and *Syriac* Copies.

Ver. 2. *And Manasses was her Husband of her Tribe and Kindred.* i. e. Of the Tribe of *Simeon*, as *Judith* was, see ch. ix. 2. The *Vulg.* omits this Particular, perhaps as a known and customary thing: Thus *Anna* and *Tobias* were of the same Tribe, and Kindred.

See *Tob. iii. 15, 17. vi. 12.* And *Joseph* and *Mary* were both of the House and Lineage of *David*, and as such were espoused.

Ver. 3. *As he stood overseeing them that bound Sheaves in the Field, the Heat came on his Head, and he died.* *Manasses* seems not only to have had the Care of his own Business and Concerns abroad, but to have been an Overseer by public Appointment, and to have had the Inspection and ordering the whole Number of Reapers, in that wide and large Field adjoining to *Bethulia*. That there was among the *Jews* such a Post or Employment for public Use, *Josephus* testifies, who mentions that such a Charge of the Fields, and of the Labourers there employed, was committed to *Abutius*. The being exposed to the scorching Heat of the Sun in an open Plain, in the Middle of the Day, has often proved dangerous, and occasioned Faintness, and sometimes mortal Diseases: *Meridie ipso faciam ut stipulam colligat; tam excoctum redam atque atrum ut carbo est*, is mentioned as a Punishment by *Terence*, *Adelp. Act. v. Sc. iii.* And *Victor Uticensis* speaks of it as a thing dangerous as well as irksome, *sub ardentis solis incendio cespites messium defecare*. The Writer of the *Geoponics*, has the same Observation, τῶν ἐν τῇ ἡλίῳ ἐργαζομένων ἡλίου βλάβη τὰ σώματα καὶ τὰς ἐλθεῖς. It appears from the Instance mentioned, 2 *Kings* iv. 18, 20. which resembles this, that Persons of Note in ancient Times (for the Quality of his Wife shews him to be no mean Person, which also may be observed of *Judith*) looked after their Corn, and oversaw their Labourers. And sometimes for their Health, and the Increase of their Estates, laboured with their own Hands. See *Jonah* iv. 8. *Matth. xx. 12.* This and the five following Verses should be put, as *Junius* places them, in a Parenthesis.

Ibid. *And they buried him with his Fathers in the Field between Dotbaim and Balama.* The *Vulg.* says expressly, that he died and was buried in *Bethulia*, his own City, the Place of his Nativity, *Mortuus est in Bethulia civitate sua, & sepultus est illic cum patribus suis*; with which agrees the old *Italic* Version. *Calmet* contends, that this is the Truth, as no Reason can be assigned why *Manasses* should be interred so far from his own Tribe, and from the City of *Bethulia*, as the other Opinion supposes: And should we even place *Bethulia* in the Tribe of *Zabulon*, *Dotbaim* would be at least thirty Miles from it.

Ver. 4. *Judith was a Widow in her House three Years and four Months.* The *Syriac* reads in like manner; but *Archbishop Usher* makes the time to be three Years, and six Months, *ad A. M. 3348.* in which Year he places the Death of *Holofernes*. The *Vulg.* makes this quite clear, which has, *erat autem Judith relicta ejus vidua jam annis tribus, & mensibus sex*, i. e. *Judith* had now been a Widow so long before this great Enterprize happened; for it cannot mean that three Years and a half was the whole Time of her



Widowhood, because she lived to be very aged, and never married after the Death of her Husband *Manasses*.

Ver. 5. *She made her a Tent upon the Top of her House.*] The *Vulg.* seems to understand this of a Chamber in the upper Part of the House, *in superioribus domus suae fecit sibi secretum cubiculum, in quo cum puellis suis clausa morabatur.* The *Jews* that lived at a Distance from *Jerusalem*, generally either went up into an upper Chamber to pray, with the Windows opened towards the Temple, as is expressly mentioned of *Daniel*, ch. vi. 10. and of the Apostles when assembled together, *Acts* i. 13. and of *Sara*, *Raguel's* Daughter, *Tob.* iii. 17. or when they were out of *Judea*, or *Jerusalem*, and so could not go up to the Temple at the Hours of Prayer, went up to the House Top, or Roof of the House, as is recorded of *St. Peter*, *Acts* x. 9. for the sake of Privacy, and to be freer from Noise and Distraction, turning themselves towards that Part which looked towards *Jerusalem*, according to *Solomon's* Prayer at the Dedication of the Temple, *1 Kings* viii. 29, 30, 35, 38.

Ver. 6. *She fasted all the Days of her Widowhood.*] A great Instance this of her pious Disposition, and of the tender Regard which she had for the Memory of her deceased Husband. This great Strictness and Severity of Life and Manners, customary among the *Jewish* Women, passed afterwards into the Church. We read of *Anna* the Prophetess, a Widow of Fourscore and four Years old, that she never departed from the Temple, but served God with Prayer and Fasting, Night and Day, *Luke* ii. 37, 38. *St. Paul* gives the like Description of a truly devout Widow, *she that is a Widow indeed, and desolate, trusteth in God, and continueth in Supplication and Prayers Night and Day; but she that liveth in Pleasure is dead while she liveth*, *1 Tim.* v. 5.

*Ibid.* *Save the Eves of the Sabbaths, and the Sabbaths, and the Eves of the new Moons, and the new Moons, and the Feasts, and solemn Days of the House of Israel.*] It is agreed on all hands, that it was the Custom of all the *Israelites* who feared God, to observe the Sabbaths and the new Moons, among the Feasts of the House of *Israel*; and they seem carefully to have observed their solemn Feasts in their worst, as well as in their best State, from their earliest to their latest Times. See *1 Sam.* xx. 5. *1 Chron.* xxiii. 31. *2 Chron.* ii. 4. viii. 13. xxxi. 3. *Is.* i. 13. lxvi. 23. *Ezek.* xlvi. 1. *Hos.* ii. 11. *Amos* viii. 5. And these *Ezra* took care to revive at the Return from the Captivity. But when the Regard here mentioned to be paid to the Eves of the Sabbaths and new Moons first began, and on what occasion, and whether in use so early as the Days of *Judith*, is much controverted. It is certain the Custom was very ancient, but according to the *Talmudists* was not in Force in the Time of *Judith*, but afterwards in use among the *Jews* in their Dispersions. Various Reasons are assigned for the Origin of this Practice;

*Grotius* thinks that the Eves were thus respected, as a sort of Fence to the Law, which forbade Fasting on any Part of a Festival, and that this was done by way of Caution, that there might be no Remains of a preceding Sorrow on the Day of the Festival; for the Eve before any Festival was esteemed part of that Festival: From whence the same Custom was derived afterwards into the Christian Church; and as the *Jewish* Festivals were always kept from Even to Even, so the Sabbath began on the Friday Evening, see *Levit.* xxiii. 32. *Is.* xxx. 29. And the Feast of the Passover, it is well known, was always kept in the Evening, and concluded with Hymns, see *Matt.* xxvi. 30. *Cunaeus* carries the Matter further, That Fasting was not only forbid on the Sabbath and its Eve, but even on the Day following the Sabbath, that the Joy of that Solemnity might not be disturbed, nor lessened by any Sorrow or Humiliation, either preceding or subsequent, *de Rep. Heb.* l. ii. cap. x. Others imagine that the Reason of this was, the almost Impossibility of keeping a Fast that Day, being the Day of the Preparation, so called by the Sacred Writers, because on it they were obliged to make Provision of Victuals for the Sabbath, and could not well avoid tasting of what they were so preparing. *Seickard de Purim.* With Respect to the new Moon in particular, and the not fasting on its Eve, it probably began when the *Jews* appointed two Feasts the Beginning of each Month, for Fear of being wanting in any Respect or Particular which the Law required; as to guard also against any Inconvenience, from the Uncertainty of the precise Time when the new Moon appeared. *Calmet* is inclined to think, that what is mentioned of the Eves of the Sabbaths, and of the new Moons, is an Addition, as no Notice is taken of them either in the *Syriac*, or *Jerom's* Version, and that the Practice referred to is probably later than the Days of *Judith*: That the Greek Translator inserted the Clause in that Version, as being the Custom of the *Jews* at that time when it was made, and in the Parts where he lived, tho' it might not be in the Original from whence he translated.

Ver. 7. *She was also of a goodly Countenance, and very beautiful to behold.*] This may be concluded from the Power which she appears to have had over *Holofernes*, and his being captivated at first Sight; a Conquest not to be wondered at, especially if she was not older at that Time than twenty-five Years, as *Prideaux* conjectures: But supposing her forty-five, or more, the Expression is as justifiable as that *Gen.* xii. 11. where *Sarah*, who was then sixty Years old, is said by *Abraham* to be *γυνὴ ὑπερκόσμος*: This Particular, as well as her being rich, is here added, lest any should think that she embraced the strict Manner of Life here described, rather out of Necessity than Choice. But in one so accomplished, Severity and Retirement are not a little to be admired, and in Proportion as her Beauty was amiable, her Humility to decline



decline appearing in public View, was the more exemplary and meritorious; particularly her wearing Sackcloth, and using such Austerities in Dress and Appearance, as naturally contributed to disfigure and lessen the Agreeableness of her Person, which the Generality of the Sex take such Pains to improve by studied Ornaments, shews her to have been devoid of Affectation and Vanity. For continual Fasting in the midst of Affluence and Abundance, save on the Eves of certain Festivals, and particularly her choosing to continue in a State of Widowhood, tho' she had many Offers and Temptations to change her Condition, see ch. xvi. 22. are not less worthy of Admiration and Notice. In fine, a Virtue so perfect received a new and additional Lustre, as appearing among a People sensual and carnal, who regarded Pleasures, Riches, and Marriage, as substantial Parts of Happiness. *Fulgentius* proposes her as the most perfect Pattern of Widowhood, and gives the following fine Character and Elogium of her, which comprizes all the Excellencies above-mentioned, *Ecce vidua, præclara natalibus, facultatibus dives, ætate juvenis, specie mirabilis, divitias contempsit, delicias respuit, carnis incentiva calcavit, & induta virtute ex alto, non quæsit secundo famulari connubio.* De statu viduali, Epist. ii. See also *Hieron.* Epist. x. Tom. i. p. 96.

Ver. 8. *And there was none that gave her an ill Word, for she feared God greatly.*] The Character which the Historian gives *Judith* here, is a very high Commendation, says *St. Jerom.* considering how tender and delicate a thing the Reputation of a young and beautiful Widow is; who elegantly expresses his Remark upon it, in the following Words, *Tenera res in feminis fama pudicitie, & quasi flos pulcherrimus, cito ad levem marcescit auram, levique statu corrumpitur; maxime ubi ætas consentit ad vitium, & maritalis deest autoritas, cujus umbra tutamen uxoris est.* Ad Salv. And from the Character here given by the Author of this History of his Heroine's Piety, there is the less Reason to credit the Objections raised by some against her Religion and Modesty, from particular Passages in it misunderstood; which we shall consider in their order, and reconcile with a just Sense of both. The *Abbot de la Chambre*, in a Funeral Oration on one of the Queens of France, took these Words for his Text, and observes upon them, "That they are perhaps the finest Commendation that ever was given to Woman; for tho' there may be some Women, who, notwithstanding the prodigious Detraction that has prevailed so long in the World, have yet escaped the Attacks of it, yet this good Fortune rarely happens to those, who have otherwise a shining Reputation, and who are, as the Text says, *famossissima.*" So that we may challenge all the Greeks and Romans, to shew us a Passage in their Books, that in so few Words gives us so great an Idea, as these do, of the Heroine *Judith*, who reached the

highest Pitch of Glory and Renown, and which is aptest to alarm and raise the Envy of the World; yet her Virtue and Merits were so engaging and powerful, so guarded with Discretion, and so incomparably amiable, as to silence and strike mute that restless and implacable Passion. And what is further to be admired in our Author here is, that he has so happily and justly pointed out the true Cause of her matchless Virtue, and the universal Admiration it met with, "She had" (says he) a great Reputation in all things, "and was secure from every evil Tongue, "because she was sensibly touched with the "Fear of the Lord." See *Bayle's Dict. in voce Judith*, Note D.

Ver. 10. *She sent her Waiting-Woman that had the Government of all things that she had, to call Ozias, and Chabris, and Charmis, the Ancients of the City; and they came unto her.*] By the Ancients of the City, we are not to understand the oldest People in it, nor yet the Priests, tho' the *Vulgate* has here *Presbyteros*, but certain Officers or Magistrates so called. And tho' *Joachim* the High Priest is joined, ch. xv. 8. with the Ancients of the City, and is said in the *Vulg.* to come to *Bethulia*, cum universis Presbyteris suis ut videret *Judith*, yet the Greek expresses it by ἡγεστία & ἄνδρες ἱερεῶν, i. e. the Senate, or Ruling Elders of the People. *Estrus* observes, that that there is no one Place in all the Books of the Old Testament, where the Word *Presbyter* is taken in the Sense of *Sacerdos*, however it may be used in the New. And by the two Ancients of the People, *Sus. v.* that are said to attempt *Susanna's* Chastity, we are neither to understand Priests, nor Persons stricken in Years, but stated Judges, as is plain from the Text itself. It may seem perhaps assuming in *Judith*, to send to these Ancients, or Magistrates to come to her, instead of going to them herself in Person: But this ought not to be ascribed to any Motive or Principle of Pride, as if from an affected Superiority she thought herself better, or more considerable than they; such a Carriage by no means agrees with one, who on many Occasions distinguished herself for her Humility. It rather proceeded from her Modesty, and Unwillingness to expose to public View her Beauty, which she had industriously concealed, that she desired them to come to her, that she might impart to them a Matter of great Consequence.

Ver. 12. *And now who are you that have tempted God this Day, and stand instead of God amongst the Children of God.*] By limiting God to such a certain Time as five Days, or promising in his Name Help within that Space; as if he could not help you, if he did not precisely do it at the Time fixed by you, and his Power then was shortned; contrary to that fine and just Sentiment, *ψ 15.* *Judith's* Reproof on this Occasion was very just; for the fixing thus a Time to the Almighty, besides the assuming a Prerogative that did not belong to them, shewed a great Diffi-



dence in them; it was declaring they would no longer depend upon him, if he did not answer their Expectation in the Time limited. As true Religion consists in just and worthy Notions of God, in a modest and humble Trust in him, submitting entirely in all Events and Exigencies to his Pleasure, leaving the Time and Manner of Deliverance to God's own Method and Determination; so to act otherwise is tempting God. To tempt God, in Scripture Language, signifies to distrust his Power, Truth, or Providence, after sufficient Demonstrations and Reasons given for Encouragement to depend upon them. See *If. vii. 12. 1 Cor. x. 9. 13.* These People, therefore, who had received so many Proofs of the Divine Protection upon different Occasions, betrayed a great Want of Faith, in fixing a limited Time for his Interposition and Assistance; as if his Wisdom and Providence ought not to chuse, when, and in what Manner he would favour and relieve them. But such is the Impatience and Conceitedness of Men, as to presume to fix the Times and Seasons which God has particularly reserved the Disposal of to himself, and keeps in his own Power.

Ver. 13. *And now try the Lord Almighty, but you shall never know any thing.* i. e. Try if you can find out in this, or in any other Matter of Consequence, what the Mind of the Lord is; the Result of the Enquiry will be, that you cannot do it to any Certainty, or Perfection. The Geneva Version has, *So now you seek the Lord Almighty, but you shall never know any thing*; i. e. you would penetrate into the secret Designs and Counsels of God, of which no body could ever fathom the Depth. See *Wisd. ix. 13, 14, 15, 16, 17.* where the like Sentiment is expressed more at large. Holy Job, describing the Unsearchableness of God's Wisdom, says, *touching the Almighty we cannot find him out: He is excellent in Power, and in Judgment, and in Plenty of Justice: He will not afflict. Men do therefore fear Him: He respecteth not any that are wise of Heart.* *Job. xxxvii. 23, 24.* It may not be improper incidentally to observe, that the last Clause here is inaccurate in our Version; it seems a Reflection on the Almighty, as if he neglected, or had no Regard to, such as are well disposed towards him; for that this is the Meaning of the Phrase, see *Job. ix. 4. Prov. x. 8. xi. 29. Exod. xxviii. 3, &c.* The Rendering of the LXX is much clearer, *ὁ ἀντιπαρὸν καὶ ἀντιπρόθεν καὶ ὁ ἀντιπρόθεν καὶ ὁ ἀντιπρόθεν*; but the Geneva Version is most agreeable to the Context, *Let men therefore fear him, for he will not regard any that are wise in their own Conceit*; and Coverdale's is much to the same Effect, *It is not we that can fynde out the Almighty; for in Power, Equite, and Ryghteousnesse, he is hyer than can be expressed; let Men therefore feare him, for there shall no Man se hym, that is wise in his owne conceite.*

Ver. 16. *Do not bind the Counsels of the Lord our God; for God is not as Man, that*

*he may be threatned.* i. e. Think not to tie down God to Terms and Conditions, to assist you when, or in the Manner ye please, as one obliges a Debtor to pay in a certain fixed Time, or to give Security to Satisfaction; for God is not a weak Creature, like Man, to suffer himself to be insulted, or intimidated by Menaces. This Verse is nearly the same with that *Numb. xxiii. 19.* especially if it be rightly translated, *God is not a Man, that he should lie; neither the Son of Man, that he should repent*; where our Version is by no means accurate, the Verb *ἀπειθεῖν*, the same that is here used, does not signify to repent, but to threaten. And in this Sense the LXX translate the Hebrew Word, *Gen. xxvii. 42.* and so *ἀπειθεῖν* is rendered by the Lexicographers, and not as signifying to repent. The Verb *ἐλεῖν*, *verior*, indeed has such a Sense, but not the Compound, *ἀπειθεῖν*. St. Cyprian, who quotes this Place of *Judith*, accordingly renders, *neque quasi filius hominis minas patitur. Testimon. cont. Judæos, l. ii. ch. xx.*

*Ibid. Neither is he as the Son of Man that he should be wavering.* i. e. *ὅς ὡς υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου διαλυθεῖν.* The reading of all the Copies seems corrupt; the true one probably is, *διαλυθεῖν*, which is followed by all the ancient Fathers, who quote this Place; St. Cyprian, particularly, has, *non quasi homo Deus suspenditur.* We are justified in this Alteration, by the parallel Passage, *Numb. xxiii. 19.* where the Verb used is *διαλυθεῖν*, which the Greek Scholiast renders *σαλευθῆναι*, i. e. to be shaken in his Resolutions, or to be in Doubt or Suspence what to do. It no where signifies to lie; as our Version in that Place of *Numbers* has it. See *Origen and Theodoret. in loc.* If we retain *διαλυθεῖν*, I think it should be derived from *αἰτέω*, and the Meaning be, intreated; i. e. God is not as a Man that he may be threatned, neither as the Son of Man, that he should be persuaded, intreated, won by Sollicitations, or Teasing. The Versions understand it as coming from *διαλέω*. *Vulg. ad Iracundiam inflammabitur. Vers. Lat. vet. ut judicetur. Syr. ut in ordinem redigatur.* but I cannot reconcile it with that Derivation.

Ver. 18. *For there is neither Tribe, nor Family, nor People, nor City among us, which worship Gods made with Hands, as hath been aforetime.* Ver. 19. *For the which Cause our Fathers were given to the Sword, and for a Spoil, and had a great Fall among our Enemies.* Ver. 20. *But we know none other God, therefore we trust that he will not despise us, nor any of our Nation.* What *Judith* here urges, was an Argument of real Consolation to them in their present Circumstances, viz. that, if the many Calamities their Nation at different times had laboured under, as Desolation, Captivity, and the Sword, &c. were owing to the then corrupt and idolatrous State of the People, they had great Reason now to hope, that being free from that Crime and Abomination, which was the Occasion of their Forefathers Miseries (for it was a common

and



and confessed Observation among them, that the Sin of the Golden Calves had a Share in all their Punishments; they might rely upon his Favour and Protection, and should not therefore, thro' Despair of Assistance, deliver themselves up rashly to their Enemies.

Ver. 21. *For if we be taken so, all Judæa shall be waste, and our Sanctuary shall be spoiled, and he will require the Profanation thereof at our Mouth.* Judith cunningly aggravates the Fault which they had committed, in being so dispirited, and ready to deliver up their City, from a Consideration of a more public nature, viz. that on the Safety and Preservation of the City of Bethulia, depended even that of the holy City Jerusalem, and consequently of their Temple and Altar, and the right and regular Performance of their whole religious Service; as it was not allowable to offer Sacrifice any where else but at the Temple: It would therefore, she insinuates, be an Instance both of great Weakness, and Rashness, to form a Resolution to give up the City, if not relieved in five Days; as it would be exposing at the same Time their whole Nation to the common Danger; to defend which, and their most holy Rites, from being discontinued or profaned, they ought rather courageously to shed the very last Drop of their Blood, than to pursue such an unadvised Measure, to the Hazard of the common Safety. There is a great Variety in the Greek Copies here; some have, ὅτι ἐὰν τῷ λαβῆναι ἡμᾶς, ἡ τὰς καθήσεις πᾶσα ἡ Ἰουδαία. Others, ὅτι ἐὰν τῷ λαβῆναι ἡμᾶς, ἡ τὰς καθήσεις, καὶ τ. ἡ. To which agrees the Geneva Version, which has, *Neither when we shall be taken, will Judæa be so famous;* and in one we have καθήσεις. Our Translators seem to have followed a Copy different from the rest, which placed the Comma after ἡ τὰς; as does Junius likewise, *neque vero si deprehendamus ita, nominabitur Judæa amplius.*

Ver. 23. *For our Servitude shall not be directed to Favour, but the Lord our God shall turn it to Dishonour.* The Geneva Version has, *Our Servitude shall not be directed by Favour,* i. e. the Slavery we shall bring upon ourselves, will not procure us the more Favour; that we shall not have the better Treatment for our Tameness in yielding, we may be assured from the Example of other Nations, who have submitted. Junius seems to take it in this Sense, when he renders, *non enim reddetur servitus nostra gratiosa. Nous ne pourrions leur plaire par toutes nos soumissions. Nous ne trouverons point grâces à leurs yeux.* says Calmet in loc.

Ver. 24. *Now therefore, O Brethren, let us shew an Example to our Brethren, because their Hearts depend upon us.* Judith knew the great Consternation and Fright in which the besieged were, and their Disposition to surrender, yet she would not address herself personally to the Body of the People, notwithstanding she might with good Reason have expected to have raised their drooping Spirits, and

made them resolute by what she had to offer. But she chooses to apply herself only to the chief Men of the City, to let them know and understand, that being the Ancients and Rulers of the People, and by Consequence their Life and Soul, on whom they depended and placed all their Hope, it was their Duty, in so important a Conjunction, to animate them by their Example, and to betray no Signs of Fear or Despondency themselves, but rather to act like their great Forefathers, who were troubled on every side, but not in Despair; persecuted, but not forsaken, cast down, but not destroyed. For it has not only a bad Aspect, but is generally attended with evil Consequences, when those who are at the Head of Affairs, appear themselves dispirited; and they are so much the more blameable herein, as by their Pusillanimity they cast a Damp and Panic upon others, and probably will be thought to have contributed, through their Discouragement, to any future Miscarriage that may ensue. In like manner, as when Generals, who have the Command of an Army, and ought to animate and encourage the Soldiers by their martial Spirit and Example, betray themselves Signs of Fear, and Backwardness to engage; if afterwards it happens that they are vanquished by the Enemy, they are deservedly in Disgrace with their Prince, as being the real, the reputed Occasion at least, of the great Loss sustained. A learned Writer thinks the rendering here would be more proper, *Their Hearts agree, or conspire with us,* according to the Use of the Verb in some Parts of Scripture, as Luke xix. 48. See Hammond in loc. But the former Sense, I think, more agreeable to the Context, especially if we read, ἐξ ὧν ἐκτεταται, as some Copies have it, and is confirmed by the Vulg. rendering.

Ver. 25. *Let us give Thanks to the Lord our God, which trieth us, even as he did our Fathers.* In this and the two following Verses, there is excellent Advice given to all such as at any time labour under Afflictions, and it consists of the following Particulars, 1. That they are of such a Nature, that, instead of being uneasy under them, Men should rather give God Thanks for them. 2. That they are graciously designed, and rather kind Admonitions, than any real Tokens of God's Displeasure. 3. That God's most faithful Servants, the Patriarchs and Prophets, have been visited in the same manner, for the Examination of their Hearts, and the Trial of their Patience. To which the Vulg. adds a Fourth Reason, that Murmuring provokes God to inflict heavier Judgments, as he did on the Israelites of old in the Wilderness on that Account. The Words of that Version are very observable, *Illi autem qui tentationes non susceperunt cum timore Domini, & impatientiam suam, & improprium murmurationis sue contra Dominum protulerunt, exterminati sunt ab exterminatore, & a serpentibus perierunt;* exactly agreeing with the very Words of St. Paul, 1 Cor. x. 9, 10.



Ver. 28. Then said Ozias to her, *All that thou hast spoken, hast thou spoken with a good Heart; and there is none that may gainsay thy Words.* The Inhabitants of Bethulia don't seem hitherto to have made the least Effort to defend themselves, no Blood spilt, no Remedy attempted. Thirst pressed them fore, and yet they had not the Courage to attempt the Assyrian Guard, that had seized upon the Fountains and Recevoirs of Waters. It was not without Reason therefore, that Judith reproaches them with want of Courage. Upon reviewing and comparing the very different Conduct, and Behaviour of her, and the Persons she speaks to, one sees the Observation, that God chuses the things that are weak, to confound the things that are mighty, remarkably verified: *Judith*, a defenceless Widow, whilst the Men around her quake for Fear, and even the Chiefs themselves give up all for lost, appears quite undaunted, and argues with so much Coolness and Constancy of Mind, as well as Strength of Reasoning, as really to deserve the Character Ozias here gives her. That one single Woman should dare to venture on an Act of such Danger and Boldness, and be so successful as to accomplish it, was owing at least to her great Zeal for the Safety of God's chosen People; or shall we ascribe it to a divine Impulse?

Ver. 33. *I will go forth with my Waiting-Woman.* The Word in the ancient Translations is, *Abra*, which signifies a Companion, or Maid of Honour (such as Ladies of the first Condition had) rather than a Servant; for the same Word in the LXX is applied to the Women who attended both *Pharaoh's* Daughter, *Exod. xi. 5.* and Queen *Ester*, *ch. iv. 4.* Thus *Calmet* understands the Word. In other Writers it is certain it signifies merely a Servant, a Chamber-maid, or House-keeper; and whether it is not to be taken in this latter Acceptation, see *v. 10.* compared with chap. *xvi. 23.*

*Ibid.* Within the Days that you have promised to deliver the City to our Enemies, the Lord will visit Israel by my Hand. *Judith*, *v. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17.* blames Ozias and the rest of the Governors, for presuming to limit the Interposition of the Almighty, within the Space of five Days, and does she not seem to do the same here herself, engaging for his Assistance within that precise Time? Was this in Compliance with them, and that she might encourage their Hopes; or shall we charge her with Rashness and Enthusiasm, for assuring them, that she should be the happy Instrument to accomplish their Deliverance within the fixed Time? or, with the *Romanists*, suppose, that she had an Assurance of the successful Event of her intended Enterprize, by some particular Revelation? Without having Recourse to this, it seems better to resolve *Judith's* engaging in so adventurous an Exploit, into her strong Confidence of God's Favour and Assistance, against an Usurper of that Honour and Adoration, which belonged to him alone.

## CHAP. IX.

Ver. 1. Uncovered the Sackcloth where-  
with she was clothed. *Byduswov*  
*ov ediduswovlo saxov*, i. e. She discovered the Sackcloth she had upon her, by taking off some upper Garment, which she probably put on occasionally, out of Compliment to the Elders that came to her. The Syr. makes her to tear her upper Garment, *Scidit tunica etiam, & apparuit saccus quo induta erat.* According to *Calmet* the Sense is, "She removed her Sackcloth, which she had put off to receive the Governors of the City." Thus also *Junius* takes it, *imposuit cilicium, postea, quam induerat, veste*; and *Grotius*, who restores the Greek Text, which he thinks corrupt, to this Sense, and makes the true Reading to be, *η γυνὴ ἀνέβη ἐπὶ τὸν σάκκον.* The Geneva Version, which has, *she put off the Sackcloth, wherewith she was clothed*, seems faulty here, and not to be reconciled with the Context, which mentions, Prostration, putting Ashes on her Head, and the like Instances of Humiliation, to recommend and enforce her Suit more effectually to God.

Ver. 2. O Lord God of my Father Simeon, to whom thou gavest a Sword to take Vengeance of the Strangers, who loosened the Girdle of a Maid to defile her. *Judith* here begs of God to inspire her with a Zeal, like that of *Simeon* who massacred the *Sichemites*, to punish the Violation of his Sister's Honour, in order to take Vengeance of the blasphemous *Assyrians*, and to deliver his People from their present sad State, and the imminent Danger that threatened them. But does not the Book of *Genesis* acquaint us, that this Action of *Simeon* and *Levi*, very much displeased *Jacob* their Father, and that he condemned it as cruel and unjust? See *Gen. xlix. 5, 6.* compared with *ch. xxxiv. 30.* How then can we excuse *Judith* for commending this Fact of *Simeon*, whom *Jacob* cursed for the very Barbarity of it? But in Answer it may be said, that these Words do not necessarily imply, that she applauded the Fact, nor does the Phrase of God's giving a Sword to take Vengeance, mean any thing more than his permitting such an Action to be done. As he may be said to put the like Means of Destruction into the Hands of Tyrants, whom he occasionally makes his Scourges. The like may be said of other wicked Persons, whom he sometimes permits in his Anger, to execute his Justice upon a People, often not more abandoned, and undeserving than themselves. See *Jerem. xxv. 9.* And thus he is said to arm his Creatures to avenge his Honour, or to make the Creature his Weapon for the Revenge of his Enemies, *Wisd. v. 17.* See also *Joel ii. 25.* So that nothing can be concluded for the Merit of the Person, that is occasionally made the Instrument of God's Vengeance. *Judith* rather praises God for his Justice in revenging such an Instance of brutal Lust, tho' executed by the Sword of cruel *Simeon*: She only commendeth



mendeth the Zeal, or just Indignation shewn on the Occasion, but by no means justifies the cruel manner of revenging the Affront. The Repentment of such an Injury was just, but the involving such a Number of People in its Punishment, was a criminal Excess of Zeal, and an Instance of great Barbarity.

Ver. 3. *Wherefore thou gavest their Rulers to be slain, being deceived.*] The Difference between the People of God, and idolatrous Nations, was visible in the Point of Lust and carnal Uncleanness, from the first Separation of them, as appears by the Zeal of Simeon and Levi, here mentioned, for their Sister dishonoured. The idolatrous Nations, who were abandoned to the Service of strange Gods, as the *Sychemites* were, looked upon all Uncleanness of this Nature, as a thing indifferent, and made no account of it, but in Civil Regards, as it dishonoured the House, or tainted the Issue; being deceived or mistaken in considering it in this respect only; but the *Israelites*, being bred in the Knowledge of the true God, and of the Abomination, in which he hath all such Acts of Uncleanness, regarded them in a moral or religious View; and if they acted herein, as the Idolaters, or seemed to countenance them in others, by overlooking them, thought they could no longer be taken for God's People. Hence Simeon and Levi proceeded probably to revenge the Injury offered to their Sister, considering it as an Act, which God had forbidden, which his true Servants abhorred, and was a Pollution of the Holiness of their Blood, which distinguished them from Idolaters. See *Thorndike of the Laws of the Church*, p. 62. Calmet observes, that the Description in these Verses of this foul Act, and its Consequences, are described poetically, and that it is probable, that this Writer had read the Poets, as appears from ch. xvi. 7.

Ver. 5. *For thou hast wrought not only those things, but also the things which fell out before, and which ensued after; thou hast thought upon the things which are now, and which are to come.*] The Geneva Rendering here comes nearer the Greek, *for thou hast wrought the things afore, and these, and the things that shall be after.* i. e. As thou wast the Author of all the Miracles done in our Forefathers Days, so thou art no less of those that now come to pass, or shall hereafter. All Events succeed one another by the ordering of thy wise Providence, which has so disposed them, according to thy eternal Counsel. The last Clause the *Vulg.* renders indeterminately, *Illam post illa cogitasti*, which seems to imply such a Succession of Thoughts in God, as is observable in the human Mind; but I conceive the Meaning there to be, that God executeth the things that are present at the same time in the divine Mind, at different successive Times; or that all things done gradually in Time, were at once, and all together in his Sight and Knowledge.

Ver. 6. *Yea, what things thou didst determine were ready at hand, and said, Lo, we are here. for all thy Ways are prepared, and thy*

*Judgments are in thy Fore-knowledge.*] The Geneva Version is clearer, *For the things which thou dost purpose, are present, and say, Behold we are here: for all thy Ways are ready, and thy Judgments are foreknown,* i. e. Thy infinite Prescience foresaw all things with their Events, and what thou didst at any time determine to effect, must necessarily come to pass. For thou executest without any Difficulty whatever thou pleasest; no Obstacle lies in thy way, thy Measures are never wrong, nor thy Designs ever ill concerted; nor is it possible that they should be discovered, or disappointed by thine Enemies, as the Means that thou employest are sure and infallible. The mighty Power of God in producing, as it were instantaneously, whatever his Wisdom determines to have done, is beautifully described in the following Words, *What things thou dost determine, are ready at hand, and say, Lo we are here,* see Job xxxviii. 35. The Syr. Rendering of them is much to be admired, *Tu cogitasti, & facta sunt; consultasti, & steterunt coram te; vocasti, & dixerunt, Ecce hic sumus.* The Observation in the latter part of the Verse about the divine Prescience, is parallel to that, *Acts xv. 18. Known unto God are all his Works from the Beginning of the World.* Seneca has almost literally expressed the same Sentiment, *Nota est illis (sc. Diis) operis sui series: omnium illis rerum per manus suas ituram scientia in aperto est; nobis ex abdito subit: & que repentina putamus, illis prævisa veniunt, ac familiaria.* *De Benefic. iv. 32.*

Ver. 7. *For behold the Assyrians are multiplied in their Power; they are exalted with Horse and Man; they glory in the Strength of their Footmen; they trust in Shield and Spear.*] *ἡλπισαν ἐν ἀσπίδι καὶ ἐν γαστρὶ, Gasum, or Gasus,* was a Javelin used among the Gauls. See *Cæsar de Bell. Gall. l. iii.* And from them the Greeks and Romans borrowed the Word. We meet with it in the *LXX, Josh. viii. 18.* which the Author of the Book of *Ecclus.* reciting the same Story, renders by *σπάται*, or a Sword, ch. xvi. 3. see *Hody, De Vers. Græc. auth. l. ii.* But Symmachus and the *Vulg.* render it by a Shield. This Verse seems not well connected with the foregoing; the *Vulg.* expresses it clearer, and illustrates it by the Example of the Egyptians, whom God destroyed for their Self-sufficiency and Presumption, *Respice castra Assyriorum nunc, sicut tunc castra Egyptiorum videre dignatus es, quando post servos tuos armati currebant, confidentes in quadrigis, & in equitatu suo, & in multitudine bellatorum; sed aspexisti super castra eorum, & tenebrae fatigaverunt eos. Tenuit pedes eorum abyssus, & aqua aperuerunt eos. Sic fiant & isti, qui confidunt in multitudine sua, &c.*

10. *Smite by the Deceit of my Lips, the Servant with the Prince, and the Prince with the Servant.*] i. e. Prosper the Stratagem which I have laid, to lead the Enemy into a Mistake by my Words, and inflame their General with such a fond Love of me, as may prove a Snare to deceive and ruin him. But how



how could *Judith* entertain any hopes of Success from such a Request? Can we suppose, consistently, that God would approve of either of these Ways? Can the God of Truth patronize Falshood, or the most pure Being favour any Attempt towards impure Lust? To this it is answered, on the other hand, that the Reading of some Greek Copies is, *παταξόν ἐν χαλκῷ ἀγανῆς μὲν*, and not *ἀδελφῆς*, as our Version has it; and so the *Vulg.* expressly renders, *Capitur laqueo oculorum suorum in me, & percussus eum ex labiis charitatis meae.* 2dly, That it was the Opinion of those Times, that in a lawful War, Surprise, Stratagem, Deceit, and Craft, were fair and allowable; that one might disguise, dissemble, counterfeit, and use all possible Means to conceal a Design, which the Enemy has no Right to know; and that if thro' Misrepresentation, or Equivocation, he be led into any Mistake, prejudicial to his Safety or Interest, there is no just ground of Complaint, according to that old Maxim, *Dolus, an virtus, quis in hoste requirat?* Thus *Jaab* prevailed, by the Deceit of her Lips, against *Sisera*, *Judg.* iv. 18, 21. And *Grotius* thinks the Men of *Jaabesh-Gilead* used the like Deceit towards the *Ammonites*, *1 Sam.* xi. 10. And thus *Elisba* deluded the *Syrians*, *2 Kings* vi. 18, 19. See *Grotius*, *De Jure Belli & Pacis*, c. i. § 17. But however some Casuists may gloss over mental Evasions, Equivocations, Untruths, and officious Lies, as they term them, yet the Case is widely different, when one forges express Lies, with a direct Intention to betray Men into wrong Measures, and evil Counsels, to their Ruin; especially when Religion is made an Accomplice in the Cheat, when it is pretended, that what is spoken is by Inspiration of God, and from a Zeal for his Religion and Glory, see ch. xi. 16, 17, 19; when studied Arts and Allurements are made use of to stir up impure Love, and kindle an unlawful Flame, and thereby to destroy the Soul, as well as the Body; than which complicated Mischief, nothing can be more cruel, or more contrary to the Law of God. It is well known in what an exemplary manner God treated the *Midianites*, for following the evil Counsel of *Balaam*, to send their Daughters into the Camp of the Children of *Israel*; what Vengeance he took of the false Prophet, that gave that insinuating Advice, and of the *Midianites* that followed it, and of the *Israelites* that were seduced, and corrupted thereby, *Numb.* xxxi. 16. "For these, and the like Reasons (says *Calmet*) we cannot approve, in all Respects, either the Prayer or Action of *Judith*; we commend her good Intentions, and think, that the Uprightness of her Designs, and her Ignorance, abate much of the Crime: We neither blame her for concealing her Purpose, nor for leading *Holofernes* into a Mistake, nor even for the Murder of him; for all this is just and allowable in a lawful War. Yet will not this suffice entirely to excuse her; a Lie, told with so much So-

lemnity, and carried on thro' her whole Conversation with *Holofernes*, is still insensible. The employing her Beauty, and all her little winning Arts, to inflame his Passion, and thereby exposing her Person to a rude Attack, is a Step likewise not to be justified."

Ver. 11. *For thy Power standeth not in Multitude, nor thy Might in strong Men.* It was a firm Persuasion of this Truth, that induced *Jonathan*, and his Armour-bearer only, to attempt the *Philistines* Garrison. It may be that the Lord will work for us, for there is no Restraint to the Lord, to save by Many or by Few, *1 Sam.* xiv. 6. By the same, *Gideon*, with his Three hundred Men, prevailed over the *Midianites*, *Judg.* vii. 7. This also encouraged King *Asa*, when *Zerah* the *Ethiopian* came out against him with a Thousand Thousand; he comforts himself with this Reflection, *Lord, it is nothing with thee to help with many, or with them that have no Power: we rest on thee, O Lord, and in thy Name we go against this Multitude*, *2 Chron.* xiv. 11. Not unlike this is *Judas Maccabeus's* Observation to his Soldiers, who seeing a mighty Host of the Ungodly coming against them, discouraged at the Sight, said to him, *How shall we be able, being so few, to fight against so great a Multitude, and so strong?* whom that great and good Leader thus piously comforts, *It is no hard Matter for many to be shut up in the Hands of a few; and with the God of Heaven it is all one, to deliver with a great Multitude, or a small Company. For the Victory of Battle standeth not in the Multitude of an Host, but Strength cometh from Heaven*, *1 Macc.* iii. 17, 18, 19. *Artabanus's* Speech to *Xerxes*, who had a much larger Army with him in his Expedition against *Greece*, surprises us, as coming from a Heathen, *Ingens exercitus ab exiguo profligatur, quoties Deus iis, quos debatur, aut metum, aut tonitru incutit.*

Ver. 12. *And make my Speech and Deceit to be their Wound and Strife.* i. e. Make the Deceit of my Speech to be their Ruin, ἐν δὲ δυνάμει, not unlike that of *St. Paul*, *Col.* ii. 8, *Beware lest any man spoil you through Philosophy and vain Deceit; i. e. through the vain Deceit of Philosophy, or through the Deceit of vain Philosophy.* Our Version follows a Copy which read, *δὲ λόγον μὲν καὶ ἀπάτην εἰς τραῦμα, καὶ τ. λ.* and so the *Alex. MS.* has it. Other Copies have, *δὲ λόγον μὲν καὶ ἀπάτην καὶ τραῦμα, καὶ μὴ λυτὰ αὐτοῖς*, i. e. make my Speech to be a Snare, and Hurt to them. In this Sense *Junius* takes it, *præsta ut sermo meus sit fraudi, & vulnere, & cicatrici istis.* The *Geneva* Version affords another, but more obscure Sense, i. e. "Grant me Words, and Craft, and a Wound, and a Stroke, against them that enterprize cruel things against thy Covenant."

Ver. 14. *And make every Nation and Tribe to acknowledge, that thou art the God of all Power and Might, &c.* It seems as if the former Part of this Verse had suffered much by Transcribers, as the Reading of the Greek is



is so different in the several Editions. Some Copies have, *ἡ ποιήσου ἐπὶ πᾶν τὸ ἔθνος σε, ἡ πάσης φυλῆς ἐπίγνωσιν, τὴ εἰδῆσαι, κ. τ. λ.* Others, *ποιήσου ἐπὶ πάντας ἔθνας σε, ἡ πάσης δυνάμεως ἡ κράτης, ὅτι οὐκ ἔστιν ἄλλος, κ. τ. λ.* The *Alex. MS.* seems to retain the true Reading, *ποιήσου ἐπὶ πάντος ἔθνος σε, ἡ πάσης φυλῆς ἐπίγνωσιν, τὴ εἰδῆσαι ὅτι οὐκ ἔστιν ἄλλος, Θεὸς πάσης δυνάμεως ἡ κράτης, ἡ οὐκ ἔστιν ἄλλος, κ. τ. λ.* To which agrees the *Syriac*, *Fac toti populo tuo, Et omnibus familiis, ut sciant te esse Deum omnis potentia Et dominii, nec esse alium qui protegat Israel, præter te:* And the *Geneva Version*, "Shew evidently among all thy People, "and all the Tribes, that thou art the God of "all Power and Strength, &c." The Sense, I conceive, will be somewhat improved, and the Wish more extensive and affectionate, if by a small Transposition we read the Passage thus, *ποιήσου ἐπὶ πάντος ἔθνος ἡ πάσης φυλῆς σε ἐπίγνωσιν, κ. τ. λ.* which *Junius* greatly confirms, *Affer in omni gente notitiam tui, Et totius potentia tue, &c.*

## CHAP. X.

Ver. 3. **W**ashed her Body all over with Water.] The *Jews* first washed, and then anointed themselves with precious Oil. So *Naomi* to *Ruth*, *Wash thyself therefore, and anoint thyself*, ch. iii. So *David*, after the Death of his Child, rose up, and washed, and anointed himself, 2 *Sam.* xii. 20. The like is mentioned of *Nausicaæ*, and her Maids,

*Αἱ δὲ, λουσάμεναι, ἡ χρίσάμεναι λίπ' ἐλαίῳ, Δῆπρον ἐπειθ' εἰλοντο. Od. vi.*

*Ibid.* And anointed herself with precious Ointment.] This refers to the *Jewish* Custom of anointing the Head, more particularly on Festivals, and other Solemnities. Instances of this in prophane Story are almost innumerable, in the Description of their Festivities. And that it was usual among the *Jews*, appears by many Passages. Thus *Pf.* civ. 15. we have Mention of Oil, *to make a cheerful Countenance:* And in this Sense learned Men understand the Oil of Gladness, *Pf.* xlv. 8. as referring to the Oil used on Festivals, which are expressly called Gladness, or Joy, 1 *Chron.* xii. 40. But that Passage in *Eccles.* ix. 8. comes nearest to what is here mentioned, *Let thy Garments be white, and thy Head want no Ointment.* See also *Luke* vi. 17. On the other hand, upon Days of Humiliation and Mourning, and particularly on the great Day of Expiation, the *Jews* were interdicted both washing and anointing, 2 *Sam.* xiv. 2. *Dan.* x. 3. Tho' *Judith* is described in this, and the following Verse, with braided Hair, and with a rich Mitre, or Bonnet, tied round her Head with Ribbons finely embroidered, and with other Decorations and Ornaments, yet are these no certain Signs or Tokens of a loose turn of Mind, or of wanton Inclinations; tho' *Jezebel* indeed is described with some of them, 2 *Kings* ix. 30. but her Character is the very Reverse of this Heroine: They are

such only, as were worn by the Women of that Age of Condition and Distinction, and were now only occasionally used, to set off her Person, for the better Accomplishment of the great Design in hand. What the *Vulg.* here adds, that God himself at this Time gave her uncommon and irresistible Beauty, to make her admired and amiable in the Eyes of all Beholders, has no Foundation in any of the other ancient Versions.

*Ibid.* And put on her Garments of Gladness wherewith she was clad during the Life of Manasses her Husband.] It may seem surprising, that *Judith*, who was so cautious of exposing her Person to public View, and was so singularly strict in her Dress, should on a sudden put on fine and gay Apparel, to allure the Eyes of all Men that should see her: But this she did to ingratiate herself the more to *Holofernes*, to disarm his Fury and Resentment against her, as one of the *Hebrews*, and thereby to procure her a more favourable Audience, and Admittance. Her putting on the very Garments she wore in her Husband's Lifetime, was probably to remind her, that, being attired in these, it was incumbent on her to behave with as much Distance and Reserve as in her conjugal State, to prevent her yielding to any criminal Solicitation, by the very Sight of them; to be careful not to reflect any Dishonour, thro' Misconduct, on her Husband's Memory, but to revere his Ashes, by preserving her Chastity, as a Widow. This seems to be *St. Ambrose's* Meaning, when speaking of this Particular, he says, *Et bene conjugales pugnatura resumpsit ornatus, quia monumenta conjugii arma sunt castitatis; neque enim vidua aliis aut placere possit, aut vincere. De Viduis.*

Ver. 5. And filled a Bag with parched Corn, Lumps of Figs, and with fine Bread.] These are the principal Food of the Eastern Nations; the Constitution of their Bodies, and the Nature of their Clime inclining them to a more abstemious Diet than is used in colder Countries. And she took her own Provisions with her, that she might not be obliged to partake of the Victuals of the Gentiles, which the Law made her to regard as polluted and defiled, ch. xii. 2. *Ἄσπλος καθαρός*, here means unfermented Bread, pure, and free from Leaven. Instead of which the *Vulg.* has, *panem Et caseum*; and the *Syriac* renders in like Manner.

Ver. 12. I am a Woman of the Hebrews, and am fled from them, for they shall be given you to be consumed.] See ch. xi. 15. It is to be observed in general of the Speeches of *Judith*, that many Expressions therein are spoken ironically, and many equivocally, or with a double Meaning. Here she cunningly conceals the Truth, when she says, that they shall be given you to be consumed; having some such mental Reservation as this: Unless God extraordinarily interposes in their Behalf; which she seems to be well assured of. Others consider these Words as spoken prophetically, as presaging some future Captivity to the *Jews*, unless they repented. In this Light the Ge-



nerality of Expositors consider *Judith's* Conduct, and endeavour to excuse her from any Imputation of Falshood.

Ver. 13. *I am coming before Holofernes to declare Words of Truth.*] Which indeed she did with respect to herself, that she was a Woman of the *Hebrews*, and had left or fled from them, see ch. xi. 12. But supposing her to speak ambiguously, ironically, or even deceitfully, is she not excusable, if it be considered, that the War, which the Children of *Israel* were engaged in at this Time, was a just and necessary one; and that in the Judgment of most Casuists, Stratagem, Dissimulation, and even Deceit in such Circumstances have been thought allowable? See Note on ch. ix. 10. But how shall we justify her, when she says in the latter Part of this Verse, *I will shew him a Way whereby he shall go, and win all the Hill Country, without losing the Body or Life of any one of his Men?* She seems to have made her Promise good in Effect; when she acquainted *Holofernes*, ch. xi. 12. with the State of the Besieged, that their Victuals failed them, and their Water was scant, and therefore were under a Necessity of surrendering speedily. So that what she says about taking the Hill Country, without the Loss of a Man, was true, considered in this Light, as there was no Need of Force, or the Hazard of an Action, where the Famine was so pressing; tho' this indeed was not the whole of the Business she came about, and her main and principal Design she concealed in her own Breast. Thus *Samuel*, when sent to anoint a King at *Bethlehem*, instead of *Saul*, to prevent his killing him, gave out by the Order of God, that he came to sacrifice to the Lord, 1 Sam. xvi. 2. The Excuse was not only plausible, but the thing itself true; but still the chief Part of his Commission he kept to himself, viz. anointing *David* to be King. Herein *Samuel* and *Judith* were both alike, that they spoke the Truth, but did not think it proper or safe to lay open their whole Purpose.

Ver. 14. *Now when the Men heard her Words, and beheld her Countenance, they wondered greatly at her Beauty, &c.*] As the Courage of *Judith* must be acknowledged great and uncommon, to venture into the *Assyrian* Camp, accompanied only with her Maid, so early as Break of Day, circa ortum diei, as the *Vulg.* has it, so it is equally to be wondered at, that the Soldiers should offer no Rudeness of any Sort to her; but on the contrary, for her safer Conduct, should appoint her a Guard of an Hundred Men, till she reached the General's Tent. We must, I conceive, ascribe this unusual Civility to some of the following Causes; either to the Majesty of her Countenance; the Splendor and Belat of her Dress and Appearance, which bespoke her a Person of Distinction; or to the Importance of the Dispatches which she said she brought with her; or lastly, to the divine Protection. St. *Ambrose* makes the same Reflection, *In qua femina insidiosa*

*pulchritudinis novitatem hostilis exercitus vehementer expavit, ut in ejus obsequio vires amitterent, arma projicerent, & colla curvarent. Deducitur ad prætorium subjectis ordinibus fraus Holofernis, & lugentis victoria civitatis.* Serm. 228.

Ver. 19. *And every one said to his Neighbour, Who would despise this People, that have among them such Women.*] This Remark of *Holofernes's* Soldiers very much resembles, says *Madam Dacier*, that of the venerable old Counsellors in the third Book of the *Iliad*, who, tho' they had suffered all the Calamities of a tedious War, and were consulting upon Methods to put a Conclusion to it, upon seeing *Helen*, the true and only Cause of it, approaching towards them, are struck with her Charms, and cry out,

Οὐ νέμεσις, Τρώας κ' εὐκνήμιδας Ἀχαιῆς  
Τοιῇδ' ἀμφὶ γυναικὶ πολὺν χρόνον ἄλγεα πάσχειν  
Αἰνῶς ἀθανάτῃσι θεῇς εἰς ὧπα εἶκεν.

which Mr. *Pope* has thus beautifully rendered,

— No wonder such celestial Charms  
For nine long Years have set the World in Arms.  
What winning Graces! what majestic Mien!  
She moves a Goddess, and she looks a Queen!

Ver. 21. *Now Holofernes rested upon his Bed under a Canopy, which was woven with Pearls, and Gold, and Emeralds, and precious Stones.*] This Piece of State, more agreeable to the Softness of an Eastern Monarch, however customary in Times of Peace, and suited to the Indolence of the Tender and Delicate, was an Indulgence not so much to be affected by a Soldier. The Business and Hurry of a Camp scarce admits or requires State, and therefore we conceive but meanly of *Holofernes*, and should of any other General, to see him at such a Time extended on a Sofa, or lying ingloriously under a magnificent Pavilion, as if Luxury and Pleasure were chiefly regarded. *Horace's* Observation, considered either as a Reflection on *Antony* himself, or on the Degeneracy of the old *Roman* Spirit, by the Introduction of effeminate Softness, is very just and apposite,

Romanus (ebrii posterius negabitur)  
Emancipatus fœmina  
Spadonibus servire rugosis potest.  
Interque signa (turpe!) militaria  
Sol aspicit Conopeum. Epod. Od. ix.

Ver. 22. *And he came out before his Tent, with Silver Lamps going before him.*] Either because it was yet scarce Daylight, see ch. xi. 5. or because it was dark within the Tent of *Holofernes*; for it consisted of two Apartments, an Antichamber, and a withdrawing or inner Room. From the latter he came out to meet *Judith*, preceded by Servants carrying Lamps; which were continually, as *Calmet* supposes, burning in it. In this Piece of State *Holofernes* may be thought to imitate the Customs of the *Persians*, among whom it was usual to carry Fire before their Kings; as it was afterwards done before the *Roman* Emperors,



perors, and is at present before the Emperor of the *Turks*. Whether this was a *Persian* Custom or not, herein however we know that all the *Oriental Nations* were unanimous, viz. in affecting Pomp and Grandeur.

Ver. 23. *She fell down upon her Face, and did Reverence unto him: and his Servants took her up.*] It was neither a sudden Fright at the Sight of this great and formidable General, that thus affected *Judith*, for she, who seemed to have defied the whole *Assyrian Army*, by passing through them with a single Waiting Woman only, would scarcely fall down in a Swoon at the Sight of one Man, however considerable. Nor was it the Eclat and Splendor of all that Pomp and Magnificence, which surrounded *Holofernes*, that dazzled her Senses, so as to occasion her falling down: Her Prostration was rather an Expression of Duty, and profound Reverence, and a submissive Token of her Meanness and Unworthiness to appear in his Presence. The paying him a sort of Worship and Adoration, was an Artifice to work upon his Vanity, to recommend her to Favour, and to draw him into her Snare.

## CHAP. XI.

Ver. 1. **W**oman, be of good Comfort: Fear not in thine Heart, for I never hurt any that was willing to serve *Nabuchodonosor*, the King of all the Earth.] Οὐκ ἐπαινώσα ἀνθρώπων, ὅς τις ἡρέτηκε δαλύνειν, κ. τ. λ. i. e. I have never hurt any Man that was willing to submit to, and serve *Nabuchodonosor*; much less shall I injure a defenceless Woman, who is fled to me for Safeguard. *Judith* had but little Reason to depend upon this Declaration, or to trust to his Veracity, as he sets out with a Falshood, in saying, that he never hurt any that submitted to his great Lord; for ch. iii. 8. mention is made of his casting down the Frontiers, and cutting down the Groves of such as had sued for Peace, and had surrendered themselves and their Cities, and had been received into Protection.

Ver. 3. *Be of good Comfort, thou shalt live this Night and hereafter.*] How are we to understand Night here, and in *ψ* 5. does it mean that *Judith* first came to *Holofernes* in the Night, and had an Audience in his Tent, as our Version, following the *Greek*, seems plainly to represent it? But how then shall we reconcile this with ch. x. 10. where it is said, that the Men of the City looked after, and followed *Judith* with their Eyes, till she had passed the Valley, and then saw her no more; which intimates that it was not Night, but rather, as the *Vulg.* has it, about Day Break, or Sun Rising, *circa ortum diei*. Possibly it might seem Night to *Holofernes*, who went no further than his Antichamber, and had then Lights burning in his Tent; or else it must mean the Night ensuing, or that he determined to have her be with him for a Continuance. 'Tis probable that *Holofernes* could

not speak the *Syriac* or *Chaldee* Language which *Judith* used; for ch. v. 3. he asks the Princes of *Moab*, who this People were, as if he was an absolute Stranger to them; we must suppose, therefore, that the Conversation which passed between them was managed by an Interpreter.

Ver. 6. *If thou wilt follow the Words of thy Servant.*] *Jael's* Behaviour to *Sisera* was not unlike this, when she said to him, Turn in, my Lord, turn in to me, fear not, *Judg.* iv. 18. and with the like Design of Treachery. Such also was *Rahab's* receiving, concealing, and conveying away the Spies, which was all a crafty Management, assisted and carried on by an untrue Suggestion; for she said, *There came Men unto me, but whence they were, I I wist not; and when it was dark, the Men went out, but whither they went I wist not: Pursue after them quickly, for ye shall overtake them:* And yet she knew they were concealed in her House at the same Time, *Josh.* ii. 4, 5. It would be too bold to charge what she said and did upon the Occasion with the Guilt of a Lye, since the Writer to the *Hebrews*, ch. xi. 31. records her Name with Honour. In like manner, when a City is straitly besieged and sore distressed for want of either Succours, or Sustainance, the Casuists allow a Liberty to amuse the Enemy with feigned Reports, and false Accounts of their State, and to make use of any crafty Stratagem they can devise, that may be of Service or Relief to themselves, tho' altogether inconsistent with the Truth. This, and such like Practices, have been thought sufficiently justified from the very State and Exigency of things in time of War. For when People are at open Hostility with one another, whether Matters be managed by mere Force, or cunning Slight, it makes no Difference; and therefore if it be lawful to kill an Enemy outright, much more is it so to deceive him, tho' it be to his very great Hurt. What some Writers have observed to excuse evasive Answers, or equivocating Behaviour, in those mentioned, and other Examples in Sacred Story, viz. that a mixt Action may be commended for the Good that is in it, or which it occasions, without any express Notice or Censure of the Evil, seems applicable to the Case of *Judith*.

*Ibid.* *God will bring the Thing perfectly to pass by thee.*] i. e. God will execute what he has decreed and purposed, and will grant a complete Victory. The Expression is equivocal, and may either mean a Victory to, or over you. Here it is to be taken in the latter Sense, and as spoken with such a Reservation, as that ch. x. 12. *Holofernes* understood her to speak of Victory, by the Surrender of the *Israelites*, or their Overthrow; but *Judith's* Meaning was, that the Victory should be obtained by the Death of *Holofernes* himself. The next Sentence also is equivocal, viz. *My Lord shall not fail of his Purposes*, which may either mean that *Holofernes*, to whom she was speaking, and whom the Compliments



ments with the Title of *her Lord*, should gain his Point, if he would follow her Advice: Or, that her Lord God would infallibly execute his Design, touching the Deliverance of his People. Where *Judith's* Speeches are capable of a double Meaning, it is sufficient to free her from the Imputation of lying, if one of the two Senses be true, viz. that which she herself had in View, tho' *Holofernes*, and his Officers might understand her in a quite different Sense; who for their Pride and repeated Blasphemies deserved to be blinded in such a Manner as to interpret in his Favour, what was really against them.

Ver. 7. *As Nabuchodonosor, King of all the Earth, liveth, and as his Power liveth.*] i. e. As true as it is that *Nabuchodonosor* liveth, and that his Power is felt, and acknowledged by the Nations around him, so true is it, that thou shalt not fail in thy Purposes. It was a common Form among the People of the East, to swear by the Life of their Kings, and other Persons of great Merit and Dignity: Thus *Hannab*, the Mother of *Samuel*, swore by the Life of the High Priest *Eli*; 1 Sam. i. 26. *Elisba* by that of *Elijah* his Master; 2 Kings ii. 4. *Abigail* by the Life of *David*, when she met him as he went to avenge himself on the Family of *Nabal*, 1 Sam. xxv. 26. And her Compliments, and fair Speeches to ingratiate herself, and sooth his Anger, somewhat resemble those of *Judith*. *Abner* swore by the Life of *Saul*, 1 Sam. xvii. 55. and *Joseph* by that of *Pharaoh*, Gen. xlii. 15. But in this sort of Oath there was neither Superstition nor Idolatry; for neither these, swearing by the Life of holy Men or Prophets, nor the other by that of Kings, regarded them in so doing as Gods; but being Persons held in Reverence, and reputed sacred and inviolable, and as representing the Power and Majesty of God, whose Ministers they were, the swearing by their Life, was the introducing, and applying as it were a thing sacred, to attest the Truth of what was spoken: and the setting such a Value upon their Lives, as of public Concernment, was a Species of Homage, and so high a Degree of political Respect, as soothed the Vanity of Princes.

Ibid. *Who hath sent thee for the upholding of every living thing.*] This does not suit the Character either of *Nabuchodonosor* or *Holofernes*, who destroyed all before him, in Pursuance of that Prince's Orders, who had vowed to avenge himself on all the Earth; except it be understood as spoken ironically. Our Version here seems inaccurate; the Greek *εἰς καλὸν ποιεῖν πάντα ζῶντα* will admit of another and better Meaning, viz. for the new modelling, correcting, and reforming of all amiss, or that have been out of Order, or given Offence. And thus the *Vulg.* *Ad correctionem omnium animarum errantium*; and the *Geneva* Version, *Whose Power hath sent thee to reform all Persons*. But Tyrants, such as *Nabuchodonosor*, however complimented, seldom concern themselves about Reforma-

tion in Earnest; they are indeed often Scourges appointed by God to correct and punish wicked Nations, such as the *Assyrians* were to that of the *Jews*, when they carried them away captive.

Ibid. *For not only Men shall serve him by thee, but also the Beasts of the Field, and the Cattle, and the Fowls of the Air shall live by thy Power, under Nabuchodonosor, and all his House.*] This is a rhetorical Exaggeration; and the Mention of Animals, and Things without Reason, submitting to his Jurisdiction, as well as Men, means only, that whole Provinces submitted to him, with all the Creatures in and belonging to them, tho' indeed not voluntarily, but thro' Fear or Compulsion.

Ver. 8. *For we have heard of thy Wisdom, and thy Policies, and it is reported in all the Earth, that thou only art excellent in all the Kingdom, and mighty in Knowledge, and wonderful in Feats of War.*] To free *Judith* from the Imputation of Lying, as Flattery often partakes of it, it may be necessary to observe, that in what she says here of *Holofernes*, she declares rather the Praises which others bestowed upon him, than praises him herself. For as there were many Flatterers, that cried up the Merits of that General, so even among those who had submitted to him, there were some who were forward to flatter him, upon those excellent Qualities mentioned here, viz. the Prudence of his Conduct, his Policy, and Contrivance, and Depth of Stratagem; his Power, or, as the *Margin* has it, the Favour he was in with his Prince, his Skill in military Discipline, and the Art of War; the great Exploits he had performed, and his Humanity and Goodness to the Vanquished. If this is only Panegyric, it is not purely of her making; she is not answerable for the Justness of the Character, as she only mentions what others said of *Holofernes*.

Ver. 10. *Our Nation shall not be punished, neither can the Sword prevail against them, except they sin against their God.*] The Truth of this Observation the *Jews* experienced in every Stage of their State, from their first becoming a Nation, to their ceasing to be so, by the Captivity of the Twelve Tribes; their Obedience or Disobedience respectively ruined, or saved them. It was therefore *Balaam's* Policy, says *Philo*, to make the Daughters of *Moab* to sell the Use of their Bodies to the *Hebrews*, upon Condition that they would sacrifice unto Idols, as knowing that the Children of *Israel* were not otherwise to be subdued, than by their own Sinfulness, and Breach of God's Commandments, *εἰδὼς ἑλεγεῖν μὴν ὁδὸν αἰλώσεως παρανομίας*, See *Numb.* xxv. and ch. xxxi. 16. And the like Reflection holds true universally, that no divine Judgment overtakes a Nation, in any signal and exemplary Manner, but what is brought upon it by its own repeated Transgressions, and a confirmed Obstinacy in sinning.

Ver. 11. *And now that my Lord be not deceived and frustrate of his Purpose, even Death*



Death is now fallen upon them, and their Sin hath overtaken them, wherewith they will provoke their God to Anger, whensoever they shall do that which is not fit to be done.] The Sense of this, and the following Verses, as they stand in our Translation, is very obscure, occasioned by the great Confusion of the Tenses; nor do the Greek or Oriental Versions afford any Light or Assistance. That of Geneva makes it rather clearer, by putting the three following Verses in a Parenthesis. Junius's Exposition, founded on the Context, seems most natural, only allowing, what is far from being unreasonable, that Sin may then be said to lay hold of us, when first being conceived, it is entertained and encouraged, and as it were compleated in our Thoughts, before the actual Commission of it: On this Supposition the Drift of Judith's Speech is to the following Effect: "The Elders of Bethulia have judged it already allowable, and, in Case of Necessity, lawful, to eat, what at other Times is forbidden by the Law; for Form sake indeed they have sent Deputies to Jerusalem for a Dispensation from the Jewish Sanhedrim, which from their own Practice in a similar Case, they are assured of: But even now the Inhabitants of Bethulia are guilty, and will suffer as such, for their wicked Intention." Judith's Design, without Doubt, was to impose upon Holofernes, as is plain from ch. ix. 10, 13. and her Story was framed to agree with what Achior had before told him, that if the Hebrews had, or should sin against their God, he might easily overcome them: She now shews there was such as in their Hearts, and soon would be actually committed by them, as would stir up the Anger of their God, the Moment they should commit it, and the Execution waited only the Return of the Messengers with the License instantly expected, and they would then immediately be given up to Destruction, and even Jerusalem itself, and all Judaea, as the Sin would hereby become general, be a Prey and Spoil unto him. But, to give a shorter Answer to this Difficulty, may not Judith be supposed to speak here as of a Fact already done, to shew her Assurance of the Certainty of it, and to gain the greater Credit with Holofernes? Or by a Hebraism the Præterit be put for the Future, Instances of which are not unfrequent?

Ver. 16. God hath sent me to work things with thee, whereat all the Earth shall be astonished, and whosoever shall hear it.] This Address is so artful, as that the Words of it admit of a double Meaning: Judith inwardly meant her own Enterprize, but Holofernes, from her Speech, fondly concluded, that the God of the Hebrews was angry with the Jews, and had given them up to Destruction; and this he imagined, thro' Mistake, to be the Cause of Judith's quitting them.

Ver. 19. I will lead thee through the Midst of Judaea, until thou come before Jerusalem.] Holofernes flattered himself from the Intelli-

gence and Assurance given him by Judith, that he should go up thither himself in Triumph; but her reserved Meaning was, that his Head should be carried thither, and thro' all Judaea, in Triumph.

Ibid. And thou shalt drive them as Sheep.] This too is capable of a double Meaning; the secret Sense in Judith's Mind was, that he should be the Occasion, by the Surprise of his Death, of the Assyrians being driven in this Manner, when the Jews should pursue after them, destroy many of them, and spoil their Tents. What follows, viz. A Dog shall not open his Mouth at thee, is also equivocal, and may either mean, that none shall oppose, or make any Resistance to him, in his victorious March thro' Judaea, or that when he is dead, and there is no longer any Fear of him, he shall give no Disturbance, or Uneasiness to any. It is a proverbial Expression, and used in this Sense Exod. xi. 7. Josh. x. 21.

Ibid. For these Things were told me according to my Fore-knowledge, and they were declared unto me, and I am sent to tell thee.] This is scarcely intelligible, as our Version has it; for what Necessity of telling or declaring the Thing to her, if she herself had Fore-knowledge of it? Grotius thinks the true Reading of the Greek is, καὶ προγινώσκων σε, according to the Fore-knowledge of God. See ch. ix. 6. xii. 4. which is confirmed by the Vulg. hæc mihi dicta sunt per providentiam Dei. Whichever Reading we follow, she flatters manifestly Holofernes, in making him believe that God watched particularly over him for his Good and Preservation, by sending a Person to him of such great Penetration, and filled with the Spirit of Prophecy.

Ver. 22. God hath done well to send thee before the People, that Strength might be in our Hands, and Destruction upon them that lightly regard my Lord.] i. e. God hath dealt favourably and kindly with you, in sending thee hither, for thereby thou wilt save thy Life. See ch. x. 15. Thus Calmet, Dieu vous a favorisé de vous envoyer ainsi devant ceux de votre nation. The Vulg. has Benefecit Deus qui misit te ante populum, ut des illum tu in manibus nostris. Our Version follows the Greek, which is more explicit.

Ver. 23. And now thou art both beautiful in thy Countenance, and witty in thy Words; surely if thou do as thou hast spoken, thy God shall be my God.] Junius thinks that Holofernes swears here by her Beauty (Instances of which, used by Lovers, occur in Plautus, and other Writers) that if she, or as the Vulg. has it, "Her God brought that to pass which she had promised and engaged for, he himself would become a Jew, and adopt her God." It is not easy to think, says Calmet, that Holofernes spoke this seriously, and in good earnest, as his Conversion would prejudice his Fortune; or he must certainly be ignorant that the God of Israel allowed not any to worship strange Gods together with him. He meant only hereby to flatter and please



please *Judith*, to insinuate himself into her Affections, and to gain her Love. And observing *Judith* to be a Woman of strict Piety, and strongly attached to her Religion, he foresaw this would be the principal Difficulty in the Way of his Passion; he declares therefore that a Difference in Religion ought not to create in her any Distance or Estrangement to his Person, as he was ready to become a Jew, as soon as he saw the Accomplishment of what she had assured him of.

## CHAP. XII.

Ver. 1. *AND bade that they should prepare for her of his own Meats.*

Συντάξτε καλαγεύματα αὐτῇ ἀπὸ τῶν ὀψοπονημάτων αὐτοῦ. *Calmet*, from the Authority of the *Syriac*, which has, *Et jussit sterni ipsi, darioque ipsi de convivio suo*, &c. thinks the true Reading of the *Greek*, συντάξτε καλαγεύματα αὐτῇ, καὶ δένααι αὐτῇ ἀπὸ τῶν, &c. he ordered that a Bed or Couch should be prepared for her, and that she should sit or lie down, and his own Meat and Provisions should be given her.

Ver. 2. *And Judith said, I will not eat thereof.* It was the Custom of ancient Times (see *Grotius* on *Dan.* i. 8. *Casaub.* ad *Alben.* l. i. c. xi.) to consecrate all that they did eat or drink to their Gods, by putting part of it on the Altar, or casting it into the Fire; so that to eat of Meats and Drinks so consecrated, was in Effect to partake of things offered to Idols. Whereas, by the Laws of *Moses*, nothing was to be eaten or drank by the Children of *Israel*, but which had been offered to the Lord, either immediately in itself, or virtually in the First-Fruits, and Offerings, *Levit.* xvii. 3. xxiii. 14. *Deut.* xii. 21, 26. The *Jews*, therefore, as appears from the Examples of *Daniel*, and his Associates, at the Court of *Nabuchodonosor*, of *Tobit* at that of *Salmanassar*, ch. i. 11, 12. and of *Nehemiah* at that of *Artaxerxes*, who being Cup-bearer to that King, was dispensed with from drinking the Wine of the *Gentiles*; the *Jews*, I say, when they could not avoid conversing with the *Gentiles*, took great Care to abstain, not only from things really sacrificed to Idols, but from most things that came out of *Gentile* Hands, because there was some Presumption, that a Part of most Kinds, by way of First-Fruits, had been consecrated to Idols, the rest being by such First-Fruits deemed polluted, as dedicated to them. From the Places above cited it appears, that the *Jews* forbore all Meats and Drinks that came from the *Gentiles*, in like manner as the *Egyptians*, would not eat with the *Hebrews*, whom they looked upon as impure and profane, and esteemed it an Abomination so to do, *Gen.* xliii. 32. When the Enemies of the *Jews* aimed to vex and displease them, they compelled them to eat Swine's Flesh, and other forbidden Meats, and great was the Persecution of them by *Antiochus*, and other Heathen Rulers, especially in the Times of

the *Maccabees*. In like Manner *Julian* the Apostate, to be revenged upon the Christians at *Antioch*, made all the Food that was brought to Market, to be first dedicated at a Heathen Altar. *Theodoret*, l. i. ch. xiv.

*Ibid.* *Left there be an Offence.* The Word σκάνδαλον, in general, signifies a Stone or Block, or something in the Way, at which Men are apt to stumble and fall; and accordingly in the *Old Testament* it is taken for a Fall, and sometimes for Sin, the Lapse of the Soul, as it seems to be *Judg.* viii. 27. and so the Sense here may be, *Left by eating forbidden Meats I sin against God, and so be an Hindrance to what God had otherwise decreed to have brought to pass by my Means for the public Good.* Or 2dly, Offence, or Scandal, as it is rendered from the *Greek*, sometimes signifies a Snare; and so another Sense of this Place may be, that she would not eat with him, lest his Table should prove a Snare unto her, an Occasion of Falling, and an Inlet to Temptation. Or lastly, we may understand it of her giving Offence to others thereby, as the Word is used when applied to Eating, *1 Cor.* viii. 13. This determined the venerable and good *Eleazar*, not to eat even of his own lawful Meat and Provisions, because being brought to him secretly, he was apprehensive that many young Persons might think that *Eleazar*, being Four-score Years old and ten, was now gone to a strange Religion, and so his dissembling prove a Snare unto them, *2 Macc.* vi. 18—24.

Ver. 4. *As thy Soul liveth, my Lord, thine Handmaid shall not spend those things that I have, before the Lord work by mine Hand, the things that be hath determined.* *Mess.* of *Port-Royal* observe, that there is the less Reason to believe that *Judith* is guilty of Lying, as she occasionally confirms what she says by an Oath; sometimes swearing by God, and asseverating solemnly, that she was sent from, and commissioned by him; at other Times by the Life of *Nabuchodonosor*, and here by that of *Holofernes*, which, if made use of in Confirmation of any Falshood, is inconsistent with that Character of her, ch. viii. 8. *that she feared God greatly.* However this be, it is certain, that throughout almost her whole Discourse with this General, she converses dubiously, or in equivocal Terms, and particularly here, when she says, that the Lord will work by her Hands what he has determined; she speaks of her Design to cut off that General's Head, and *Holofernes* understands her of delivering the *Jews* into his Power.

Ver. 5. *Then the Servants of Holofernes brought her into the Tent, and she slept till Midnight, and she arose when it was towards the Morning Watch.* Ver. 6. *And sent to Holofernes, saying, Let my Lord now command that thine Handmaid may go forth unto Prayer.* According to the *Vulg.* *Judith* asks this Favour of going forth to Prayer at a Distance from the Camp, at her first Entrance into the Tent appointed her, which seems more



more probable than disturbing *Holofernes* unreasonably by such a Message towards the Morning-Watch. And indeed *Judith* had prepared *Holofernes* to grant this Favour, by telling him on the preceding Day, *thy Servant will go out by Night into the Valley, and pray unto God*, ch. xi. 17. *Judith* could as well have prayed within her Tent, and God could as effectually have heard her from the most secret and retired Part of it; but persisting out of Policy in her first Resolution, of going forth at a Distance from the Camp for that Purpose, she thought it an Instance of more Duty and Respect, to apply for Leave afresh. This Conduct of *Judith*, tho' very artful, was regular, and of a Piece, and left *Holofernes* no room to suspect her Fidelity and Integrity. For as it was necessary at first to take this Precaution, so was it likewise to manage the Liberty indulged her, of going forth for three Days, in such a Manner, as to create no Jealousy; that after having cut off *Holofernes's* Head, and accomplished the great Design she came upon, she might retire with more Ease, Safety, and Confidence, to *Bethulia* again, without any Stop, or Molestation. To retire apart for Prayer, that it may be performed with more Earnestness and Attention, and freer from the Notice and Hearing of the Rude and Profane, is certainly most laudable; but the true Reason of *Judith's* Procedure at this Time, seems rather to be founded on Artifice, than on any Obligation either from the Jewish Law, or Custom. By this Pretext she induced *Holofernes* to think, what was contrived for his Ruin, to be most advantageous to his great Designs, and, under a Notion of praying for Victory and Success in his Undertaking, she opened a Way to triumph more securely over the grand Adversary of her Country, and to facilitate her own safe Return.

Ver. 7. *And went out in the Night into the Valley of Bethulia, and washed herself in a Fountain of Water by the Camp; and when she came out, she besought the Lord God of Israel, to direct her Way, to the raising up of the Children of her People.* One is astonished to see here a Woman of such Beauty go out in the Night-time, accompanied only with her Waiting-Woman, and pass thro' the Camp of the *Assyrians*, without any Insult, or Violence offered to her. But it is most probable that the Dread of *Holofernes's* Resentment, who was captivated with her Person, and regarded her as one who would soon crown his warmest Wishes, hindered the Soldiers from attempting any Rudeness, or Assault. There is no Necessity to suppose, with the *Romish* Expositors, that either an Angel conducted her at first from *Bethulia*, or secured her each Night from Danger, when she went out into the Valley. The Occasion of her going was to wash herself in a Fountain, whether that at the Foot of the Mountain, whose Aqueduct, according to the *Vulg.* *Holofernes* cut off from all Communication with the City, is not material to determine;

it may be more proper to observe, that Fountain Water seems particularly enjoined by the Law, *Levit. xv. 13.* Where the *Chaldee* Interpreter has, *in aquis fontis*. *Spencer* adds this further Reason, *Aqua fontana purior, & acrioris ad purgandum virtutis, adeoque lustrationi magis apta crederetur*. De Purific. p. 774. Purification, or Washing the Hands or Body before Prayers, or Sacrifices offered to the Deity, was a very ancient religious Ceremony. The *Egyptians*, *Greeks*, *Romans*, all used these Washings before their Devotions; and from the Heathens probably this Custom was derived to the *Jews*, *Spenc. ibid.* p. 788. *Philo* πειλὶ Φιλανθεωμ. *Eurip. Alcest.* § 157. *Hom. Il. 2. Ov. Fast. l. v. Virg. Æn. ix.* Thus ch. xvi. 18. of this History, we read, that, as soon as the People were purified, they offered their Burnt-offerings; and to this Custom the *Psalmist* alludes, *Pf. xxvi. 6.* as the Apostle also is thought to do, *1 Tim. ii. 8.* *I will therefore that Men pray every where, lifting up holy Hands, sicut x̄̄as, puras manus.* 'Tis certain that the *Jews* even to this Day, wash their Hands before they enter the Synagogue to pray. *Leo Moden. de Jud. Rit.* and from *Mark vii. 2, 3, 4.* it appears, that when they returned from Market, or other public Place, they used with great Care and Exactness this Ceremony, to purify themselves from any Defilement, which a Converse with Strangers, or the Touch of any Thing that was thought impure, according to the Law, might occasion. And so *Judith* being all Day in the Camp of the *Assyrians*, probably took the Opportunity of the Night to wash herself, that she might purge or purify herself from any Defilement or Uncleaness which she might have contracted from conversing with *Gentiles*, among whom she was.

Ver. 9. *So she came in clean, and remained in the Tent, until she did eat her Meat at Evening.* It seems from this Place, as if *Judith*, to fervent Prayer for the happy Success of her Enterprize, added likewise strict Fasting, to render herself more worthy to effect the Deliverance of her People: For being an *Israelite* indeed, serving the God of Heaven in Spirit, Day and Night, ch. xi. 17. she rightly judged it necessary, to purify her Heart before God of all that might displease him, as well as to use the outward Ceremony of Washing. And as thereby she returned pure, so she resolved to continue so both in Body and Spirit, passing the whole Day in severe Fasting until the Evening before she took any Refreshment; according to the Custom of the more religious *Jews*, who used to fast not only till Evening, but even till the Stars began to appear. And nothing but Prayer, added to such a severe Discipline, say *Mess. of Port-Royal*, could have kept one so beautiful, chaste, and virtuous, in the Midst of a Camp of rude Barbarians; or enabled an Instrument so feeble, to execute a Work of such vast Danger and Importance. *St. Ambrose* has the same Remark, *Non bibebat famina*



mina Judith, jejunans omnibus diebus viduitatis sue. His armis munita processit, & omnem Assyriorum circumvenit exercitum. Sobrii vigore consilii abstulit Holofernis caput, servavit pudicitiam, victoriam reportavit. Hæc enim succineta jejunio, in castris prætendebat alienis: ille vino sepultus jacebat, ut ictum vulneris sentire non posset. Itaque unius mulieris jejunium innumeros stravit exercitus Assyriorum. De Jejunio.

Ver. 10. And called none of the Officers unto the Banquet.] i. e. That he might be more at Liberty, and have fewer Witnesses of his Intemperance, and Lasciviousness. Most of the Copies have, εἰς τὴν χοῆσιν, but the Alex. and the Complute, which last our Translators generally follow, have, εἰς τὴν κλῆσιν. Thus in the Third Book of Maccab. κλητοί, are Guests invited to a Feast, to which is opposed ἀκλητοί, in Homer, and invocati in Plautus. In the Glossaries we have, κλητωρ, and δειπνοκλητωρ, invitor. And so Matth. xxiii. 3. καλῶσαι τὸς κεκλημένους, is to be understood, and is an Expression like that here, ἐκάλεισεν εἰς τὴν κλῆσιν.

Ver. 11. Bagoas, the Eunuch, who had Charge over all that he had.] Bagoas is not a proper, but a common Name for an Eunuch, at least for the Chief of them, for so the principal ones were called among the Persians and Babylonians, according to Pliny, l. xiii. 4. Q. Curtius calls Alexander's Eunuch Bagoas, l. x. Herod also had one called by the same Name, Joseph. Antiq. l. xvii. 3. See Sulpit. Sever. Sac. Hist. l. iii. in Not. We find Eunuchs in Vogue among the Assyrians, Babylonians, Medes, and Persians, and all the Eastern Princes. They were anciently employed in the most momentous Affairs, all Places of the greatest Trust being filled by such. The Term Eunuch, therefore, does not always signify a real one, but often an Officer at Court, and near the King's Person. In the Book of Esther, i. 10. vi. 2. they are called Chamberlains, that served in the Presence of the King; such as was Potiphar to the King of Egypt, as many have supposed. To them the Persian Kings, not only committed the Guard of their own Persons, Xenoph. Cyrop. l. vii. But likewise the Education of their Children; it being a Custom among them to put the Heir apparent to the Crown, as soon as he was born, into the Hands of Eunuchs, under whose Tuition he remained till he attained the Seventh Year of his Age, Plato in Alcib. Formerly they were entrusted likewise with the Care of some favourite Women, and to watch over their Conduct. Thus Ovid,

Quem penes est dominam servandi cura Bagoæ.

Amor. l. ii.

as in later Times they have been employed in Seraglios. From the Words, πᾶσαν τὴν γυναῖκα τὴν Ἑβραίων, ἥ ἐστὶ παρὰ σοί, it seems probable that Bagoas had the Care of Judith, and that she lodged with him, or in his Tent.

Ver. 12. For it will be Shame for our Person, if we shall let such a Woman go, not having had her Company: for if we draw her not unto us, she will laugh us to scorn.] These Words of Holofernes are capable of a double Meaning, and contain either a harmless Invitation to the Banquet, and innocent Freedom of Discourse, or in a bad Sense they may imply an Intention in Holofernes to abuse and debauch her, in which Sense ἐμύλειν is often taken by Lucian, Aristotle, and other Writers. See particularly Hist. of Susanna, § 54. and 58. The Syriac and Geneva Versions understand it in the former Sense; the Vulg. and Sulpitius Severus, Sac. Hist. l. iii. in the latter; which the Conclusion of the Verse, and the Context, see § 16. render most probable, and is better adapted to the dissolute Character of the Person spoken of, to say nothing of the Profession. But what a mean and detestable Opinion does it give us of Holofernes's Honour, and of his loose and degenerate manner of acting, to hear him declare, that it will be a Reflection and Disgrace to him, not to have ruined a Woman's Virtue! As if it was a commendable Triumph, or added to the Laurels of a General, to glory in the Spoils of Beauty, or signalize himself by debauching Innocence. And how degenerate must those, or any, Times be when Rapes are accounted Gallantry, and brutal Lust an Accomplishment! As Virtue wears not the Attire of a Harlot, so neither was Judith like any of his Assyrian Prostitutes; he needed not have been afraid, if he did not draw her, i. e. as the Geneva Version has it, allure her to him, that she would have ridiculed him for his Backwardness, or reproached him for coming away undefiled; for as she would not permit indecent Freedoms, so neither would she take them, nor act beneath the unblameable Character she had maintained, by any criminal Levity of Conversation.

Ver. 13. Then Bagoas said, Let not this fair Damsel fear to come to my Lord, and to be honoured in his Presence, and drink Wine, and be merry with us, and be made this Day as one of the Daughters of the Assyrians, which serve in the House of Nabuchodonosor.] The infamous Pander but too well understood his Master's Inclination; he therefore invites her freely to drink Wine, the great Incentive to Lust. The Persians were much more free and dissolute at their Entertainments, than the other Nations of the East, who allowed not their Women to appear at their Banquets, nor to dine with them in public: They generally eat by themselves apart, and did not affect to be introduced on such Occasions. One sees in the Book of Esther how backward Queen Vashti was to attend the royal Summons, with what a Fierceness of Spirit she received the Message, and absolutely refused to go into the Apartment, where Abasuerus was dining with his Nobles, ch. i. 12. In the History of the Hebrews, and that of the Egyptians, we read of no Women at their public Entertainments, nor among the ancient

Greeks.



Greeks; but the *Persians* took much greater Liberties, had Women promiscuously among their Guests, and were very indiscreet, according to many Writers, in their Behaviour and Conduct towards them, *Herod.* l. v. c. xviii. *Justin.* l. vii. Even lewd and infamous women sometimes attended to sing and dance before them, and were afterwards employed in Scenes of Wickedness. It is true that the Manners of the *Persians* and *Affyrians* were not altogether alike; but they greatly resembled one another, says *Calmet*, and the Liberties taken with Women by the one, were to be found and paralleled in the other. One need only read the Life of *Sardanapalus* to be convinced of the Dissoluteness of their Kings, nor have a stronger Proof to what abandoned and vile Purposes the Daughters of *Affyria*, who served in the House of *Nabuchodonosor*, were employed, than the Proposal made to *Judith* by this intriguing Eunuch.

Ver. 14. *Then said Judith unto him, Who am I, that I should gainsay my Lord? Surely whatsoever pleaseth him, I will do speedily.* It hath been objected against this History, that the Author of it makes his Heroine act and talk in a Manner not so well comporting with that Sense of Virtue and Religion, which she professes to have, ch. xi. 17. for she seems, from this Verse, as a Woman devoid of Modesty, who endeavoured to ensnare *Holofernes* in a sinful Amour, and answered to the Declaration of a criminal Passion, with too little Modesty and Reserve. To this it is answered, by its Advocates, in Favour of her Conduct, that her Answer to the Eunuch's Suggestions she might design for no more than a common Compliment, which the Situation of her Affairs at that Time obliged her to make. She might perceive, very likely, the bad Design which the *Affyrian* General had upon her; but she did not think herself concerned to discover that she perceived it. She pretended, in some measure, to be ignorant of it; and to pretend an Ignorance in what is proposed, when the thing is faulty, and will not bear an Examination, is a Point of Modesty, as well as Prudence; as where it will admit of a double Construction, there to take it in the better Sense, is even reputed an Act of Candor and good Breeding. *Let not this fair Damsel fear*, says the old Pander, *to come to my Lord, to be honoured in his Sight, and to be as one of the Daughters of Affyria, who serve in the Court of Nabuchodonosor.* How the Daughters of *Affyria*, who served in this Capacity, were used, *Judith* very probably had been informed; but since the Eunuch put it upon the Foot of a great Favour and Dignation done to her, she could do no less than return him a Compliment. But then we all know that the Offers of Service, which upon every Occasion we are so apt to make to one another, and those Expressions of Submission and Respect, which so commonly pass among us, are not to be taken in a literal Sense, because they always imply a tacit Condition. And there-

fore the Answer, which the Historian puts in *Judith's* Mouth, *Surely whatsoever pleaseth him, I will do speedily*, will fairly admit of this Construction: "Whatever *Holofernes* shall desire of me, so far as is consistent with my Duty, Honour, and Religion, I will not fail to do." See *Calmet in loc.* and *Stackhouse's History of the Bible*, vol. i. There is also a further Solution to be given of this seeming Forwardness of *Judith*, that by *her Lord* she might mean the Lord God, whom she had all along endeavoured to please by her Prayers, Fastings, and special Acts of Faith; and might with good Reason say to the Eunuch, who was sent to her from *Holofernes*, "Whatsoever pleaseth him I will do, and it shall be my Joy unto the Day of my Death;" and her Meaning might only be, "I am willing to do what that good and acceptable and perfect Will of God requires of me, and it shall be the Pleasure of my Life to fulfil it; as the Accomplishment of it, I know, will be my Happiness in this Life, and be the Means of Blessedness in the other." The Eunuch, indeed, who spoke to *Judith* in this Manner, regarded his Master, as the Person whom she called *her Lord*, and being blinded with this Persuasion, and interpreting *Judith's* Answer by the Passion of *Holofernes*, he contributed to make that General fall into the Snare, which was his Overthrow, without thinking of any evil Consequence.

Ver. 15. *And her Maid laid soft Skins on the Ground for her, over against Holofernes, that she might sit and eat upon them.* Εἰς τὸ ἐσθίειν καλὰ κλινόμενῃ ἐπ' αὐτῶν. It appears from hence, that *Judith* did not eat at the same Table with *Holofernes*, but apart by herself, and on her own Meats; not sitting, as our Version has it, but recumbent, καλὰ κλινόμενῃ, on soft Skins spread on the Ground, a Custom among the Ancients, which *Homer* mentions, *Il.* i. and *Strabo*, l. iii. The Translator of the LXX, in our *Polyglot*, has, *ut manducaret accumbens super eas, & ingressa recubuit Judith.* *Junius* renders in like Manner. The *Jews* ancient Posture at Table was sitting. *Saul*, when he was King, sat upon his Seat by the Wall, 1 *Sam.* xx. 24. And they continued the Posture of sitting, for the most Part, in the Reign of *Solomon*, *Prov.* xxiii. 1. At the Feast of *Abasuerus*, the Princes lay on magnificent Beds, *Esther* i. as they did also at the Banquet *Esther* made for the King and *Haman*, ch. vii. which though it relates only to the *Persians*, yet shews the Antiquity of this Custom of lying at Meals, in the *East*: And after the *Jews* had Acquaintance and Dealings with the *Babylonians*, *Persians*, and *Syrians*, little or no Mention is made of sitting at Meals. The Posture of lying at them sprang first from Luxury and Effeminacy, and as such it is mentioned by the Prophets, *Amos* vi. 4, 7. *Ezek.* xxiii. 41. But after the Captivity it became more general. In the Gospel Times, Beds to lie on at their Meals were common; our Saviour was on one of them,



them, when *Mary Magdalen* anointed his Feet, and also when he ate the last Supper with his Disciples.

Ver. 18. *I will drink now, my Lord, because my Life is magnified in me this Day, more than all the Days since I was born.* The Glory of which *Judith* speaks, was that springing from the Hopes of Victory, which she entertained over *Holofernes*, the Person who aimed to triumph over her Chastity; a Conquest, not of her Eyes, but the Effect of her Courage; a Satisfaction not arising from Love, but Hatred. For a Woman so religious, so attached to the Love of her Country, and of the Sanctuary in particular, was, we may be assured, averse to the Addresses of this Alien and Barbarian, and very far from regarding it as an Honour to serve and please him, whose Design was, as she mentions in her Prayer, to defile the Sanctuary, and to pollute the Tabernacle, where the great and glorious Name resided, and to cast down the Horn of the Altar, ch. ix. 8. She could never have any Thoughts, or Inclination to respect and honour one so wicked, whom with such Earnestness she implored God to give her Grace to despise, and Strength to subdue. As she had anticipated Victory in her Mind, and reflected on it as a glorious Instance of the Power of God, that the wicked and proud *Assyrian* should fall merely by the Hand of a Woman, she had Reason to regard that Day, when she should cut off the Head of the grand Adversary of her Country, as the most glorious in her whole Life.

Ver. 20. *And Holofernes took great Delight in her, and drank much more Wine than he had drank at any Time in one Day since he was born.* I cannot better illustrate this than by *St. Ambrose's* Reflection upon it: *Temperantia virtus est femininum. Inebriatus vino viris, & somno sepultus, abstulit vidua gladium, exeruit manum, bellatoris abscondit caput, per medias hostium acies intemerata processit. Advertitis igitur quantum mulieribus nocere possit ebrietas, quando viros vina sic solvunt, ut vincantur a feminis? Esto igitur vidua temperans; casta primum a vino, ut casta possit esse ab adultero. Nequaquam te ille tentabit, si vina non tentent. Nam si Judith bibisset, dormisset cum adultero. Sed quia non bibit haud difficile ebrios exercitus unius sobrietas & vincere potuit, & eludere. De Viduis.*

#### CHAP. XIII.

Ver. 1. **N**OW when the Evening was come, his Servants made Haste to depart, and *Bagoas* shut his Tent without. Ver. 2. *And Judith was left alone in the Tent, and Holofernes lying along upon his Bed: for he was filled with Wine.* Coverdale's Rendering here seems preferable, as it sets this Interview in a much stronger Light. Now when it was late in the Night, his Servants made haste every Man to his Lodging, and *Bagoas* shut the Chamber Door, and went by

Way, for they were all overladen with Wine: So was *Judith* alone in the Chamber. As for *Holofernes* he lay upon the Bed all drunken, and of very drunkenness fell a slepe. Here are many Particulars very observable, 1. That the Tents of the great Generals in the East were very spacious, having several Apartments, and for their Grandeur and Magnificence not unlike Palaces. 2. It is probable that Lamps were burning all Night in *Holofernes's* Chamber, without which *Judith* could not have seen to have managed, and conducted her Enterprize. 3. When it is here said that *Bagoas* shut the Doors of his Tent without, it must be understood with this Reserve, that *Judith* had Liberty to go out; for, to prevent Suspicion, she had the Cunning and Precaution to acquaint *Bagoas* beforehand, with her Intention of going forth that very Night, as on the preceding ones. 4. *Judith's* Servant is ordered to wait without, not at the Door of *Holofernes's* Tent, as some Expositors would have it, that she might be ready at Call, and to give any Notice or Assistance that was necessary, but at that of her own Bed-chamber, which carried less Suspicion with it. Nor does it appear that she had acquainted her Waiting-woman with the great Design in Hand; it seems more probable, from her not communicating it to the Elders of *Berbulia*, when she set out on this Enterprize, that she kept it as an impenetrable Secret, wholly in her own Breast, for Fear of any Discovery, or Miscarriage. The foregoing Circumstances suggest this useful Reflection, That the Wisdom of God often makes even the Vices and Irregularities of Men to serve, in a surprizing Manner, to the Execution of his own great Purposes. *Judith* would never have been able to have cut off *Holofernes's* Head, if she had not been alone with him in his Tent, and even when alone, could not have accomplished so desperate a Design, if an Excess of Wine had not quite stupified and laid asleep *Holofernes*, and his Officers, so as not to be capable of mistrusting any thing, much less to hinder what she was about to effect. One sees also by the Event, how brutal Lust, and pure Love were differently rewarded: *Judith*, enflamed with the Love of her Country, and its afflicted People, is transported beyond herself at the Thoughts she had conceived of their Deliverance, and with great Presence of Mind, and Undauntedness of Spirit, happily accomplishes it. *Holofernes*, on the other hand, whose Intentions were base and dishonourable, intoxicated with Wine, falls a Sacrifice to his Lusts, a Victim to that Heroine whom he meant to abuse.

Ver. 4. *Then Judith, standing by his Bed, said in her Heart, O Lord God of all Power, look at this present upon the Works of mine Hands, for the Exaltation of Jerusalem.* *Judith* shews by this Prayer, directed to the God of all Power, that it was not upon herself, or her own Management or Force that she depended for Success, but on the all-powerful



powerful Hand of God, from whom she expected that Assistance, which she stood so much in Need of at this Time. Her Prayer seems conceived in this, or the like Manner: "I know and Experience, O Lord, that in myself I am nothing but Weakness, and incapable to execute what I have undertaken; I therefore now in thy Presence disclaim all Pretence to the Merit, or Glory of an Action, which is far above me to achieve; but I believe at the same Time, and have a firm Faith and Assurance, that what I cannot do by myself, thou wilt do in, and by me, and make thy Power the more known and conspicuous, as the Instrument thou art pleased to employ is proportionably weak and insufficient." *Judith* prayed thus, it is said, in her Heart, not that she had any Fear or Apprehension of being overheard by a vocal Prayer, as *Holofernes* was so insensible and stupified by his excessive Debauch; but the Expression denotes, that God, being a Spirit, hears not the articulate Sound of the Voice, tho' it be said figuratively to enter into his Ears, but has a particular Regard to the Language and Motion of the Heart,

Ver. 6. *Then she came to the Pillar of the Bed, which was at Holofernes's Head, and took down his Fauchion from thence.* [Προσελθὼσα τῷ κανόνι τῆς κλίνης . . . καθεῖλε τὴν ἀκινάκην αὐτοῦ ἀπ' αὐτοῦ.] It is very probable that τὸ κίονι, is the true Reading here, as κίον properly signifies a Pillar. The *Acinaces* was a short Persian Dagger, according to *Curtius*, *Herodotus*, l. vii. *Horace*, *Carm.* l. i. manageable by a Woman's Hand: Hence likewise some have concluded *Holofernes* to have been a Persian. It may be asked, whether *Judith* had any Instrument of Death with her, as Poison, or Dagger, &c. for it may seem probable, as she went with a settled Resolution to kill *Holofernes*, she was prepared accordingly. To this it may be sufficient to answer, that she depended upon finding something for her Purpose in the Assyrian General's Tent, a Magazine usually of warlike Weapons: Or she assured herself, that his own Sword at least would be ready at hand to complete her Vengeance; in like Manner as *David*, when, unarmed in Comparison, he went forth to engage the Champion of the *Philistines*, made use of the uncircumcised Giant's own Sword, to cut off his Head: Or like *Jael*, she might hope to dispatch him, perhaps, with a Nail of the Tent; and that, as *Sisera's*, she might smite off his Head, when she had pierced, and stricken through his Temples, *Judg.* v. 26.

Ver. 7. *And approached to his Bed, and took hold of the Hair of his Head, and said, Strengthen me, O Lord God of Israel, this Day.* Ver. 8. *And she smote twice upon his Neck with all her Might, and she took away his Head from him.* Excess of Wine had made *Holofernes* not only sleepy and drowsy, but even insensible; by his not waking or stirring during the whole Action, he seems to have lost all Sense, even that of Feeling,

which gave *Judith* Time, who was not able to take off his Head at one Blow, to strike a second, and to complete what she had begun. One shall hardly hear or read of an Instance, where such a rough and violent Assault passed seemingly unfelt and unperceived. When *Sisera* was smote by *Jael*, the Text says, *At her Feet he bowed, he fell, he lay down*, which seems to import, that at the first Stroke he started and lifted up his Body (his Sleep being only occasioned by Fatigue and Weariness) and shewed some Sign of Life and Motion, but being very much stunned, he fell down again, and by a second Stroke on so sensible Part (for the very Manner of the Expression denotes a Repetition of the Blow) he fell down dead. *Holofernes's* Death was not quite so immediate, nor from the Nature of the Part wounded could the dire Business be so quickly dispatched; but, during the whole bloody Process of his Decollation, no Struggle appears, no Groan is uttered; he lay, as it were, in a continued Coma, or rather slept, as it really proved, the Sleep of Death. Herein they both agree, that they fell ingloriously by the Hand of a Woman, and by a like Instance of Treachery. When *Polypheus* lay in the like Circumstances, inebriated and in a deep Sleep with the copious Draughts of *Ulysses's* generous Wine, the wise Chief, to whom some God, says *Homer*, imparted Courage for the Design, took the Advantage of his Drowsiness and Stupidity, and contrived cunningly the putting out his Eye, which alone occasioned such Anguish in him, that, as the same Poet says,

Σμερδαλίῳ δὲ μέγ' ἄμωσ', πρὸ δ' Ἰάλε πέτρῃ,  
Odyss. ix.

It is observable, that *Virgil*, mentioning the same Story of the Cyclops, adds, that the Persons who were engaged in the Design first prayed to the Gods to assist them in the Attempt

*Nam simul expletus dapibus, vinoque sepultus,  
Cervicem inflexam posuit, nos magna precati  
Numina, sortisque vices, una undique circum  
Fundimus, a telo lumen terebramus acuto.*

The History of *Judith* is so far similar, that she had her Revenge likewise upon a Monster of Cruelty, and prayed to God to strengthen her Hand for the Execution of her Design. With respect to the Act itself, the Advocates of this History justify it from the Command of God, *Deut.* xiii. 6. and following Verses. In Pursuance of this Law, *Judith*, or any other Inhabitant of *Bethulia*, inspired with the like Courage and Magnanimity, might lawfully, they maintain, endeavour to counterplot the Designs of any, even with the Death of the Person, who in an hostile Manner should come not only to invade their civil Rights and Liberties, but to extirpate their Religion, and compel them by Force of Arms, to receive an idolatrous Form of Worship, which neither they nor their Fathers knew.

Ver. 9.



Ver. 9. *And tumbled his Body down from the Bed.*] One cannot well guess at the Reason which induced *Judith* to tumble the dead Body from the Bed upon the Ground, unless it was that so frightful a Spectacle might strike the greater Terror and Consternation in those that should behold it, and that the Fright and Dejection of Spirit, communicated from one to another upon the Occasion, might at Length affect the *Assyrian* Army in general for the Loss of their Chief, as in Reality it did some Time after, and occasion their sudden Flight, and a successful Pursuit after them.

*Ibid.* *And pulled down the Canopy from the Pillars.*] The Ancient, especially in warm Countries, made the Curtains of their Beds of a very fine Net-Work, which coming round the whole Bed, shut them in such a Manner as to have the Benefit of the Air without the Trouble of Flies, which could not get through them. Such seems to have been round the Bed of *Holofernes*, called here *κνώπεον*, and by the *Vulg.* *Canopeum*, which was a sort of Veil made in the Form of a fine Net, which left a Passage for the Light, and at the same Time kept out the Flies. The *Egyptians* used this kind of Net Work all round their Beds, to guard against the Inconvenience of certain Flies, or Gnats, which are called *κνώπες*. The Ponds and Marshes, with which *Egypt* abounded, bred a great Number of these Insects. They who translated the History of *Judith* into *Greek*, probably *Alexandrian Jews*, seem to speak after their Country Manner, when they say here, that *Judith* pulled down the *Canopeum* of *Holofernes's* Bed after she had cut off his Head.

Ver. 11. *Then said Judith afar off to the Watchmen at the Gate, Open, Open now the Gate: God, even our God is with us, to shew his Power yet in Jerusalem, and his Forces against the Enemy.*] *Καὶ κέαρὸς κατὰ τῶν ἐχθρῶν*, which would be better rendered, "And his Force against the Enemy, or his Enemies," as the *Geneva* Version has it. *Judith*, exulting with Joy for the happy Success of her Enterprize, is impatient till the Watchmen open the Gates for her Admittance, that she may communicate the important News to the Elders of the City, and the distressed Inhabitants. It is observable, that she calls to them afar off, that she redoubles her Call, and dwells upon the Name of her great and mighty Deliverer. If we should suppose *Judith*, soon after her Entrance, to hasten into the Sanctuary of the Lord, there to return her devout Thanks in Form, it would be no improbable Supposition, nor disagreeable to her Character, ch. viii. 8. *that she feared God greatly.* She might then say, in a higher and more exalted Sense, *Open me the Gates of Righteousness, that I may go into them, and give Thanks unto the Lord. I will thank thee, for thou hast heard me, and art become my Salvation. This is the Lord's Doing, and it is marvellous in our Eyes.* Pl. cxviii. 19, 21, 23.

Ver. 14. *Then she said to them with a loud Voice, Praise, Praise God, Praise God, for he hath not taken away his Mercy from the House of Israel.*] The *Jews*, upon the Receipt of any signal Deliverance, used to repeat the cxlvii<sup>th</sup> Psalm: *Judith*, probably, begins this, the Words of which are very applicable to the Occasion, particularly v. 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14.

Ver. 15. *The Lord hath smitten him by the Hand of a Woman.*] As *Judith* perceived within herself a sort of inspired Courage upon the Occasion, less than which would not have conducted her thro' such a desperate and hazardous Undertaking, she represents the Victory gained over *Holofernes* as the Act of God, and accordingly calls upon the Elders of the City, in the most earnest and importunate Manner, to praise God for his Mercy, v. 14. One cannot but observe here, the great Humility of *Judith*; she doth not say, "I have smitten him," to take the Honour of such an Enterprize to herself solely, but attributes all the Success of the Action to God, who had wrought so great Salvation for *Israel*, by her Hand. Not unlike that devout and humble Acknowledgment of St. Paul, *Yet not I, but the Grace of God that was with me*, 1 Cor. xv. 10. St. Ambrose, among other Instances of the Merit of this Heroine, mentions particularly her strong Confidence in God, and that it was the highest Commendation of her Virtue, to be favoured with the Assistance of God, and to experience his loving Kindness and Protection, *Quanta honestatis auctoritas, ut Deum adiutorum præsumeret, quanta gratia ut inveniret?* De Offic. l. iii.

Ver. 16. *As the Lord liveth that hath kept me in my Way that I went, my Countenance hath deceived him to his Destruction, and yet hath he not committed Sin with me, to defile and shame me.*] i. e. Tho' he was captivated with my Person, and intended the Ruin of my Virtue, yet hath he not effected his vile Purpose; I am free from the Sin of Impurity and Uncleaness. But as it might seem very difficult, and almost impossible, that a single defenceless Woman should keep her Chastity, unattacked and inviolate, in the Midst of an Army of lawless Barbarians, and even alone, under the Covert of Night, in the Tent of so powerful a Ravisher, she calls upon God to attest her spotless Innocence, *that* God, who had accompanied her in the Way, and brought her back in Triumph and Safety. *Primus triumphus*, says St. Ambrose, *ejus fuit quod integrum pudorem de tabernaculo hostis revexit; secundus, quod femina de vino reportavit victoriam. Non expavit mortis periculum, sed nec pudoris, quod est gravius bonis feminis. Non unius ictum carnificis, sed nec totius exercitus tela trepidavit. Stetit inter cuneos Bellatorum femina, inter victricia arma secuta mortis. Quantum ad molem spectat periculi, moritura processit, quantum ad fidem, dimicatura.* De Offic. l. iii. c. xiii. i. e. Her first Triumph was, that she preserved her Chastity unspotted, even in the Tent of the Enemy;

the



the second, that she prevailed over the Temptation and Power of Wine. She feared not the Loss of Life, nor even that of her Modesty, which is of more Value in the Esteem of grave and discreet Women. So far was she from being afraid of Mischief from one Ruffian, that she regarded not the Power of his whole Army: One single Woman stood regardless of Fear amidst the crouded Ranks of Soldiers flushed with Victory. If we consider the Greatness of the Danger, she went in Peril of her Life; if her Faith and Confidence in God, she was resolute and determined, at the Expence of it, to contend for Victory.

Ver. 19. *For this thy Confidence shall not depart from the Heart of Men, which remember the Power of God for ever.* i. e. As long as Mention shall be made of God's Omnipotence, so long, and often, shall they instance in that signal Act, the Deliverance of his People by one single Woman, effected thro' the mighty Prevalence of her Faith. Or thus, *Judith's* religious Confidence, shall in future Times be honourably mentioned, as an Instance, how God, for the bringing about his secret Purpose, avails himself of the weakest Instrument, which is strong in Faith.

Ver. 20. *And God turn these Things to thee for a perpetual Praise, to visit thee in good Things, because thou hast not spared thy Life for the Affliction of our Nation, but hast revenged our Ruin, walking a strait Way before our God.* The *Vulg.* has, *sed subvenisti ruinæ ante conspectum Dei nostri.* What *Ozias* here says to *Judith*, gives one a high Idea of her who wrought this Deliverance at this Time. It seems, say *Mess. of Port-Royal*, commenting on this Rendering, as if God was angry with his People, and was upon the Point of delivering them up to the Fury of the *Assyrians*, when *Judith*, urged by a secret Impulse, and herein not unlike *Moses*, presents herself before his Throne, and interposes between him and the People of *Israel*, to disarm his Fury, and hinder the Ruin of her Nation. She interposes with him in their Behalf, not by urging any Merit of theirs, but by her Watchings, Fastings, and other religious Austerities, by her continual Prayer, holy Confidence, and Faith, and above all, her profound Humility, which rendered her a worthy Advocate to apply to, and prevail with God to take Pity on his People. *St. Ambrose* sets the Reasons in a strong Light, which induced *Judith* to engage in an Enterprize so hazardous; *Honestatis fuit, prohibere ne populus Dei prophanis se dederet, ne ritus patrios & sacramenta proderet, ne sacras virgines, viduas graves, pudicas matronas barbaricæ subjeceret impuritati; ne obsidionem deditione solveret. Honestatis fuit, se malle pro omnibus periclitari, ut omnes eximeret periculo,* l. iii. *Offic.*

## CHAP. XIV.

Ver. 1. **H**EAR me now, my Brethren, and take this Head, and hang it

upon the highest Place of your Walls.] This was done to discourage and cast a Dread upon the *Assyrians* from so ghastly a Sight. *Judas Maccabeus* did the like by *Nicanor's* Head; he hung it upon the Tower, an evident and manifest Sign, says the Text, unto all, of the Help of the Lord, 2 *Maccab.* xv. 35. *Livy* mentions, that, when *Asdrubal* was slain, his Head was flung into his Brother *Hannibal's* Tent, that the Sight of it might cast a Damp upon that General, and his Soldiers. In like Manner when the *Philistines* saw the Head of their Champion *Goliath* in *David's* Hand, they fled, and were overtaken with a great Slaughter, 1 *Sam.* xvii. 51.

Ver. 2. *And so soon as the Morning shall appear, and the Sun shall come forth upon the Earth, take you every one his Weapons, and go forth every valiant Man out of the City, as though you would go down toward the Watch of the Assyrians, but go not down.* Ver. 3. *Then shall they take their Armour, and shall go into their Camp, and raise up the Captains of the Army of Assur, and they shall run to the Tent of Holofernes, but shall not find him: then Fear shall fall upon them, and they shall flee before your Face.* This was a well-concerted Scheme, and a politic Contrivance: She advises not, that the *Hebrews* should go down, and fall on a sudden on the *Assyrians*, who would be sure to repulse and overcome them, being much stronger, and far superior in Number: But her Counsel is, not to come in Reality to Blows, but only to make a Feint of so doing, and by a false Attack, to alarm and put their Army in Motion, and oblige them to run to *Holofernes's* Tent to receive his Orders, who, upon seeing their General lie dead, and his mangled Carcase upon the Ground, would be flung into a Panic and Confusion, and before they should have Time, or be able to recover themselves from the Consternation, the *Israelites* with all their Force should attack them, and they would flee with great Precipitation and Disorder. *St. Ambrose* admires *Judith* for this Stratagem, and extols her Reach of Thought above her Magnanimity, *nec dexteræ tantum hoc opus, sed majora trophæa sapientiæ. Nam manu solum Holofernem vicit, consilio autem omnem hostium vicit exercitum. Suspenso enim Holofernis capite, quod virorum non potuit excogitari consilio, suorum erexit animos, hostium fregit, suas pudore excitans, hostes quoque terrore percellens, eoque cæsi sunt & fugati.* l. vi. *De Viduis*, i. e. The Victory which *Judith* gained was not so much an Instance of her Courage, as of her Wisdom. By her Hand she triumphed over *Holofernes's* only, but by her Counsel over the whole Army of the *Assyrians*, by hanging up *Holofernes's* Head, an Expedient, which not even the Elders of the City thought of, she as much exalted the Spirits of the Besieged, as she depressed those of the Enemy. By the Sight of this Trophy, she shamed her own People into Courage, as she cast a Dread and Horror upon the Besiegers, by so shocking a Spectacle. And her



Stratagem had the desired Effect, for through the Power of it they fled, and were cut to Pieces.

Ver. 5. *But before you do these things, call me Achior the Ammonite, that he may see and know him, that despised the House of Israel, and that sent him to us, as it were to his Death.*] The *Vulg.* places this almost at the End of the last Chapter. One is surprized to find, since it is said ch. xiii. 13. that all both small and great, ran together to meet Judith at her Return; that Achior still continued in Ozias's House a Stranger to it, and came not among the rest to congratulate her Arrival, till he was sent for; as he seems equally interested, and concerned to know this important News, it does not appear what should detain him at a Time when all others hastened where Judith was. It is probable that Achior had not yet his entire Liberty, and that he was in some Sort watched, till they saw the Success of Judith's Expedition; or perhaps, as her Return was in the Night, Achior might be asleep, and not instantly informed of it. Whatever was the Cause, it was highly reasonable to acquaint him with it, to free him from Inquietude and Fear, whom the proud Holofernes threatened to kill, when he took Bethulia, because he had so much extolled the Almighty Power of the God of Israel. And therefore Judith was kind in remembering him, and insisting, that, before they went forth out of the City, they should fetch Achior to her, that she might give him the Pleasure to hear that the Tyrant, who threatened his Life, was thro' her Means now no more. Particular Favour also might be shewed to Achior, because he differed so much in Temper and Behaviour from the rest of his Countrymen; for it was true of the Ammonites, as well as of the Moabites and Edomites, that tho' they were related in Blood to the Jews, yet they bore a constant Hatred towards them, which they took all Opportunities to shew, when the Jews were under any Distress: And therefore Achior's interesting himself in their Behalf, in the Time of their Distress, at the Peril of his own Life, was the more remarkable, and on that Account he claimed the more Notice and Favour.

Ver. 6. *Then they called Achior out of the House of Ozias, and when he was come, and saw the Head of Holofernes in a Man's Hand in the Assembly of the People, he fell down on his Face, and his Spirit failed.*] The Sight of the severed and bleeding Head of him who had threatened his Life, the Surprize of an Event so great and unexpected, and the Joy to see himself thus delivered in an Instant from the cruel Death which awaited him, if Bethulia had been taken, these meeting together, occasioned within him such a Disorder and Confusion of Spirits, as quite to overset him. "So pious Souls are affected" (says Mess. of Port-Royal, who often allegorize Part of this History) from considering, that Jesus Christ, the Seed of the

"Woman, has bruised the Serpent's Head, "has delivered them from the Wrath to "come, and wrought for them so wonderful "a Salvation. The Thoughts of their Deliverance fill them with holy Raptures; like "St. Paul, they are, as it were in an Ecstasy, "caught up into the Third Heavens, and can "scarce tell whether they are in or out of "the Body." *Comm. in loc.*

Ver. 10. *And when Achior had seen all that the God of Israel had done, he believed in God greatly, and circumcised the Flesh of his Foreskin, and was joined unto the House of Israel unto this Day.*] i. e. He became a Jew, and his Descendants continued so; for being circumcised, and becoming a Jew, were synonymous Terms. Thus what our Translators render, *Esther* viii. 17. *Many of the People of the Land became Jews*, according to the LXX is, πολλοὶ τῶν Ἰουδαίων περιέτεμοντο, ὡς Ἰουδαῖον, were circumcised, and conformed to the Jewish Rites and Customs. It should seem from the Text, as if Achior circumcised himself, and at that Instant; but it is more probable, that this was done by the proper Minister of Circumcision, and not till after the Victory was gained over the Assyrians. It also seems to intimate, at least according to the Rendering of the *Vulgate*, and I think it is likewise countenanced by the *Greek*, that Achior was induced to believe in God greatly, from seeing and admiring this Instance of his Power; but does not the zealous Manner in which he delivered himself before Holofernes, and his chief Officers, ch. v. and his noble Declaration of the Greatness and Majesty of God, his strict Justice, and impartial Goodness in all his Dealings with his People, give us Reason to think, that he believed in God long before? The Truth is, Achior hitherto regarded the God of the Jews as a local Deity only; as the God, or Protector of one particular People, he doubted not of his Power, and the Miracles which he had done for his People Israel, but he still continued, according to the Custom and Mode of his Nation, a Worshiper of Moloch, or Milcom, and an Observer of his abominable and superstitious Rites. The Elders of Bethulia, when they received him into the City, probably instructed him better, and gave him the Choice of being either a Profelyte of the Gate, or a Profelyte of Justice. Upon seeing this further Evidence of God's Power, in Behalf of his Chosen, exerted by Judith's Hand, and the proud Leader of the Assyrians, for his Blasphemy and contemptuous Defiance, so exemplarily punished by him, he received Circumcision, the initiatory Rite into the true Religion, and proved the Sincerity of his inward Belief, by outwardly submitting to this Ceremony. But still as an Ammonite, he was not entitled to any of the Privileges usually allowed to a Profelyte of Justice, which makes his Faith the more conspicuous and remarkable, as he was now joined to a People despised, and embraced a Religion, where he could not expect or hope for, either for himself or his De-



Descendants, any temporal Advantages, belonging to the Jewish People. And hence we may satisfy an Objection which naturally offers itself from this Place, viz. how *Achior*, being an *Ammonite*, could be joined unto the House of *Israel*, since the Law expressly says, *Deut. xxiii. 3.* that no *Ammonite* or *Moabite* shall enter into the Congregation of the Lord for ever, even to the Tenth Generation. But this Prohibition is not to be understood strictly and literally, since it is agreed on all hands, that neither a *Moabite*, or *Ammonite*, or even a *Canaanite* were hereby incapable of becoming Converts, or Profelytes to *Judaism*, and entering thereby into the Congregation of the Lord: The Intention of this negative Precept was only to hinder such from ever partaking of the Jewish Privileges, Prerogatives, Dignities, Places, Preferments, or other temporal Emoluments; and it does not appear from the Story, that *Achior* was so fully received among the Jews, as to be admitted to partake of any, or all of the Privileges and Advantages of that People, tho' *Aquinas* and some others have maintained, that the Rigour of this Law was dispensed with in Favour of *Achior*, on Account of his signal Profession and Acknowledgment of God's Power, and Providence before *Holofernes*. The like Difficulty has been started with Respect to *Ruth*, who being a *Moabitish* Woman, and married to *Booz*, became a Jewess. But here the Case is still clearer, as that Law in *Deuteronomy* affected not Women, who might from any Nation be admitted Profelytes, and by Reason of their Sex were incapacitated from aspiring to, or enjoying any Dignities, Prerogatives, or Emoluments.

Ver. 13. *Waken now our Lord, for the Slaves have been bold to come down against us to battle, that they may be utterly destroyed.*] The Appellation of Slaves is disgraceful, but the *Vulgate* speaks of them as contemptibly when it renders, *Egressi mures de cavernis suis, ausi sunt provocare nos ad praelium.* And probably it spake of them as such, from the Fastnesses in which they secured themselves, and as appearing very diminutive on the Top of so high a Mountain, to those in the Plain.

Ver. 14. *For he thought that he had slept with Judith.*] This is expressed with great Decency, tho' an impure Sense is intended: *ἑρπύς* is often used for concubitus, by the Hellenist Jews, and other Writers. See *Wisd. iv. 6.* and *ch. vii. 2.* with the Notes on those Passages. *Terentius Christianus*, renders it not improperly, *nunc imperator noster in amore est totus.*

Ver. 15. *But because none answered, he opened it, and went into the Bed-chamber.*] By the Description of *Holofernes's* Tent it seems rather to have been a Pavilion, which was generally built with long Palisadoes made of Fir, the Top of it covered with Reeds, and the Inside divided into several Apartments, as this is described to be. Thus *Achilles*, in *Hom.* had his *αὐλή μεγάλη*, or Great Hall, and behind it were Lodging Rooms. So again,

*Il. ix.* *Phenix* has a Bed prepared for him in one Apartment, *Patroclus* has another for himself, and his Captive *Ipbis*, and *Achilles* had a third for himself, and his Mistress *Diomeda*. Such fixed Tents were not used in common Marches, but only during the Time of Sieges, when their long Stay in one Place made it necessary to build such Tents. At other Times they lay in the open Air, their Spears standing upright to be ready upon any Alarm, and generally with the Hides of Beasts spread on the Ground, instead of a Bed.

Ver. 18. *These Slaves have dealt very treacherously.*] *Ἠθέληκασιν οἱ δῆλοι.* This Expression seems to be a kind of stated Form, the Form of a Cry intimating Sedition. Like that *1 Sam. xiii. 3.* which the LXX, it is observable, render by the Expression here used, *Ἠθέληκασιν οἱ δῆλοι*, tho' our Version in that Place, renders it, *Let the Hebrews hear*—a Form likewise in Use among the Jews to bespeak Attention.

*Ibid.* *One Woman of the Hebrews hath brought Shame upon the House of King Nabuchodonosor: for behold, Holofernes lieth upon the Ground without a Head.*] To overcome the Captain or General of the hostile Host personally, and by one's own Hand, was the highest Point of military Glory, and such as no more than three of their Heroes had ever gained, from the Foundation of the Jewish Commonwealth. In this Action of *Judith's*, personal Prowess, and great bodily Strength, which are made essential Ingredients to complete the Character of a great Hero, were supplied and compensated by Fineness of Stratagem, Artifice well conducted, and a Resolution not to be shaken. And the Renown arising from this Action was the greater, as being done by the Hands of a Woman, and therefore reflected the more Disgrace upon the House of King *Nabuchodonosor*. And well may she be said to have saved her Country, and destroyed its Enemies, because to vanquish the General himself, whose Presence and Bravery was the Support of his Troops, was in Effect to dismay, and to defeat his Forces, as Experience proved.

## CHAP. XV.

Ver. 2. *AND Fear and Trembling fell upon them, so that there was no Man that durst abide in the Sight of his Neighbour; but rushing out all together, they fled into every Way of the Plain, and of the Hill-Country.*] One can hardly look upon the Fright which seized the *Assyrians*, as merely natural, for allowing it possible, that an Army may on the Report of the sudden Death of its General, be affected with great Surprise and Consternation, and that it may be increased by the Reflection on the Manner of it, and especially by the discouraging Sight of his Head hung out to public View, yet as there are always experienced Commanders ready to supply the Place of the deceased Chief, and as they knew the Condition of the Besieged



to be so desperate, for Want of Water, as to be obliged to surrender within a very few Days, one would think, that such an Accident happening to one Man, tho' a principal Person indeed, could not have affected the whole Host in such a Manner, as not only to break up the Siege ingloriously, but to flee with the utmost Precipitation. And it is yet more unaccountable, to see so formidable an Army pursued and cut to Pieces by a People famished, and weakened for want of Necessaries, whom just before they looked upon with the utmost Contempt. It is therefore not improbable, supposing the Truth of this History, that God cast upon them a supernatural Panic, as he once confounded with a sudden Fear the Host of the Syrians, 2 Kings vii. 6. and that, to humble their Pride and Presumption, he took from them the Spirit both of Counsel, and of Courage, for they seem not to have deliberated what to do, or what Course to take, but like Sheep scattered and dispersed, they fled before the Hebrews.

Ver. 5. *Now when the Children of Israel heard it, they all fell upon them with one Consent, and slew them unto Chobai, &c.*] This Overthrow of the Assyrian Host may seem the more probable, as they fled without Order, in different and unknown Ways, and thro' an Enemy's Country, who having Notice of what had happened, lay in Wait for their coming, and slew such as fell into their Hands. The Event reminds one of Gideon's Success in slaying a Hundred Thousand of the Midianites, by so small a Company as Three Hundred only: And the Description in the Book of Judges, ch. vii. 21—25. of their Flight, the Pursuit, the dispatching Messengers throughout all Mount Ephraim, to intercept them, and their final Overthrow, in Consequence of it, very much resembles the Account here. *Mess. of Port Royal* have a fine and pertinent Reflection upon this Defeat of the Assyrians: "Let none presumptuously assure himself of Success, on Account of the Number of his Forces, when he considers, that the proud Holofernes, who had the Vanity to tell Achior, that he knew no other God but Nabuchodonosor, and that he would destroy all the Jews as one Man, fell himself by the Hands of a Woman; and his great and very numerous Army itself, fled like one Man, before the Face of those very Jews whom he so cruelly threatened. Nor let the meanest at any Time be discouraged, or fall into Despair at the Sight of insulting Enemies, how formidable soever they may appear, when he reflects upon the unexpected and miraculous Deliverance which the weak Hand of Judith, strengthened by the all-powerful one of God, procured for the Children of her People." *Comm. in loc.*

Ver. 8. *Then Joacim the High Priest, and the Ancients of the Children of Israel, that dwelt in Jerusalem, came to behold the good Things that God had shewed to Israel.*] Our

Version here, with the *Vulg.* follows the *Roman* Edition, which has, *τὸ θεῶν αὐτῶν τὰ αἰγυπία.* The *Complut. Ald.* and some others have, *τὸ θεῶν αὐτῶν τὰ αἰγυπία.* *Grotius* prefers the latter, and his Exposition of the Place is, that the Ancients of Jerusalem came to be certified of the Truth of the good News: But were they not before assured of this by Messengers dispatched thither on purpose, or by the Men that told them what Things were done in the Camp of their Enemies, y 5. 2 Nor is the Sense of the *Geneva* Version, which follows the same Reading, sufficiently clear, viz. that the Ancients of the Children of Israel that dwelt in Jerusalem, came to confirm the Benefits that God had shewed to Israel. The Meaning seems rather to be, and the Passage would thereby be more intelligible, that the Ancients of the People, or Judges at Jerusalem (for the Sanhedrim, of which some expound it, possibly might not be in being at this Time, as its Institution is generally thought to be after the Return from the Captivity) sent a solemn Deputation of the principal Persons in Authority, to compliment her upon the Success of an Enterprize so wonderful, to testify in her Presence the grateful Sense which they had of the extraordinary Service done to all Israel, and to Jerusalem in particular, by destroying the common Enemy, and putting the Assyrian Army to Flight, and their public Acknowledgment of God's loving Kindness and Mercy to their whole Nation, and to improve withal the Advantage gained by Judith, and settle upon a sure and lasting Foundation the Quiet and Safety she had procured for them. And from the Account in the last Verse of this History, that there was none that made Israel any more afraid in the Days of Judith, nor a long Time after, it appears, that they fixed the public Repose upon a firm Basis.

Ver. 10. *Blessed art thou of the Almighty Lord for evermore.*] In like Manner Deborah the Prophetess called Jael, *Blessed among Women*, for the like Fact committed on Sisera, *Judg. v. 24.*

Ver. 11. *And the People spoiled the Camp, the Space of thirty Days.*] The Syriac has only three Days instead of thirty, as the *Greek* and *Vulg.* have it. It may be alledged in Defence of this Reading, that the Camp of the Assyrians was doubtless very large, of great Circuit and Extent, Detachments of it being differently distributed on the Mountains, or distant Parts of the Plain, for the greater Convenience of subsisting so great an Army, and therefore must require no little Time to go through, and plunder it. The Camp itself indeed might be plundered in less Time than a Month, but it may be supposed, that the People continued for the whole thirty Days to ransack, and constantly to find some things which escaped former Searchers. It is probable the first that went out in Quest of the Spoil, did it in a Hurry, and with Precipitation. On such Occasions, where Variety offers, People are wont to take only what strikes



strikes them most, and to leave many things which afterwards are gathered with more Exactness and Care, when the Plenty is not so great, and the Hurry not so pressing. Or the Meaning perhaps may be, that a whole Month passed before a Division and Distribution was made of the whole Spoil; it might take up the greater Part of that Time, before all the Plunder could be brought into *Bethulia*, to be faithfully and equally distributed among the People, according to the Rules of War, and Prescription of the Law mentioned *Numb. xxxi. 27. 1 Sam. xxx. 24, 25.*

*Ibid.* And they gave unto *Judith* *Holofernes's* Tent, and all his Plate, and Beds, and Vessels, and all his Stuff.] The Syriac has, *Tabernaculum & lectum ejus, jumenta, & universum instrumentum ejus.* In dividing the Spoils taken from an Enemy, the Person who chiefly conducted the Enterprize, had always a more particular and larger Share. Some rich Present was also set apart to the Lord, and consecrated in his Temple, see *ch. xvi. 19.* What remained was usually divided among the Soldiers, as well those that guarded the Camp, as those that were actually in the Battle. *Judas Maccabæus* gave a Portion to the Maimed, the Widows, and Orphans, of the Spoils taken from *Nicanor*, and the Residue was divided, *2 Macc. viii. 28.*

Ver. 12. And she took Branches in her Hand, and gave also to the Women that were with her.] *ὀφύρα.* The *Thyrus* was a sort of Spear twisted about with Ivy, used in the Mysteries and Triumphs of *Bacchus*. It is probable the Jews borrowed this, as they did many other Customs, from the Heathens, and applied it to their Feasts of Tabernacles, and other solemn Occasions. Boughs were made use of by both of them, to adorn and set off the Pomp of their solemn Processions, and as public Ensigns of Triumph. When *Judas Maccabæus* had cleansed the Temple from the Pollutions, which *Antiochus Epiphanes* brought into it, all the People, to do him Honour, and to express their own Joy, carried Branches, or Boughs, in Procession, *2 Maccab. x. 7.* and sang *Psalms* unto him that had given them good Success, in cleansing the holy Place.

Ver. 13. And they put a Garland of Olive upon her, and her Maid, that was with her.] Crowns, and particularly those made of Olive Twigs, were very rare, especially for Women. This is the only Instance one meets with, says *Calmet*, among the Hebrews; but nothing was more proper to grace *Judith's* Triumph, than such a Crown. The Olive was a Tree in much Esteem among the Ancients, and its Boughs used on certain Festival Occasions; it was also made by them an Emblem of Peace, and as such now very pertinently applied to distinguish and adorn her, who was the happy Procurer of it. *Pliny* mentions the Honour paid to it by the Romans, *Oleæ honorem Romana majestas magnum tribuit, turmas equitum Idibus Juliis ex eis coronando, item minoribus triumphis ovantes,*

*l. xv. c. 4.* And among the Greeks, the Reward of the Conquerors at certain Games, was a Crown made of Olive. *Alex. ab Alex. Gen. Dier. l. v. c. viii.*

## CHAP. XVI.

Ver. 1. *ALL the People sang after her.*] The way of singing alternately, or for the People to join in the Chorus, and sing the ἀπελθεῖν, or Ends of the Verses which the *Psalms* began, was a very common and ancient Practice, see *Exod. xv. 21.* where, after the Children of *Israel* had passed the Red Sea, *Moses* and the Men sang a Song unto the Lord, and *Miriam* the Prophetess, with all the Women, joined in the Chorus, *Exod. xv. 20, 21.* So after *David's* Victory over *Goliath*, the general Chorus of the Women was this, *Saul has slain his Thousands, and David his Ten Thousands,* *1 Sam. xviii. 6, 7.* And in the Ceremonies used on the Passage of the Ark from one Place to another, the Chorus is generally thought to have been, *For his Mercy endureth for ever,* *Psalms cxxxvi.* *Calmet* thinks this Song of Thanksgiving was composed extempore by *Judith*, animated and inspired by the Spirit of God; and that the People replied in the Measure she began, and joined together in the Chorus. Others are of Opinion, that this was sung publicly in the Temple at *Jerusalem*, when *Judith* went thither to offer the Trophies of her Victory to the Lord, carrying with her the Head of *Holofernes* in Triumph.

Ver. 3. For God breaketh the Battles.] *Judith*, in her Prayer to God, *ch. ix.* to throw down the Strength of the *Assyrians* by his Power, and bring down by his Wrath, the Forces of them that were exalted with Horse and Man, who gloried in the Strength of their Footmen, and trusted in Shield and Spear, and Bow and Sling, uses this very Expression, *Thou art the Lord that breakest the Battles, the Lord is thy Name.* And very properly does she here, when her Prayer was answered, and she had obtained her Request, repeat it, and expatiate, with great Pleasure and Thankfulness, upon his almighty Power and Mercy, shewed to her amongst the Camps, and in the Midst of the People, who threatened to destroy their Borders. The Jews, to exalt the almighty Power and Majesty of their God, sometimes describe him as going forth like a mighty Man of War, armed with a Sword to take Vengeance of his Enemies; sometimes as the God of the Armies of *Israel*, in particular, and sometimes as the Lord of Hosts in general. The *Vulg.* furnishes us with a new, and not improper Sense of the Remainder of the Verse, *Qui posuit castra sua in medio populi sui, ut eriperet nos de manu omnium inimicorum,* i. e. his ministering Spirits watched over the *Israelites*, and procured their Deliverance, by striking a Panic into the Hearts of the *Assyrians*, and occasioning their Flight.

Ver. 4.



Ver. 4. *Affur came out of the Mountains from the North.*] Tho' *Affyria* and the other Provinces beyond *Euphrates*, were not directly North of *Judea*, the Prophets notwithstanding usually describe them by the North. See *Is.* xiv. 13—31. xli. 25. *Jer.* i. 13, 14, 15. iii. 12—18. *Ezek.* i. 4. viii. 3, &c. It seems to be, because the People beyond *Euphrates*, came into *Judea* by the Defiles of the Mountains of *Libanus*, and *Hermon*, which are North of *Judea*: The Way thro' *Arabia Deserta*, which was the direct and shortest Way, was impassable for an Army, as having neither Water, nor Wood, nor Forage of any sort, nor any Villages.

*Ibid.* *He came with Ten Thousands of his Army, the Multitude whereof stopt the Torrents.*] The Jews often confound the Torrents with the Valleys thro' which they pass, the same Word נַחַל, with them signifying both; and so the Sense here may be, that the *Affyrian* Army covered all the Valleys. The *Greek* seems to imply, that they maliciously stopped up and spoiled all the Springs, wherever they came, that the Inhabitants and their Cattle might perish with Thirst. Or the Meaning may rather be, that thro' the great Number of their Forces, they had drained and exhausted all the Torrents, as *Sennacherib* boasted, that he had dried up all the Rivers of besieged Places, 2 *Kings* xix. 24. The like is mentioned of *Xerxes's* Army, *Juven. Sat.* x. *Herod.* l. vii. c. 108, 109.

Ver. 6. *The Almighty Lord hath disappointed him by the Hand of a Woman.*] He who had defied the God of *Israel*, and had threatened to destroy his People, as one Man, ignominiously falls by the Hand of a Woman. In the like disgraceful Manner *Sisera*, who was determined to destroy the Children of *Israel* utterly, was given up into the Hands of a Woman, who slew him with a Nail, and the Workman's Hammer, *Judg.* iv. 21. Dying by the Hand of a Woman, was reckoned so ignominious, that *Abimelech*, being wounded by the Hand of a Woman, desired his Armour-Bearer to save his Honour, and thrust him through with his Sword, lest it might be said, that a Woman had slain him, *Judg.* ix. 54.

Ver. 7. *Neither did the Sons of the Titans smite him...*] Some have formed an Objection from this Term as taken from the Heathen Poets; but have not some of the inspired Writers borrowed Words, and even Sentences from the Poets, especially *St. Paul* and *St. James*? And why is this Word more to be condemned than the Name Giant, which is as poetical as that of *Titan*; for Giants are supposed to be so called, quasi γηγενες, or Earth-born, according to poetical Fiction: It seems to be used here only to vary the Expression. The *LXX* and *Vulg.* have taken the same Liberty, and particularly in the Book of *Job*, by inserting the Names of the *Pleiades*, *Hyades*, *Orion*, *Arcturus*, *Amalthea*, &c. See Note on *Wisd.* xix. 21. All, I think, that can with Reason be inferred from the Use of

this Term is, that the Author of this History, or however the Translator of it, had read the *Greek* Poets. By *Titans* are here meant the *Repbaim*, Giants, often mentioned in Scripture.

Ver. 9. *Her Sandals ravished his Eyes.*] By the Shape and Size of these, the Beauty of the Feet was discovered: These Shoes, or Sandals were anciently wont to be set off, or adorned with Jewels, as we learn from many Authors, see *Is.* iii. 18. and were richer and neater than Mens. The Rabbins say, that the *Israelites* of Condition appeared in the Temple on solemn Days with Crimson Shoes; *Virgil* describes *Venus* in the Dress of a *Phœnician* Damsel, with Buskins of Purple. The Bride's Sandals, *Canticles* vii. 1. were probably of this Colour, *How beautiful are thy Feet with Shoes, O Prince's Daughter?* Their Shoes did not hide their Feet as ours do, but were like the *Phœnician* Buskins, which discovered the Foot, and Part of the Leg, the Whiteness whereof was set off by the Lustre of the Purple. *Judith*, in all Probability, had a Pair of these Buskins on, when she appeared before *Holofernes*.

*Ibid.* *Her Beauty took his Mind prisoner...*] Nothing can be more poetical than this, or express the Power of Beauty stronger, see *Eccles.* ix. 8. 1 *Esd.* iv. 26, 27. where the Words, πολλοὶ ἀπενόησαν ταῖς ἰδίαις διανοίαις διὰ τὰς γυναικας, ἡ δὲλοι ἐγένοντο δι' αὐτάς, sufficiently confirms this Passage.

Ver. 10. *The Persians quaked at her Boldness, and the Medes were daunted at her Hardiness.*] Possibly the *Medes* and the *Persians* were at this Time Subjects to the King of *Affyria*, and made up Part of his Army, as they did when *Sennacherib* besieged *Jerusalem*, that Army consisting of several Sorts of Nations, *Is.* xxix. 7. Except we should think, that *Nebuchadnezzar* was foisted in here, and that this Expedition was undertaken by *Darius*, or some other *Persian* Prince. See Note on ch. ii. 7. *Calmet* thinks these two Nations submitted to *Nabuchodonosor*, after his Victory over King *Arphaxad*, or *Phraortes*, ch. i. 13.

Ver. 11. *Then my Afflicted shouted for Joy, and my weak ones cried aloud; but they were astonished: these lifted up their Voices, but they were overthrown.*] i. e. The People of *Bethulia*, her weak and afflicted ones, thro' Want of Water, and other Necessaries occasioned by the Siege, shouted for their Deliverance: Or in a more general Sense, the *Israelites*, threatened with Ruin and Destruction by this proud Conqueror, triumphed upon his Overthrow. But the *Affyrians*, as the Margin rightly understands it, were astonished at a Calamity so sudden, and a Defeat so unexpected. The former lifted up their Voices in Songs and Acclamations; and the latter were overthrown by those, whom they had insulted for their Impotency and Weakness. There is a sort of Contrast here which heightens the Sense, and makes it preferable, either to that of the *Syriac* or *Vulg.* which understand the whole of the *Affyrians*.

Ver. 12.



Ver. 12. *The Sons of the Damsels have pierced them through, and wounded them as Fugitives Children: they perished by the Battle of the Lord.*] i. e. Because the Lord fought for Israel. The Meaning here is, that raw Youths, or Children in Comparison, overcame these mighty Men of Valour, so little Resistance did they make; so little, that, according to the Geneva Version, they fled away from those that wounded them, like so many Children, or, as the Syriac has it, suffered themselves to be put to death, like timorous Women, without returning a Blow.

Ver. 15. *For the Mountains shall be moved from their Foundations.*] i. e. Such proud Princes, who, like the Assyrians, trust in the Multitude of their Forces, shall be disappointed, and overthrown. Or it may be applied to the Overthrow, on which this Song, or *ἐπὶ τῆς νίκης*, was composed.

Ver. 16. *For all Sacrifice is too little for a sweet Savour unto thee, and all the Fat is not sufficient for thy Burnt-Offering; but he that feareth the Lord is great at all Times.*] i. e. Is always in great Favour with him. *Qui timet Dominum, magni est apud eum semper.* This Sentence is very remarkable, and a strong Proof of the Inefficacy and Unprofitableness of the ancient Sacrifices as such: That God does not regard the Sacrifice itself, however nice and costly, so much as the Mind, and holy Disposition of the Offerer; nothing but the Fear and Love of God, can render Men agreeable to him, or their Oblations effectual in his Sight.

Ver. 17. *The Lord will take Vengeance of them in the Day of Judgment, in putting Fire and Worms in their Flesh.* . . .] i. e. The Lord shall slay all the Enemies of the Jewish Nation, and they shall be like to so many putrifying Carcases lying slain in the Field of Battle, and overrun with Worms and Stench. They shall be a lasting Monument of God's Justice, like Sodom, set forth for an Example of the divine Vengeance, and of that eternal Fire which is prepared for the Ungodly, see *Mark ix. 44. Eccles vii. 17.* An Expression of the like Import we meet with in *Is. lxxvi.* where it is said of the Enemies of God, that *the Worm shall not die, neither shall the Fire be quenched, and this shall be an Abhorrence to all Flesh.* It seems more curious than useful to enquire, whether the Fire and Worms mentioned here and in Scripture, as the Punishment of the Wicked, are really material. If by these is to be understood a wicked and polluted Conscience only, with the racking Reflections that always accompany it, as was the Opinion of Origen, there seems but little Reason for the Wicked to triumph; as the Stings of Conscience must be a greater Torment than any bodily Punishment, and will be co-eternal with the Soul.

Ibid. *They shall weep under a Sense of their Pains for ever.*] The ancient Jews held, that the Punishment of the Wicked in Hell should be perpetual; or without End. *Josephus in-*

forms us; *De Bell. Jud. l. ii. Antig. l. xviii.* that the Pharisees maintained, the Souls of the Wicked were to be punished, *αἰδῶ τιμωρίᾳ*, with perpetual Punishment, and that there was appointed for them, *εἰς γὰρ αἰῶνος*, a perpetual Prison. *Philo* says, the Punishment of the Wicked is, *ζῆν ἀποθανόντα αἰεὶ*, to live for ever dying, and to be for ever in Pain, and Grief, and Calamities, that never shall have an End. *De Præm. & Pæn.* Instead of *καύσονται*, the common Reading of the Place, a learned Writer would have, *καύσονται ἐν αἰσθήσει*. See *Thirlby Notes in Just. Apol.*

Ver. 18. *As soon as the People were purified, they offered their Burnt-Offerings.*] See Note on ch. xii. 7. *Philo's* Testimony, with respect to the Antiquity of this Rite of Purification, is too particular to be omitted, "Let the Person (says he) who is about to offer Sacrifice, after he has washed and purified his Hands, lay them upon the Head of the Victim." *De Vict.* The Psalmist seems to allude to this Custom, *Pf. xxvi. 6. I will wash mine Hands in Innocence, and so will I go to thine Altar.* The Priests were more particularly and strictly obliged to this Purification, when they were to attend the public Service, and minister about holy Things, *Exod. xxx. 20.* See *Gen. xxxv. 2.* where we read that *Jacob's* Servants, before they performed their Devotions at *Beit-el*, washed themselves, and changed their Garments. The Meaning of this Passage is, that the People offered Sacrifice as soon as they were purified from the Uncleanneſs which they had contracted from the Slaughter of the Assyrians, and the touching their dead Bodies, and carrying away their Spoils.

Ver. 19. *Dedicated all the Stuff unto the Lord.*] The Reason of this was to acknowledge God is the Giver of all Victory, Almost all Nations have concurred in this Duty of Thankfulness and Gratitude after some signal Success, and called, as *Virgil* expresses it, *in prædam partemque Jovem.* So the Philistines hung up the Arms of *Saul* in the Temple of *Ashtaroth*, and carried the Ark into the Temple of *Dagon*. The Sword of *Goliath*, slain by *David*, mentioned *1 Sam. xxi. 9.* to be wrapt in a Cloth behind the Ephod, is thought by learned Men to be dedicated unto God. Thus *Josephus* understands it, *τὴν ῥομφαίαν ἀνέθηκε τῷ θεῷ.* And *Sulpitius Severus*, *Gladium postea templum posuit.* Thus *Abraham* gave to *Melchisedek*, the Priest of the most High God, as a Return of Gratitude to him, *δεκάτῃ τῆς λείας*, the Tenth of all the Spoils, *Heb. vii. 4.* And the Jews sometimes offered all the Spoils taken in War, *2 Sam. viii. 12.* Or the First Fruits, *1 Sam. xv. 21.* according to the Rendering of the LXX. or the Tenths, *Heb. vii. 4.* Or hung up in the Fore-Front of the Temple, some more remarkable Part of the Spoils, as Shields, &c. in Token of Victory, and as an Instance of Gratitude for it, *1 Maccab. iv. 51.* See *Spencer de Leg. Hebr. de Solut. Decim.*



Ver. 20. *So the People continued feasting in Jerusalem before the Sanctuary for the Space of three Months.*] Such a Fact as the killing of *Holofernes*, and thereby defeating the whole Army of the *Affyrians*, and rescuing the *Jews*, not only from the Danger of the present Siege, but from such farther Attacks as might have affected the very Being of their State, was it indeed true, say Objectors, one might well expect, that some public Notice, some standing Memorial, besides the temporary Rejoicings here mentioned, tho' longer indeed than usual (being three Months, according to all the Versions but the *Syriac*, which mentions only one) should have been instituted of so auspicious an Event. Public Blessings of an inferior Nature to this, were wont to be commemorated by anniversary Feasts, and that no such should be appointed in Memory of this, may seem scarce credible: From the Foundation of the *Jewish* State, and the first giving of the Law, scarce any Deliverance happened to that People, which was of greater Consequence than this, if it had been truly such as here represented, and yet we find no such annual Triumph and Festivities, tho' the Occasion may seem to demand it. Some *Latin* Editions indeed, as particularly the *Vulg.* conclude this Book with the following Verse, *Dies autem victorie hujus festivitatis, ab Hebræis in numero sanctorum Dierum accipitur, & colitur a Judæis, ex illo tempore usque ad præsentem diem.* But as there is no Mention of this in the *Greek* and other Versions, nor any Festival taken Notice of by the *Jewish* Writers, as instituted on this Occasion, it has been judged a corrupt Addition to the Text. *Huetius* thinks this is not a sufficient Reason, because in Time such a Feast might be abrogated and laid aside, *Dem. Evang. Prop. 4.* And this, *Calmet* says, is not improbable, as being only a human Institution, and therefore it might drop by Disuse, or other Accidents. In like Manner as the anniversary Festival of *Judas Maccabæus's* Victory over *Nicanor*, which in *Josephus's* Time was celebrated with great Rejoicings, *Antiq. l. xii. c. 17. 1 Macc. vii. 2 Macc. xv.* afterwards ceased, and it is now many Ages since any Notice was taken of it. The *Babylonish* Captivity gave so violent a Shock to the *Jewish* State, and occasioned such Confusion and Disorder, that it is no wonder, during so long an Exile, if they forgot and dropt many of their ancient Feasts and Solemnities, such especially as were not of divine Institution. *Scaliger* indeed mentions, *l. vii. De Emend. Temp.* that the Church of *Æthiopia* still observes the Feast in Memory of this Victory, and that it is kept on the 4<sup>th</sup> of *August* in particular, which agrees very well with the History which places the Siege in the Time of Harvest, and when the Season was dry and hot. Which shews, that the Feast here said to be observed, could not be that of the Dedication of the Temple, instituted by *Judas Maccabæus*, as *Grotius* would have it, since that was confessedly kept in the Winter, *John x. 22.* On which Place

that learned Writer observes, that it was instituted in Memory of the Purification of the Temple from the Pollutions of *Antiochus*: But if this Book was composed before that Time, see *Præfat. in Jud.* how can the Festival here mentioned possibly relate to it?

Ver. 22. *And many desired her, but none knew her all the Days of her Life, after that Manasses her Husband was dead.*] *Judith* is not more magnified for her severe Fastings, than she is for her Widowhood of so many Years, and living with one Husband only for the Space of so long a Life. She continued in the State of Widowhood, not from any Imbecillity of Body, or for want of Solicitation, but from the Magnanimity of her Virtue: *St. Ambrose* admires and celebrates her prudent Conduct on this Occasion, *nec his tamen elata successibus, cui utique gaudere & exultare licebat, viduitatis reliquit officium; sed contemptis omnibus, qui ejus nuptias ambiebant, vestem jucunditatis deposuit, viduitatis resumpsit. Nec triumphorum suorum amavit ornatus, illos existimans esse meliores, quibus vitia corporis, quam quibus hostium arma, vincuntur. De Viduis.* Like that Holy Pattern of Widows, *Anna* the Prophetess, a Widow about Eighty-four Years of Age, *Luke ii. 38.* whereof she lived Seven only with one Husband from her Virginity, and continued the rest of the Time separated and retired, serving God with Fastings and Prayers Night and Day. Great Things are said in the ecclesiastical Writings in Praise of perpetual Widowhood; it is put upon a Footing with, and by some preferred to, continual Virginity. For as the Lapsed, who remained true to the Faith after their Reconciliation to the Church, were the more valued and esteemed, so the Widows, indeed, who after casting off their first Faith, continued single and chaste, were counted worthy of double Honour. Second Marriages, anciently, were looked upon as infamous, especially in Women, and, even among the Heathens, esteemed faulty, and somewhat criminal; and the Reason was, because it brought them under a Suspicion of Incontinence. Nay, some Writers have carried it much further, and made it a sort of Adultery. After the same Manner second Marriages were condemned by the *Jewish* Rabbins, *Filii mulieris viduæ, filii scortationum sunt, i. e. the Children of a Woman, once a Widow, are the Children of Whoredom; and even some of the Fathers seem to have been of the same Opinion.*

Ver. 23. *And waxed old in her Husband's House, being an Hundred and five Years old.*] *Transit autem in domo viri sui annos centum quinque. Vulg.* Not that she lived so long with her Husband, or even in his House, but that her Life was prolonged to that Term, or that she died at that Age.

Ver. 24. *And the House of Israel lamented her Seven Days.*] See *Eccelus xxii. 12.* where the Son of *Sirach* says, *Seven Days do Men mourn for him that is dead:* And that this was the stated Time of Mourning among the *Jews*,



*Jews*, appears from many Instances, see *Gen.* v. 10. where *Joseph's* Mourning for his Father is said to have been Seven Days. The like was observed with respect to *Saul* and his Sons, 1 *Sam.* xxxi. 13. *Archelaus* performed the accustomed Solemnity of Seven Days Mourning for his Father *Herod*.

*Ibid.* And before she died, she did distribute her Goods to all them that were nearest of Kin to *Manasses* her Husband, and to them that were nearest of her Kindred.] From hence it seems probable that she had no Children by her Husband, as she adopted those that were nearest of Kin on both Sides to inherit her Substance. As Barrenness lay under a sort of Disgrace among the *Jews*, her continuing without Issue seems to have arose from an Abhorrence of a second Marriage.

*Ver.* 25. And there was none that made the Children of *Israel* any more afraid in the Days of *Judith*, nor a long Time after her Death.]

There is not a greater Difficulty in all this History, than to account for so long and continued Peace as is here mentioned. For, according to the Account of this Writer, says *Dr. Prideaux, Conn. vol. i.* "Peace must have lasted at least Eighty Years. For allowing *Judith* to have been Forty-five Years old at the Time of her killing *Holofernes* (and in an older Age she cannot well be supposed to have Beauty enough to charm such a Man) there must be Sixty Years after to the Time of her Death. But the Expression, a long Time after, in the Text, cannot imply less than Twenty Years, and so carries the Computation still further." *Calmet* endeavours to explain and settle the Difficulty thus: "From the Death of *Holofernes*, *A. M.* 3348, to that of *Manasses*, *A. M.* 3361, we read of no War or considerable Disturbance either in *Israel*, or *Judah*: *Amon*, who succeeded him, reign-

ed but two Years, he was slain in his own House, but no Account of any War in his Time. *Josias* lived in like Manner in Peace and Quiet, during the One and thirty Years of his Reign, to *A. M.* 3394." According to this Reckoning there are Forty-six Years of continued Peace. He supposes further, as the Text says nothing certain of the Age of *Judith* at the Time of this Assassination, that she might be Sixty-three, or Sixty Years old, being then what we call a fine Woman, and having an engaging Air, and Person. In this Case, and if this be allowed, he maintains, that from the Raising of the Siege of *Bethulia*, to the Death of *Judith*, and even some Time longer, there was no War, or considerable Disturbance in *Israel*, for the Space of Six and forty Years. The following Table will make his Scheme clearer:

A. M.	
3285	Birth of <i>Judith</i> .
3306	<i>Manasses</i> began to reign.
3328	He is brought Prisoner to <i>Babylon</i> , and after some Months sent back to <i>Judea</i> .
3347	War between <i>Nabuchodonosor</i> and <i>Arphaxad</i> .
3347	Victory of <i>Nabuchodonosor</i> over <i>Arphaxad</i> .
3348	Expedition of <i>Holofernes</i> .
3348	Siege of <i>Bethulia</i> .
3361	Death of <i>Manasses</i> , King of <i>Judah</i> .
3390	Death of <i>Judith</i> , aged 105 Years.
3394	Death of King <i>Josiah</i> .
3414	The last Siege of <i>Jerusalem</i> by <i>Nabuchodonosor</i> .
3416	The City taken, the Temple destroyed, and the People brought Captive to <i>Babylon</i> .











in their ancient Books, i. e. the *Hebrew* Scriptures comprized in their Canon, and therefore might pass over the Circumstances of this History however known to, or believed by him, as not being wrote in that Language, nor admitted into the sacred Code: And should it be allowed, that he has occasionally inserted in his History, some Circumstances and Facts apocryphal and unrecorded, yet this, I conceive, proves more against the Veracity of *Josephus* himself, and his little Regard to the Profession he makes of a strict Attachment to the *Hebrew* Scriptures only, than it impeaches the Credit of the History of *Judith*. 2. Those who have read *Josephus* with Care, must have observed, that in his History of the Times which precede the Captivity of *Babylon*, he scarcely mentions any thing more of the Kings of *Judah*, than what he finds in the Books of *Kings* and *Chronicles*. And hence probably it happened, that many remarkable Facts omitted in those sacred Books are likewise omitted by *Josephus*. It is observable, that he follows these Step by Step, and possibly he either would not interrupt their Series and Order, if he knew of *Judith's* History, or might not certainly know in what Time to place it. Which is the more probable, as he seems not to have had any great Knowledge of the History of the *Medes*, wherein several very considerable Omissions are to be discovered. It is certain that the *Scythians* invaded *Asia* in the Time of *Manasses*; that they made great Devastation there; that they entered even *Palestine*, robbed and plundered the Temple of *Venus* at *Ascalon*, and at length settled at *Bethsan*, a City of *Judea*, and from their own Name called it *Scythopolis*. Might not one expect, in such a History as that of *Josephus*, some Account, or Mention at least, of so great and interesting Events? And yet that Historian wholly omits them, probably as not being taken Notice of in the Books of *Kings* and *Chronicles*, which are the Memoirs he proceeds upon, and are his only Guides and Authority in the *Jewish* History. The same Answer will in a great Measure satisfy another Objection, sometimes urged from *Josephus*, viz. his omitting *Joachim* in his List of the High-Priests, from the Times of *David* to the Captivity; for as he omits several of that Order, even those mentioned in Scripture, it is no Wonder that he should omit a single Name which occurs in this History. It appears then from what has been observed, that the Objection founded on the Silence of *Josephus*, is but of little Weight, and that the History of *Judith* may notwithstanding be true, tho' *Josephus* does not mention it. It may be proper here also to examine more fully another Difficulty, in some Measure indeed replied to in its Place, founded on the Words of *Achior*, ch. v. 17, &c. who, speaking of the *Jews*, says, *The Temple of their God was cast to the Ground*. From hence some have inferred, that the History of *Judith* ought to be placed after the Captivity, and that the Meaning is, that the Temple was entirely ruined from the Foundation, and that the Words, *they are returned from the Places of their Captivity*, point out their Return from the Captivity of *Babylon*. But before I proceed to the Objection itself, it may be pertinent to premise, that *Achior*, who speaks in this Place, being a Stranger, an *Ammonite*, too much Stress ought not to be laid on his Account of *Jewish* Affairs; for possibly he might not be well informed of what passed in *Judea*, or related to it, and might have heard that the Number of *Jews* returned from their Captivity, was much greater than it really was, as Report often exaggerates Matters, and deceives Persons at a Distance. But there is no Occasion to rest in this general Answer, or to have Recourse, with *Bellarmino*, to any supposed Corruption of the Text; for the Greek, *ὁ ναὸς τῷ θεῷ αὐτῶν ἐγενήθη εἰς ἰδαφὴν*, may fairly admit of another Meaning, viz. that the Temple had been abused and profaned by *Gentiles* and *Idolaters*, who entered into it, and dealt with it as a common Place; *Templum Dei ipsofrum habitum est ut profanum solum*, says *Junius*, very closely and explicitly; and some more ancient *Latin* Copies, *Templum Dei ipsofrum factum est in pavementum*. For tho' *εἰς ἰδαφὴν κατὰβάλλειν* in *Plutarch*, and *εἰς ἰδαφὴν καθίζειν* in *Thucydides* and *Josephus*, may mean *solo equare*, I know not of any Authority to make *εἰς ἰδαφὴν γίνεσθαι* signify *solo equari*. And even tho' one should find *εἰς ἰδαφὴν γίνεσθαι* in the Sense of *solo equari*, yet this Passage will not admit of it here. It is manifest it speaks not here of any particular Calamity that happened to the *Israelites*, such as the Destruction of their Temple, but of God's general Conduct with Respect to them, that so long as they were obedient, so long God filled them with Blessings; but when they forsook his Worship, he delivered them to their Enemies to be slain, and carried captive; and even permitted his own Temple to be profaned and desecrated, and in that Sense trampled under Foot; as happened in the Time of *Reboboam*, when it was spoiled and abused by *Shishak*, King of *Egypt*, in that of *Amaziah*, by the King of *Israel*, who was himself an *Idolater*; in that of *Abaz*, by *Tiglath-Palassar*, and by the scandalous Idolatry of *Manasses* himself; and probably by the *Assyrians*, when they made him Prisoner. It is not then of the actual Destruction of the Temple, but of its Profanation on different Occasions, that this Passage is to be understood. This will more plainly appear to be the Sense, by considering, ch. iv. 3. where it is said, *that the People were newly returned from Captivity, and the Temple, Altar, and holy Vessels purified after their Profanation*. Can this possibly relate to the Return from the last Captivity of *Babylon*, when there was neither Altar, nor Temple remaining to be purified? Or can it be expounded better than of the Profanation of them by *Manasses*, of the Captivity of him and his People, of his and their Repentance, and their

Return



Return in Consequence of it; and of the Purifying of the holy Place and Utensils, thro' his Care, to compensate for his former great Wickedness. See 2 *Chron.* xxxiii. 15, 16. Strange have been the Whims, which even learned Men have fallen into, with respect to this History. *Luther* will have it to be no more than an artful Tragedy; and even *Grotius* labours, in a forced Manner, to make it wholly enigmatical, by fancied Derivations, or Allusions to the *Hebrew*: By joining to the Names *Bethulia*, and *Holofernes*, what Letters he thinks proper, or dividing and splitting them as he pleases, he makes Words to signify just what he would have them. *Bethulia*, or, as the *Greek* has it, Βεθούλια, must be *Beth-el-ia*; tho' *El*, which is the Name of God, is rarely, if ever found wrote with *ul*, much less is it usual to join two Names of God in one Word. Nor could he certainly know, how these proper Names were wrote in *Chaldee*, the original Language of this Book. And to make of *Holofernes*, which is confessedly a *Persian* Name, *Halpar-nabas*, i. e. *binding the Serpent*; is not this straining Words beyond all Reason, or explaining away their true Meaning? Or finally, could there be any Manner of Reason to invent a Fable, as he supposes, such as he would have this to be, to raise the Spirits of the *Jews* at this Time, when there were so many well attested Histories of God's gracious Interposition in Behalf of his Chosen, and by the Hands of those famous Worthies, whom the Writer to the *Hebrews* so justly celebrates? The allegorizing this History in the Manner he has done, and violently extorting a reconcile Meaning, supposed to be concealed under every Place and Person, seems rather the Sport of Fancy, than the Result of Judgment. To conclude, I conceive this to be a real History, and one which is so circumstantial, cannot be suspected or objected to, without subjecting other Histories to the like Caprice or Fancy. There is certainly this useful Moral contained in it, viz. that God is never wanting to his faithful Servants; and as he has an infinite Variety of Means, to bring about his secret Purposes, so he is able, and often chuses to do it, by the most feeble and unpromising.

## Book of BARUCH.

## CHAPTER I.

And back the holy Vessels which he had carried to Babylon, when Jerusalem was taken in the Time of *Jehoiachin*. *Jehoiachin* confirms the Account of his being of a very eminent Family, and that he was well skilled in the Language of his Country. *Jehoiachin* is a name which two Characters, have a learned Writer, seem to imply that *Jehoiachin* had read the Canon of *Isaiah* prefixed to this Book, and that it was written in the Language of his Country, either in *Hebrew*, or *Chaldee*. *Jehoiachin*, vol. i. *Gen.* on the other hand, maintains, that it was not wrote in *Hebrew* (which *St. Jerome* argues, as the Reason of its not being received into the *Hebrew Canon*) but the Work of some Hellenistic Jew, well skilled in *Greek*, who excluded his Fancy in composing the Letter contained therein, forming it, as it was wrote from those who were carried to Babylon, and addressed to those of their Brethren, who still continued at Jerusalem.

*Isid.* *Wrote in Babylon*. Probably, says *Com.* in the Fourth Year of the Reign of *Zedekiah*, when he accompanied his Brother to Babylon; and whilst the latter was still citing the Return of the holy Vessels, belonging to the Temple, *Baruch* repared

*Baruch* was the Word of the Book. It begins abruptly, as it is a part of Continuation of some former Work; but the connective particle, *and*, is often to be observed in the Beginning of Books, particularly the historical ones of the *Hebrew*. See *Exod.* i. 1. *Levit.* i. 1. *Num.* i. 1. *Deut.* i. 1. *Josh.* i. 1. *Judg.* i. 1. *Sam.* i. 1. *1 Kings* i. 1. *2 Kings* i. 1. *1 Chron.* i. 1. *2 Chron.* i. 1. *Ezra* i. 1. *Nehem.* i. 1. *Esther* i. 1. *Job* i. 1. *Psalms* i. 1. *Proverbs* i. 1. *Ecclesiastes* i. 1. *Song of Songs* i. 1. *Lamentations* i. 1. *Jeremiah* i. 1. *Ezekiel* i. 1. *Daniel* i. 1. *Hosea* i. 1. *Joel* i. 1. *Obadiah* i. 1. *Jonah* i. 1. *Micah* i. 1. *Nahum* i. 1. *Habakkuk* i. 1. *Zechariah* i. 1. *Malachi* i. 1. *Matthew* i. 1. *Mark* i. 1. *Luke* i. 1. *John* i. 1. *Acts* i. 1. *Romans* i. 1. *1 Corinthians* i. 1. *2 Corinthians* i. 1. *Galatians* i. 1. *Ephesians* i. 1. *Colossians* i. 1. *1 Thessalonians* i. 1. *2 Thessalonians* i. 1. *1 Timothy* i. 1. *2 Timothy* i. 1. *Titus* i. 1. *Philemon* i. 1. *Hebrews* i. 1. *James* i. 1. *1 Peter* i. 1. *2 Peter* i. 1. *1 John* i. 1. *2 John* i. 1. *3 John* i. 1. *Jude* i. 1. *Revelation* i. 1.

*Isid.* *Wrote Baruch the Son of Neriah*. It is certain that the true *Baruch*, whom this Writer seems to patronize, was of an illustrious Family; his Father and Grandfather, *Azarias*, and *Isai*, were in their Times, and distinguished in their Country. His Brother, *Isai*, was sent on an important Commission to *Nebuchadnezzar* to request him to

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Return in Consequence of it; and of the Purifying of the holy Place and Uterus; thro' his  
 Life, to compensate for his former great Wickedness. See a Greek. xxxiii. 16. Strange  
 have been the Whims, which even learned Men have fallen into, with respect to this Hi-  
 story. Some will have it to be no more than an artist's Tragedy; and even Greek Authors  
 have been so far from making it wholly empirical, by fancy'd Derivations or Allusions to  
 the History, as to join in the same, and to say, that it is a Tragedy, and that it is a History.  
 But, or dividing and splitting them as he pleases, he makes Words to signify just what he  
 would have them. Baruch, or, as the Greek has it, Baruch, must be Baruch; tho' it is  
 which is the Name of God, is rarely, if ever found wrote with a, much less is it usual to  
 join two Names of God in one Word. Not could he certainly know, how these proper  
 Names were wrote in Chaldee, the original Language of this Book. And to make of the  
 Baruch, which is certainly a Jewish Name, Baruch, or, as the Greek has it, Baruch, is  
 is not this Learning Words beyond all Reason, or explaining away their true Meaning?  
 Or finally, could there be any Manner of Reason to invent a Fable, as he supposes, such  
 as he would have this to be, to raise the Spirits of the Jews at this Time, when there  
 were so many well attested Histories of God's gracious Interposition in Behalf of his Chosen  
 and by the Hands of these famous Writers, whom the Writer to the Hebrews to justify  
 celebrates? The allegorizing this History in the Manner he has done, and violently extor-  
 ting the Meaning, and forced to conclude every Part and Person to be a Type of some  
 thing, the History, and one which is to circumstantial, cannot be supposed or objected to,  
 without subjecting other Histories to the like Caprice or Fancy. There is certainly this use  
 of the Moral contained in it, viz. that God is never wanting to his faithful Servants; and as  
 he has a infinite Variety of Means, to bring about his secret Purposes, so he is able, and  
 often chooses to do it, by the most secret and surprising.

# COMMENTARY

ON THE

## Book of BARUCH.

### CHAP. I.

Ver. 1. **A**ND these are the Words of the Book.] It begins abrupt-ly, as if it was a part or Con-  
 tinuation of some former Work; but the  
 connective particle *et*, or *et*, is often to be  
 observed in the Beginning of Books, particu-  
 larly the historical ones of the Hebrews. See  
*Exod. i. 1. Levit. i. 1. Numb. i. 1. Josh. i. 1.*  
*and 1 Macc. i. 1. Judith i. 1.* in the Vulg.  
 By Book we are to understand the Letter,  
 see *14.* which Baruch wrote from those  
 that were carried into Babylon, to such as re-  
 mained in Judea, and begins at *10.* (the  
 first Part is a sort of Preface) and contains  
 that Confession which the Jews were to use  
 in their public Worship, upon solemn Days,  
 during their Captivity. It begins, *ch. i. 15,*  
 and is continued to *ch. iii. 8.*

Ibid. Which Baruch the Son of Nerias, &c.]  
 It is certain that the true Baruch, whom this  
 Writer seems to personate, was of an illu-  
 strious Family; his Father and Grandfather  
 were of great Note in their Times, and dis-  
 tinguished in their Country. His Brother,  
 Seraiah, was sent on an important Commis-  
 sion to Nebuchadnezzar to request him to

send back the holy Vessels which he had car-  
 ried to Babylon, when Jerusalem was taken  
 in the Time of Jechonias. Josephus confirms  
 the Account of his being of a very eminent  
 Family, and that he was well skilled in the  
 Language of his Country, *Antiq. l. x. c. 11.*  
 which two Characters, says a learned Writer,  
 seem to imply that Josephus had read the Ge-  
 nealogy of Baruch prefixed to this Book, and  
 that it was written in the Language of his  
 Country, either in Hebrew, or Chaldee, *Aut-  
 then. Rec. vol. i. Grotius*, on the other  
 hand, maintains, that it was not wrote in  
 Hebrew (which St. Jerom urges, as the Rea-  
 son of its not being received into the Jewish  
 Canon) but the Work of some Hellenistic  
 Jew, well skilled in Greek, who exercised his  
 Fancy in composing the Letter contained  
 herein, framing it, as if it was wrote from  
 those who were carried to Babylon, and ad-  
 dressed to those of their Brethren, who still  
 continued at Jerusalem.

Ibid. Wrote in Babylon.] Probably, says  
 Calmet, in the Fourth Year of the Reign of  
 Zedekiah, when he accompanied his Brother  
 to Babylon; and whilst the latter was solli-  
 citing the Return of the holy Vessels, be-  
 longing to the Temple, Baruch repea-  
 ted



ted to the captive Jews residing there, the Prophecies of Jeremiah concerning the Fall of Babylon, ch. li. 60, 64, and the encouraging Promises of their future Deliverance.

Ver. 2. *In the Fifth Year, and in the Seventh Day of the Month, what Time as the Chaldeans took Jerusalem, and burnt it with fire.* This Writer neither mentions what the Month was, i. e. by what Name it was called, nor from whence one should compute the Fifth Year. It seems probable, that it means the Fifth Year of Jeboiachin's Captivity. See *ſ. 9.* But to make as it should seem the Account more clear and explicit, is added, *what Time as the Chaldeans took Jerusalem, and burnt it with Fire*, which is attended with two Difficulties: 1. That the Temple is represented here as burnt by the Chaldeans, in the Fifth Year of Jeconias's Captivity, which was not till the Eleventh of Zedekiah: And 2dly, that after the Burning of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, there remained notwithstanding there a High Priest, Priests, and Numbers of People with them at Jerusalem, *ſ. 7.* that the Altar was still standing, and Sacrifices offered on it; that the Solemn Days continued to be kept, and particularly that Zedekiah then reigned, and had made Vessels of Silver for the Use of the Temple, &c. Circumstances so promising and favourable, as but ill comport with the melancholy Times which followed the Destruction of the City and Temple, and the unparalleled Misery described in some of the following Chapters.

Ver. 3. *Baruch did read the Words of this Book in the Hearing of Jeconias, the Son of Joakim, King of Juda, and in the Ears of all the People.* This Fact is said to be false, Jeconias being in Captivity, and Baruch himself not then at Babylon, but in Egypt, as appears from *Jerem. xliii. 6.* and *ch. xliv.* from which Chapters it seems plain that both Jeremiah and his Scribe Baruch died among their Brethren of the two Tribes, who had carried them along with them into Egypt, in the Twenty-third of Nebuchadnezzar; and that neither they, nor the Body of the Remainder of the two Tribes who were then in Egypt, ever returned thence, or saw Babylon, as is asserted in this Passage. This, says a learned Writer, is a strong objection according to the present Copies of the Prophecy of Jeremiah, *ch. xliv.* But from the Authority of *Josephus, Antiq. l. x. c. 11.* who had ancient and better Copies, he contends "that not only Jeremiah and Baruch might, but that the Body of those Jews that were in Egypt probably did return from thence, and were directly carried into Babylonia by Nebuchadnezzar himself, according to that Prophecy, as it stood in the Hebrew Copies of the First Century. And to confirm Josephus's Account, he refers to 2 *Esd.*

*xv. 10.* as a Prophecy (probably of Jeremiah) of this very Fact, of the Jews Return from Egypt." *Whiston's Authent. Rec. vol. i. p. 7.*

Ver. 4. *All them that dwelt at Babylon by the River Sud.* *Ad flumen Sodi, Vulg.* Babylon is mentioned here as situate on the River Sud; but one does not read of any River in Babylonia of this Name. Sodi, indeed, in Hebrew, signifies Pride, and so mystically, may be expressive of the swelling of the mighty River Euphrates, whose Course was impetuous, and over-bearing. The Commentators either take no Notice at all, or give no sufficient Account of this River. Bochart conjectures, that Sodi, or Sori, is a Fault of the Copyist, and that it should be Sori, or Suri, because there is on the Banks of Euphrates, a City called Sura, or Sora. His Words are, *Me auctore legendum est Sē, Sar. Nam ex Hebræorum monumentis desumptum est, in quibus erat נד Sar, sed sefellit interpretem similitudo literarum נד Resh & Daleth. Sar idem quod Sura vel Sora, urbs Babyloniæ notissima, ad hunc ipsum Euphratis alveum.* Of the Reality of such a City, he gives ample Testimony, and observes it was called by another Name, *Madbasia*; but that the River Euphrates was called Sar, or Sor, he shews not so distinctly: However, it is not improbable that it was so, and that the City either took its Name from that part of the River, or the River from the City. Ptolomy mentions a Branch of the River Euphrates, called *Maarsares*, which Bochart supposes, and not without some Probability to be a Corruption from נד Naar-Sura, *Fluvius Surae.* See Bochart *Phaleg, l. i. c. 9.*

Ver. 8. *Namely, Silver Vessels, which Sedechias, the Son of Josias, King of Judah, had made.* Instead of the golden ones which Nebuchadnezzar King of Babylon carried away, which Solomon had put in the House of the Lord. These, being only of Silver, and not of such Value as the former, possibly might fall into such Hands as to be purchased again, and sent back to Jerusalem. The other, of immense Worth, were kept by Nebuchadnezzar, as appears from *Dan. v. 2.* Grotius thinks this Sentence an Interpolation, *Comm. in loc.*

Ver. 10. *Prepare ye Manna.* *Παρασκεύαζετε μάννα.* It is generally agreed, that this is a corrupt Reading, as the Margin also intimates: it should be *Mincha*, or a Meat Offering. Grotius contends, that the true one is *μάννα*, and not *μάννα*. *Παρασκεύαζετε* is also improperly rendered *prepare*, it is a sacrificial Expression, and signifies to offer. In the Translation of the Old Testament, which is followed by the Writers of the New, *μάννα* is equivalent to *ισχυρισμός*, or *isuectio*. See 2 *Kings xxiii. 21.* 1 *Esd. i. 6.* And the Words



Words at the Institution of the Eucharist, *ἵνα πάντες*, would be as well rendered, *Offer this in Remembrance of me*. It is likewise so used by the Jewish Hellenistic Writers, and by the Greek ones of the Church, as *facere* is also among the Latins.

[Ibid. *And offer upon the Altar of the Lord our God*.] The Exiles at Babylon, are here supposed to send money to the Priests, to buy the necessary Offerings for the Altar of the Lord. But how is this consistent with what is mentioned *ῥ 2*, that Jerusalem was taken and burnt? If the Temple was indeed at this Time burnt, we must either understand this, that they were to bring their Oblations to the Place where the Altar formerly stood, which they esteemed as consecrated Ground, or that an Altar was actually erected on the same Spot, or of a Place of Worship in general, or of that at Mizpah, in particular; which Place continued to be a Proseucha, or Place of Worship. See *1 Maccab. iii. 46*. There is the like Expression, and upon a parallel Occasion, *Jerem. xli. 5*. Grotius thinks this last Clause to be an Interpolation.

Ver. 11. *And pray for the Life of Nabuchodonosor*.] We meet with the like *Ezra. vi. 10*, where Darius orders all things necessary for the Sacrifices to be given to the Elders of the Jews, that they may offer Sacrifices of sweet Savour unto the God of Heaven, and pray for the Life of the King, and his Sons. *Diodorus Siculus* has a Passage to the same Purpose, *Ad dūstis ad eum victimis, mos erat pontificem sacerdoti adstantem magna voce in conserta Aegyptiorum corona preces enūtiare, ut Dei sanitatem cum cæteris bonis omnibus regi largiantur*, l. i. And from *Tertullian*, we learn, that it was a solemn Part of the Service of the Church, in his Time, to pray for the Happiness and Prosperity of the Princes under whom they lived, *In Apolog.* When the Jews came under the Government of the Kings of Egypt, *Eleazar*, their High Priest, writes to *Ptolemy* thus, "We continually offer Sacrifice for thee, thy Children, and Friends; and the People pray for the happy Success in all Things, and for the peaceable State of thy Kingdom." *Jos. Antiq. l. xii.* And so they did, when they were under the *Seleucidae*: And lastly, when they came under the Roman Government, this was their constant Practice, till they begun that Rebellion which ruined their Nation, *Jos. De bello Jud. l. ii.* This being, says the same Author, the Cause of the War that the Seditious did reject the Sacrifice offered for *Cæsar*, tho' the Priests and Nobles earnestly entreated them not to desert the Custom, which had always obtained among them, And that the Christians, following their Example, thus prayed continually, from the Beginning, for their Kings, tho' Heathens and Persecutors, we learn from the Writings of *Polycarp*, *Justin*, *Tertul-*

*lian*, *Cyprian*, *Lactantius*, and other ancient Writers.

[Ibid. *And for the Life of Balshazzar his Son*.] As the Scripture mentions *Evilmerodach* as Son of *Nebuchadnezzar*, *2 Kings xxv. 27*. some have thought that by *Belshazzar*, *Evilmerodach* is here to be understood, and that one and the same Person is meant by both Names. Others say, that *Evilmerodach* was the eldest Son of that Monarch, and *Belshazzar* the youngest; and that the eldest being at that Time in Disgrace with his Father, the younger was looked upon as presumptive Heir of the Crown, and therefore taken Notice of here. Others understand by Son, his Grandson *Belshazzar*, as Grandfathers are frequently called Fathers in Scripture, see *2 Sam. ix. 7*. *2 Kings viii. 26*. compared with *ῥ 18*. especially with respect to such as inherit after them. But *Nebuchadnezzar* was in Truth his Grandfather, tho' called his Father, *Dan. v. 2*. for *Belshazzar* was Son of *Evilmerodach*, by *Nitocris* his Queen, and therefore Grandson to *Nebuchadnezzar*.

Ver. 12. *And we shall serve them many Days*.] As the Jews had the greatest Reason to consider *Nebuchadnezzar*, and his Family, and the Babylonians in general, as their most cruel Enemies, since they had overturned their State, burnt their holy City and Temple, and either killed or taken Prisoners their Kings, Nobles, Priests, and the far greater Part of the People, can it be consistently supposed, that they should wish, or pray, as the Words seem to imply, that they might serve them many Days? The Meaning therefore must be, that, if, according to their melancholy Prospect, they should continue to serve them many Years, they might find Favour in their Sight, and their Servitude in the Land of their Captivity, be easy, or at least tolerable to them.

Ver. 14, 15. *And ye shall read this Book which we have sent unto you, to make Confession in the House of the Lord, upon the Feasts, and solemn Days. And ye shall say, &c.*] By Book we are here to understand the Letter (for so any Writing of considerable Length is styled among the Hebrews) which *Baruch* wrote in the Name of those that were in Babylon, to such of their Brethren as still remained in Judea. It begins properly at the 15th Verse (for the five foregoing ones are a sort of Preface) and it contains that Prayer or Confession, which the Jews used in their public Worship, on solemn Days, during their Captivity. It may be divided into three Parts; in the first, which ends at *ch. iii. 8*. they acknowledge their great Unworthiness, and the Justice of God's Dealings with them; they entreat his Forgiveness of their Sins past, and repeat the Warning and Threats of the Prophets, whose Words and Reproofs they had notwithstanding rejected. The second Part, which begins at *ῥ 9*. of the third Chapter,



ter, to the Beginning of the fourth, recounts the great Privileges and Advantages which the Jews enjoyed above other Nations, in that they had the Knowledge of the Law of the Most High, and thro' the Direction of the only true Wisdom, were made acquainted with the Means of real Happiness, Life, and Peace. From thence to the End of the fifth Chapter, is an Exhortation to a sincere Repentance, and to leave their evil Ways, by a speedy Conversion, with a Promise on that Condition, of a Deliverance from the Captivity under which they groaned, that the Power of their Enemies should be subdued, and their Haughtiness turned into Mourning. This pleasing Prospect takes up the Remainder of the Letter, in which the Author has many beautiful Turns, and lively Strokes, and is transported, even to a Degree of Rapture, and the Thoughts of the agreeable Change. In particular, the happy Times of the Gospel are spoken of with such Assurance and Clearness, as to give Occasion to some to suspect Interpolations in several Places, which are indeed too glaring and explicit for the Darkness of those Times; especially, ch. iii. 37. It is easy to observe, with respect to the supplicatory Part of this Prayer, that much of it is borrowed from that of *Daniel*, and that in the Description of the glorious State of the Church, there is frequent Allusion to many Passages in *Isaiah*.

## CHAP. II.

Ver. 3. **T**HAT a Man should eat the Flesh of his own Son, and the Flesh of his own Daughter.] This is to be understood of the first Siege of *Jerusalem*, by the *Babylonians*, the Misery of which *Jeremiah* thus pathetically describes, *They that be slain with the Sword are better than they that be slain with Hunger; the Hands of the pitiful Woman have sodden their own Children, they were their Meat in the Destruction of the Daughter of my People*, ch. iv. 9, 10. See also ch. ii. 20. the like unnatural Cruelty happened at the Siege of *Jerusalem*, by *Titus*, when the Distress by Famine was so great, "that Wives tore away the Meat out of the Mouths of their Husbands, Children from their Parents, and Mothers forced the Food from the Mouths of their Infants, and took away even the Drops of Milk, the last Support of their just expiring Babes: But what was most surprizing and unnatural, the very Instinct of Parents towards their Children was extinguished by the Famine; for they eat their own Sons and Daughters without Horror." *Jos. de Bell. Jud.* l. v. c. 10. and l. vi. c. 3. The like happened at the Siege of *Samarita*, *2 Kings* vi. 28, 29. in all which lamentable Instances, was fulfilled that Passage, *Deut.*

xxviii. 56. *The tender and delicate Woman which would not venture to set the Sole of her Foot upon the Ground for Delicateness, her Eye shall be evil towards the Husband of her Bosom, and towards her Son, and towards her Daughter.*

Ver. 11. *And hast gotten thyself a Name as appeareth this Day.*] It may be pertinently asked, With what Propriety it can be here said, that the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, and the Captivity of the People of *Israel*, exalted the Name of God, and manifested the Greatness of his Majesty? Would not Infidel Nations from hence take occasion to blaspheme the true God, and to reflect upon his Power, as if the Gods of the Nations had been too powerful for him, by subduing a People, of whom he had proclaimed himself the Saviour, and Protector? To this it may be replied, that what these Idolators looked upon as an Instance of God's Weakness, was a signal Act of his Power, Justice, and Veracity, as it was the remarkable fulfilling of what he had so many hundred Years before threatened by his Servant *Moses*, *Deut.* xxviii. 47, 48, 49. If the *Chaldeans* led his own People into Captivity, it was because God was become their Enemy; if a Kingdom once so flourishing was destroyed in a Manner so deplorable, it was to punish the Ingratitude of a People quite insensible of his Mercies. So that the Greatness of God appeared as visibly in the Instances of his Severity, as in those of his loving Kindness; and he was as truly the God of *Israel*, when he delivered them into the Power of a Nation of a fierce Countenance, & 50. to suffer all the Miseries there threatened, as when he brought them out of *Egypt*, with a mighty Hand, and stretched out Arm.

Ver. 13. *We are but a few left among the Heathen, where thou hast scattered us.*] Besides the Jews decrease by Dispersions, who were tossed like Vagabonds from one Country to another, without any certain Settlement, the horrid Butcheries which the Jews underwent, were innumerable. The Jewish Writers, in describing them, cannot find Expressions tragical enough to represent them: twice as many, they tell us, perished by the Romans Cruelty only, as came actually out of *Egypt*, and thereby completed that Malediction, *Deut.* xxviii. 62. If one considers the Miseries with which the Jews were afflicted from the Reign of *Josias* only, they are scarce to be paralleled in any other Kingdom, in so short a Time. *Pharao-neco*, gained a great Victory over *Josias*, conquered *Judea*, and deposed King *Jeboabaz*, and set up another, and brought away great Part of the People, with their King *Jeboabaz*, into *Egypt*; four Years after the Kingdom of *Juda* was wasted by *Nabuchadnezzar*, and not long after, *Jeboakin* was put to death, and many Captives brought to *Babylon*. *Jeconias* reigned



reigned but three Months and ten Days, and was also brought to Babylon, with a great Number of his Subjects. In eight or nine Years, how many Misfortunes, Changes, Captivities! how many Princes murdered, or deposed!

Ver. 24. *The Bones of our Kings, and the Bones of our Fathers; . . . taken out of their Sepulchres.* It was a Custom, both among Jews and Gentiles, to bury with the Deceased some of their most valuable Effects, and Ornaments, and sometimes to put into the Sepulchre great Quantity of Money, and Treasure. On this Account, says a learned Writer, *Chaldei ossa regum Jude, ac principum, nec non sacerdotum ac Prophetarum, in sepulchris effoderunt, ad effodiendos nimirum thesauros, quos in antiquorum sepulchris munificia reconditis manu consuetos, ipso experimento edocti probe norant.* *Alting. Roma Subterranea.* p. 93.

Ver. 35. *I will make an everlasting Covenant with them . . . and will no more drive my People out of the Land.* The Jews at Babylon, where this Author wrote, did not imagine that the Prophecies were at an End in the first Return of the Jews under the Persian Kings; they, by Virtue of the everlasting Covenant which God made to drive them no more out of the Land, hoped for another more perfect and glorious Restoration, as foretold by the Prophets, which should be the Deliverance of God himself, even Salvation by their Messiah. See *Bishop Chandler's Defence*, &c. p. 53.

CHAP. III.

Ver. 4. **H**EAR the Prayers of the dead Israelites. This Passage has been applied by the Romanists, to countenance their Notion, that the Saints departed, intercede and pray for the Living, and has been quoted by Bellarmine, particularly for that Purpose. But the Place seems capable of a fair and orthodox Interpretation, if we consider the following Reasons: 1. By the dead Israelites, we are not to understand such of them who are departed this Life, and whose Souls are separated from their Bodies; but those, who being yet alive, are dead in Trespases and Sins, as St. Paul speaks, *Ephes. ii. 1.* 2. This Sense is further confirmed from *vs. 11.* where it is said of Israel, *How happeneth it, that thou art defiled with the Dead? that thou art counted with them that go down into the Grave?* i. e. as one of them that are near the Pit, upon Account of their great Misery and Affliction. And the Reason for this their Suffering, follows the Question immediately, *viz. Thou hast forsaken the Fountain of Wisdom, for if thou hadst walked in the Way of God, thou shouldst have dwelt in Peace for ever.* i. e. shouldst not have been in Captivity. 3. It is no uncommon Expression to compare Persons under and great Calamity to dead Men, and to account of them as such. See *Ezekiel ch. xxxvii.* where the Israelites in their Captivity, are represented as dead Bones, *vs. 11.* and their Return from their Dispersion, as the Opening of their Graves, and their Restoration is described as a Resurrection by *Isa. ch. xxvi. 15.* 4. After the Words, *Hear the Prayers of the dead Israelites*, it follows, *and of their Children, which have sinned before thee*, where the Vulg. and our Version seem faulty: The Greek renders it by a Participle of the Present Tense, *ἀναπαύοντων*, which shews that this is to be understood of the Israelites then alive, and not of those which had sinned and were dead, for then it should have been *ὑπαλκόντων* in the Pluperfect Tense. *Junius* renders here, *Exaudi orationem mortuorum Israelitarum*, id est, *filiorum qui peccant coram te*. Lastly, It is an Absurdity for the Israelites to intercede for their Intercessors, which according to the Romanists Sense they do, by beseeching God to hear the Prayers of the departed Israelites in Favour of those that are alive, *2 Maccab. xii. 13, 14.* Mr. *Whiston* says the Sense is here, the Prayers of those Israelites who were then alive, and interceded with thee, but are since dead, see *ch. ii. 17.*

Ver. 8. *And to be subject to Payments, according to all the Iniquities of our Fathers.* *His ἀφαισιν. ἀφαιμα and ἀφαισις*, properly signify a Debt. Here we may understand unjust Exaction, as *Junius* expressly renders, which the Jews in the Land of their Captivity were exposed to, and probably suffered, being at the Will and arbitrary Pleasure of those that had them in Subjection. According to *Calmet*, it signifies their being bought or sold into Slavery, to satisfy the Debts contracted by their Fathers. Anciently Creditors had a Power to sell the Children of their Debtors for the Satisfaction of their Debt, *Matth. xviii. 25.* And Fathers themselves were sometimes necessitated to sell their Children for this Purpose, *Exod. xxi. 7. Baruch iv. 6.* Or being subject to Payments, may here mean Usury. God threatens his People, *Deut. xxviii. 44.* that they should borrow of their Enemies upon Interest, or Usury, and thereby become their Bondmen, or Debtors. The first Part of the Letter of these Captives ends with this Verse.

Ver. 11. *Thou art defiled with the Dead, thou art counted with them that go down into the Grave.* The Sense is, that, living among the Chaldeans, they were in a State of continual Defilement, dwelling as it were among the



the Tombs. He compares the captive Jews, in a strange Country, to a Person shut up in a Grave, or confined in a House with a dead Corpse. There is the like Expression Psalm xxviii. 1.

Ver. 14. *Learn where is Wisdom, where is Strength, where is Understanding, that thou mayst know also where is Length of Days and Life, where is the Light of the Eyes, and Peace.* By Strength, *ἰσχύς*, I would not here understand, with most Interpreters, Fortitude, or bodily Strength, to subdue Enemies, which is but ill connected with the Perfections of the Soul in this Place: It means rather, I conceive, Strength of Mind, see Dan. ii. 20. where Might is rendered by the *ἰσχύς*. The *Vulg.* properly distinguishes between *μακροβιότης* and *ζωή*, which follow, rendering the former, *longiturnitas vite*, and the other, *Victus*. The *Light of the Eyes*. *Castalio* renders *vita* likewise, which would encrease the Tautology; nor is it better, I think, translated by *Grotius*, *res adversa*. It means rather, as *Solomon* speaks, that the Commandment is a Lamp, and the Law is Light, Prov. vi. 23. Or as the Psalmist has it, that the Commandment of the Lord is pure, and giveth Light unto the Eyes, Ps. xix. 8. See Baruch iv. 2. Eccles. xxv. 11. and the Note.

Ver. 16. *Where are the Princes of the People become, and such as ruled the Beasts upon the Earth.* *Grotius* understands this of Kings who delighted in Hunting, and the Diversions of the Chace; who pleased and sported themselves with Animals the most fierce and savage; looking upon themselves as Lords in a more especial Manner of Nature, and the Creation, and exercising a Power beyond the common Dominion given to Man at the Beginning. The Scriptures often put Animals in the Number of the Things over which Monarchs have Dominion. Accordingly God, to denote the absolute Sovereignty which he had given to the King of Babylon, says, that he had given the Beasts of the Field also to serve him, Jer. xxvii. 6. xxviii. 14. *Judith* flatters the Pride of *Holofernes*, by telling him, that not only Men should obey him, but also the Beasts of the Field, and the Castle should do Homage to him, ch. xi. 7.

Ver. 17. *They that had their Pastime with the Fowls of the Air.* If we understand this figuratively, it means such as delighted in high and lofty Contemplations, whose towering Imaginations played aloft, like the soaring Eagle. *Grotius* expounds it literally of such as delighted in Hawking, which was a royal Pastime in ancient Times. A Dominion over the Fowls of the Air is mentioned also in Scripture, as an Instance of the Sovereignty of Princes. Thus *Daniel* tells *Nebuchadnezzar*, that wheresoever the Children of Men dwell, God had given both the Beasts of the Field, and the Fowls of Heaven into his Hand, and made him Ruler over them, ii. 38. *Ezekiel* represents the King of Assyria as a great Cedar, in which all the Fowls of Heaven made their Nests, and under whose

Branches all the Beasts of the Field brought forth their young, xxxi. 6. *Judith* xi. 7.

Ver. 18. *For they that wrought in Silver, and were so careful, and whose Works are unsearchable.* *Οτι οἱ τὸ ἀργύριον τελευτῶντες, καὶ μελεμνῶντες, καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ἐξεύρεσις τῶν ἔργων αὐτῶν.* The *Vulg.* and *Syriac* omit *οτι*, which indeed perplexes the Sense, eludes and disappoints the Reader, and, after promising him a Reason, he finds nothing that it relates to, or can be assigned as a Reason of. It seems not improbable that the true Reading may be, *ἔτι οἱ τὸ ἀργύριον, κ. τ. λ.* which gives a natural and clear connection to what follows. *Ἐξεύρεσις*, which *Maldonat* and some other Expositors understand here in the Sense of *lucrum*, is not so proper to this Place. It seems rather to mean the Number and Delicacy of the Works here spoken of. The Sentence, *Οὐκ ἔστιν ἐξεύρεσις τῶν ἔργων αὐτῶν*, plainly corresponds to the Close of the former Verse, *οὐκ ἔστι τέλος τῆς κτίσεως αὐτῶν*, as will appear by laying the two corresponding Passages together, "both they that heaped up Riches so extravagantly, that there was no End of their getting, and they that wrought so accurately in Sculpture and Engravings, that there is no finding out," i. e. no counting their Number, no equalling the Excellence of their curious Works, are all of them vanished, and gone down to the Grave. The Author designs the Close of the two Verses to give Strength and Force to what went before in each, that he may at last more effectually shew the Excellence of Wisdom or Piety, which is so much better and more enduring than these worldly Advantages and Attainments; that neither the Wealth of these Men, which was without End, nor their Art which is now inimitable, could ensure to them Life and Happiness; whereas they that walked in the Way of God, *ψ. 13.* should dwell in Peace for ever.

Ver. 19. *They are vanished.* This, according to *Grotius* and *Badwell*, denotes the transitory and mortal State of Kings, as well as other Men, who die and are as quickly succeeded by others. *Νεώτεροι*, in the following Verse does not mean merely young Men, but fresh Successors, or new Kings. Or it may refer to the curious Artists, beforementioned, who took such Pains to bring their Work to Perfection, and to make it valuable and lasting, that they are vanished, and dead like others of less Figure and Taste. *Αφανισμός*, is taken absolutely for Death, *2 Maccab. v. 12.* But in those Words of the Psalmist, *before I go hence, and have more seen*, it is rather a Periphrasis of Death.

Ver. 23. *The Agarenes that seek Wisdom.* called also *Ishmaelites*. *Strabo* and *Ptolemy* call them *Agari*. Not only Arabia, and the adjacent Countries, but the Eastern Part of the World in general was famous for the Study of Wisdom or Philosophy, as it was afterwards called. The *Edomites* put in their Claim to this Character, *Is Wisdom no more in Teman?* Jer. xlix. 7. In the Book of Job,

*Eliphaz,*



*Elipbaz*, one of the Disputants, is called the *Temanite*, as being descended from *Teman*, *Esau's* Grandson. Under the Burden of *Arabia*, *Is.* xxi. 14. the Inhabitants of the Land of *Tema* are mentioned, which *Tema* is reckoned by *Moses* among the Sons of *Ismael*. As this Writer joins *Meran* to *Teman*, there is Reason to think that the first is in *Arabia* as well as the second.

*Ibid.* *The Authors of Fables.* i. e. Ingenious Apologues. The Margin has *Expounders*, probably of *Ænigma's*, or Riddles. Or it may mean Persons skilled in the Interpretation of Dreams, or *Oneirocritics*; a Piece of Science, but falsely so called, in great Request among the *Egyptians*, *Arabians*, *Persians*, *Indians*, and other Eastern Nations. See *Mede's Comment. Apocalyp.* l. iii. p. 451. *1 Kings* x. 1.

Ver. 24. *How great is the House of God?* How large and extended is his Empire! and how great the Number of his Creatures! the whole Earth is his Kingdom, all Men are his Subjects, and all Times under his Cognizance; but there are but few that enter into his Secrets, and partake of his Wisdom. It is observable, that this Writer calls the Universe, *the House of God*; because, great as it is, yet the infinite Being is present every where in it, and governs it with as much Ease, as a Father or Master does his Family.

Ver. 26. *There were the Giants famous from the Beginning.* These great Giants, like all others, were under the Empire of the sovereign Monarch of the Universe; but they were not preferred, or chosen of God to receive the Gift of Wisdom. God chose before them *Noah* and his Family before the Flood, and after that Time he preferred the *Israelites* to the *Repbaim*. And, indeed, throughout both Testaments, the constant Tenor of his Procedure has been, to prefer the Meek and Lowly, to the Mighty or more Powerful.

Ver. 28. *These were destroyed, because they had no Wisdom.* Or wanted the Fear of the Lord. The Fear of God is the principal Wisdom, whence thro' the whole Book of *Proverbs*, the wicked Man, who neglects the Fear of the Lord, is called a Fool. That Passage, *Prov.* xxi. 16. comes very near this Place, *the Man that wandereth out of the Way of Understanding, shall remain in the Congregation of the Dead*, or in the Assembly of the Giants, as it may be rendered from the Hebrew, i. e. shall go and keep them Company in that accursed Place, and Condition which they are in.

Ver. 29, 30. *Who hath gone up into Heaven,* These Words allude to, and greatly resemble those of *Moses*, *Deut.* xxx. 12, 13. *It is not in Heaven that thou shouldst say, Who shall go up for us to Heaven, and bring it unto us? Neither is it beyond the Sea, that thou shouldst say, Who shall go over the Sea for us, and bring it to us?* To the same Effect with this of *Baruch*, is that of *Philo*; what Need is there of *ἡ παραπρὸς ὁδοποιίας, ἢ τῆς θαλάσσης*

*ἡ παραπρὸς ὁδοποιίας, ἢ τῆς θαλάσσης*, either to take long Journeys, or to go to Sea in Search of Virtue, seeing we have the Root of it within ourselves; or as *Moses* expresses it, *in our Mouth, and in our Heart*.

Ver. 32. *He that prepared the Earth for evermore, hath filled it with four-footed Beasts.* The Vulgate reads with a Conjunction, *qui preparavit terram in eterno tempore, & replevit eam pecudibus, & quadrupedibus*. The Sense is, according to *Calmet*, he that made the Earth that it might continue always, or that it might never move at any Time. The Earth was looked upon as the Foundation and Centre of all the Movements, and of all the Changes that happened here below, without moving, or changing itself. Monarchs rise and fall, Men die, and others succeed in their Place, the Seasons change, and are in continual Vicissitude, but the Earth continues always the same. According to that Observation of *Solomon*, *one Generation passeth away, and another Generation cometh, but the Earth abideth for ever.* *Eccles.* i. 4.

Ver. 33. *He that sendeth forth Light and it goeth, calleth it again, and it obeyeth him with Fear.* He commands the Sun to stop, and it stands still, as it happened under *Joshua*, ch. x. 12. He commands it to be retrograde, and the Shadow returns backward ten Degrees, as was the Sign to *Hezekiah*, *2 Kings* xx. 9. he forbids it to shine at all, and Darkness is over all the Land, as at our Saviour's Crucifixion, *Matt.* xxvii. 45. What follows in the next Verse about the Stars, is equally sublime, and very much resembles *Eccles.* xliii. 10. *Pf.* cxlvii. 4. *ἐλάμψαν τῷ ποιῶντι αὐτὸς*, is inaccurately rendered in the next Verse following, *they shewed light unto him that made them*; it should rather be, *They shined*, not for his Use, but by his Order and Appointment, that made them.

Ver. 36, 37. *He hath found out the Way of Knowledge, and hath given it unto Jacob his Servant, and to Israel his beloved. Afterward did he shew himself upon Earth, and conversed with Men.* The Author shews, that the Jews were in Bondage for deserting that way of Wisdom, which being unknown to idolatrous Nations, he that founded the Earth by Wisdom, had made known to his People by his Prophets, see *Eccles.* xxiv. 8. and intending to exhort them to stick fast to God, and not to fall away to the Idols of the Nations in their Captivity, as the Prophets *Isaiab* and *Jeremiab* had warned them before, he puts them in Mind, that it was none but God that could discover that Way of Wisdom to which the Law taught *Israel*; which Wisdom, says he, was afterwards seen upon Earth, and conversed among Men, viz. in and by the Prophets, who spoke by the Word and Wisdom of God. The Expression in the 37<sup>th</sup> Verse, it must be owned, is very like that of *St. John* i. 14. *that the Word was made Flesh, and dwelt amongst us*, and is thought to be so close a Resemblance of it, that some learned Men have fancied on that Account, it was foisted in here by some Christian Copyist. A learned



learned Writer who contends for the Canonicalness of this Book, thinks that this Clause, too much favouring the Divinity and Incarnation of the Messiah, induced the Jews to lay this Book aside, soon after Christianity prevailed in the World, which before that Time they ever looked upon as Sacred and Canonical. *Auth. Rec.* vol. i. p. 7. Bishop Chandler thinks by *afterwards* is meant the latter Days, or the Days of the Messiah, see *Dan.* ii. 29—45. the Time that all *Israel* shall be saved by the Deliverer's coming to *Sion*, and his manifesting the Jews to be the Children of his Kingdom, *Def. Christ.* p. 55. Others, who think that the applying this Passage to the Incarnation and Appearance of the Messiah would hold out too much Light for the Times of this Writer, refer it either to that Occurrence, when, after the giving of the Law on Mount *Sinai*, *Moses* and *Aaron*, and the Seventy Elders, were permitted to see the God of *Israel*, *Exod.* xxiv. 9. and *Moses* himself to come up into the Mount to him: Or to the Angel of the Covenant appearing amongst, and conducting his People in the Wilderness Forty Years. *Estius in loc.*

## CHAP. IV.

Ver. 1. **T**HIS is the Book of the Commandments of God, and the Law that endureth for ever.] As the Gospel comprizes the Law and the Prophets in two Commandments, viz. the Love of God and of our Neighbour; or more briefly in Charity: So this Writer says, that Wisdom described in the former Chapter, contains the Substance of the Commandments, and of the Law here said to endure for ever; not with respect to its ceremonial Ordinances, but the moral and spiritual Part, which is fixt and unchangeable. Wisdom therefore here described seems to be no other in Effect, than Charity so highly extolled, *1 Cor.* xiii. 8. whose Character it is, never to fail, when even Tongues shall cease, and Knowledge itself shall vanish away.

Ver. 3. Give not thine Honour to another, nor the Things that are profitable unto thee, to a strange Nation.] It was the Glory of the *Israelites* to know the only true God, to love and serve him, who had chosen them above all other Nations, to be an holy People, consecrated to his Service: This Character distinguished his Peculium from Heathen and Infidel Nations: By forsaking therefore the God of their Fathers, and abandoning themselves to the Idolatry of the strange Nations, they gave the Honour due to the living God only to insensible Things, and stained their former Glory. And instead of Children of God, a Title and Privilege which they enjoyed before became Slaves, and were rejected by him. And this God threatened to do by *Moses*, *Deut.* xxxii. 21. when they should move him to jealousy with that which is not God, and provoke him to Anger with their Vanities.

Ver. 5. My People, the Memorial of *Israel*.] i. e. ye poor Remains of the Jews, the surviving Hopes of sinking *Israel*, who are preserved to continue the Name and Memory of once so famous a People, the only remaining Monument of distressed *Sion*.

Ver. 7. Ye provoked him that made you, by sacrificing to Devils.] The Psalmist, according to the Version of the LXX, says, *ὅτι πάντες οἱ θεοὶ ἰθὺν δαίμονια*, that all the Gods of the Heathen are Devils, *Pf.* xcvi. 5. And of the Jews who sacrificed to them it is said, they sacrificed to Devils, and not to God; *לשדים* to evil, wasting, and destroying Spirits. And so they are styled, *2 Chron.* xi. 15. *Rev.* ix. 20. The pulling down idolatrous Worship, is in our Saviour's Language, the Casting out the Prince of this World, *John* xii. 31. xvi. 11. The converting of the Gentiles from Idolatry to the Worship of the true God, is called, turning them from the Power of Satan unto God, *Acts* xxvi. 18. The delivering them from the Power of Darkness, *Col.* i. 13. who before walked according to the Prince of the Power of Darkness, *Ephes.* ii. 2. and were led Captive by Satan at his Will, *2 Tim.* ii. 26.

Ver. 12. Let no Man rejoice over me a Widow, who for the Sins of my Children am left desolate.] This *Prosopopœia* of *Sion*, bemoaning her Children gone into Captivity, is moving and beautiful. She assumes the Character of a disconsolate Widow, an Idea often borrowed to represent deep Distress, bemoaning the Loss of the Favourite of her Bosom, with these two sad, but common, Aggravations of her Sorrow, her Children taking evil Courses, and as such exemplarily punished, stricken of God, and afflicted; and herself, instead of that Compassion, which her Calamities called for from those around her, neglected, insulted, reproached, and injured. The venting her Grief in broken Accents, *ψ* 17. But what can I help you? is imitatively, says *Grotius*, affecting, "I who am devoid, not only of my former Substance, my Ornaments, and pleasant Things, my Comforts and Conveniences, but reduced to the lowest State, and wanting myself the Necessaries of Life, what am I able, what can I be expected to do for you?" At length all Appearance of human Help vanishing, she raises Motives of Consolation from that never failing Treasury of Delight and Comfort to afflicted Minds, the Word of God, whose Statutes had been her Song in the House of her Pilgrimage; and assures them, from the Prophets, of a Deliverance from their Captivity, and remarkable Vengeance overtaking their Persecutors. In this pleasing Prospect she exults and triumphs, ch. v. as a fond Mother overjoyed for the Recovery of her Children.

Ver. 15. Probably this refers to *Deut.* xxviii. 49, 50. and may be considered as a fulfilling that Prophecy, The Lord shall bring a Nation against thee from far, from the End of the Earth, as swift as the Eagle flieth, a Nation whose Tongue thou shalt not understand.



A Nation of fierce Countenance, which will not regard the Person of the Old, nor shew Favour to the Young. This, if applied to the Chaldeans, the Description of the Place will not suit, for the Chaldeans did not come from a Country which was very far from Judea. If to the Romans, the Time will not suit with the supposed Age of this Writer. Josephus, indeed, informs us, that, upon the Romans making themselves Masters of the Temple, they slaughtered all, both Old and Young, indifferently, without any Respect to Age, having neither Mercy, nor Modesty.

Ver. 16. *And left her that was alone, desolate without Daughters.*] The Geneva Version, I think clearer, *leaving me alone, and destitute of my Daughters*, i. e. both Sons and Daughters were carried into Captivity. See *Y 14*.

Ver. 20. *I have put off the Clothing of Peace, and put upon me the Sackcloth of my Prayer: I will cry unto the Everlasting in my Days.*] i. e. I have put off the Garment of Prosperity, as the Margin has it, or of Gladness, and put upon me the Sackcloth of Penance and Supplication, *indui cilicium deprecationis meae*. Arab. And Junius renders in the same Manner: Or, as the Syriac has it, *cloathed me with Sackcloth in the solemn Time of my Prayer, and Supplication*. The last Clause, *καταξομαι προς τὸ αἰώνιον ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις μου*, is inaccurately rendered here. It may either be translated, with the Margin, *in the Time of mine Affliction*, and in this Sense we are to understand *ἡμέρα Ἱερουσαλήμ*, Psalm cxxxvii. 7. and xxxvii. 13. Or the Sense may be, "I will cry unto the Everlasting all my Days;" thus Calmet, *Je crieray au Tres-baut tous les jours de ma vie*: And the Geneva Version accordingly, *as long as I live I will call upon the Everlasting*. This Sense is strongly confirmed by Ps. cxvi. 2. where the Expression in the LXX very much resembles this, *ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ μου επικαλέσομαι*, and our Translators rightly render, *I will call upon him as long as I live*.

Ver. 22. *Because of the Mercy which shall soon come unto you from the Everlasting, our Saviour.*] The like is repeated, *Y 24, 25*. but how can this Mercy be properly said to come soon, as the Captivity was to last Seventy Years? This, say Mess. of Port Royal, may be admitted, if considered either with respect to God, who inflicted this Punishment, in whose Sight a Thousand Years are but as a Day; or with respect to the suffering Jews themselves, those especially among them, who were touched with a Sense of their Sins, and their deserving a much longer and forer Punishment; "for a Soul which is truly convinced of, and sensibly affected with, the Eternity of Punishment due to its Transgressions, counts for nothing, or considers but as a Moment, the Time of Penance and Suffering, which God is mercifully pleased to inflict in this Life." *Y 22, 24*. This Writer, says Bishop Cband-

ler, personates Baruch, and his Book is little else than an Epitome of what we have at large in the Prophets, concerning a more universal Return than that was of the Jews under Cyrus, and in Virtue of God's everlasting Covenant, to drive them no more out of the Land. The Jews at Babylon, where this Baruch wrote, did not conceive that the Prophecies were exhausted in the first Return of the Jews under the Assyrian Kings, they hoped for another more perfect, and more glorious Restoration, as foretold by the Prophets, which should be the Deliverance of God himself, as the Jews are wont still to call the Salvation of the Messiah. In Confidence of this so eminent a Deliverance, he breaks forth into Admiration of this Emanuel, or God with us. *Def. of Christ*. p. 53, 54.

Ver. 25. *Shortly thou shalt see his Destruction, and shall tread upon his Neck.*] This, says Calmet, was literally accomplished in the Time of Queen Esther, and Mordecai at Susa; and under Daniel at Babylon; for when they were exalted to the highest Dignity, and the most important Posts of the Government, the Chaldeans themselves were obliged to submit to their Authority, and to bow before them, as Isaiah had long before expressly foretold, ch. lx. 14.

Ver. 28. *For as it was their Mind to go astray from God, so being returned, seek him ten Times more.*] It is not enough, says a pious Writer, morally to revoke what is past, by wishing it had not been done, but you must oppose a State to a State, a Habit to a Habit, i. e. as Sin before gave you Law, so now must the Spirit of God. Habitual Sin must be destroyed by a contrary Habit, or State of Holiness: This is well summed up by the Apostle, *As ye have yielded your Members Servants to Uncleaness, and to Iniquity unto Iniquity, even so now yield your Members Servants to Righteousness, unto Holiness*, Rom. vi. 19. What the Greek makes Matter of Exhortation and Advice here, is spoken prophetically according to the Vulg. which accordingly came to pass; for after the Captivity, the Jews were more observant of the Law of God, than they were before, especially with respect to Idolatry. But it will be best, if this Reading is followed, to understand this of those devout Jews in particular, who were converted by the preaching of the Apostles, and were the First Fruits of the Christian Church.

Ver. 35. *And she shall be inhabited by Devils.*] This Expression is grounded on a vulgar Notion, that desolate and forlorn Places are inhabited by evil Spirits, who have their Haunts there. The Canonical Scriptures seem to countenance this Opinion; thus the Demoniack, Luke viii. 29. is said to abide in no House, but to be driven of the Devil into the Wilderness, and thither was our Saviour led, as being the Devil's Residence, to be tempted by him, *Matth. iv. 1*. And accordingly our Saviour, in the Parable of the unclean



clean Spirit, says, *that he walks thro' dry, or uninhabited Places*, Matth. xii. 43. See also Tobit viii. 3.

Ver. 36. *Look about thee towards the East.*] This, no doubt, primarily relates to the Restoration of the Jews under Cyrus, and the Return from their long Captivity by his Appointment; or rather God's influencing his Heart for that Purpose; and tho' *Babylon*, properly speaking, was rather to the North with respect to *Jerusalem*, yet *Persia*, where *Cyrus* reigned, and from whence the happy Orders were to come, was to the *East*. That ἀνατολή here is the Title of the Messiah likewise, there is no Question, whether it be literally rendered *the East*, as the Title formerly was bestowed upon him, Zech. vi. 12. or the Rising of the Sun, that Sun of Righteousness, mentioned Mal. iv. 2. However that be, it is certain that where ἀνατολή, the East, is used in most Places of Scripture, the Commentators and Scholiasts have still applied it to *Christ*, meaning by the *East*, *that Orient*, or *Rising Sun*, and not the Point from whence it rises, see Jer. xxiii. 5. And this seems the more probable, because y 22. he is called *The Everlasting, our Saviour*.

C H A P. V.

Ver. 3. **T**H, ὑπ' ἑγώνον πάση. subaud. χόρη. The like Ellipsis occurs Luke xvii. 24. Job xviii. 4. in LXX Prov. viii. 28. 2 Macc. ii. 18. in Addit. Esth. xiii. 10.

Ver. 6. *For they departed from thee on foot, and were led away of their Enemies; but God bringeth them unto thee exalted with Glory, as Children of the Kingdom.*] i. e. As a royal Race, or Children of Kings, riding in Triumph, and in a most magnificent Procession. *Ezra* gives us the Number and Quality of the Persons that returned, their Horses, Mules, Camels, &c. employed on the Occasion, ch. ii. 66. And it appears from 1 Esdr. v. 2. that *Darius* himself sent a Thousand Horsemen to conduct them back safely to *Jerusalem*, with musical Instruments. *Isaiab* describes their Return from *Babylon* in the most pompous Manner, and in Terms scarcely inferior to a real Triumph, ch. xlix. 22, 23. lxvii. 20. "Their Transport of Mirth" and Jollity on this Occasion (says *Josephus*) "was as great, as if the Day of their Redemption and Return had been the first Day of a new Life." Antiq. lib. xi. c. 4.

Ver. 7. *For God hath appointed that every high Hill.*] By ὑψος and ὕψος, we are here to understand those who are lofty, proud, and supercilious, who exalt themselves from a Conceit of worldly Wisdom: The Meek, on the contrary, are represented as prostrate and humble, casting aside every high Thought, and adoring, with holy Reverence, Mysteries that are above them. This refers to a known Custom of great Kings, who, when they travelled, had their ὁδοποιοί, or Harbingers, sent before them to make the Way plain and commodious, by filling up deep Places, and levelling those that were high,

and smoothing those that were rough. And so *Josephus* says, that when *Titus* came to the Wars, there went before him all the royal Aids, and all the military Men, and those who plained the Way, De Bell. Jud. lib. vi. c. 6. and c. xii. for the coming of the *Roman Army*. The Words here seem to refer to Isa. xl. 4. where the Prophet, describing the Return of the People from their Captivity to their own Country, expresses it "By the former Deliverance and Passage out of *Egypt*, thro' uneven craggy Ways in the Desert, which yet, by God's Conduct, was made passable to them, and they brought at last to a happy *Canaan*." Thus the *Targum* on *Canticles* saith, the Cloud went before the *Israelites* in the Wilderness three Days Journey, to take down their Hills, and fill up their Valleys before them. Mystically, or by way of Metaphor, this Expression of casting down every high Hill, means also, the Removing of all Obstacles to one's Happiness or Designs, as in those Verses of *Sibylla Erythraea*, set down by St. *Austin*, De Civit. Dei, l. viii. where foretelling the coming of the King from Heaven in the Flesh, it follows,

Dejiciet colles, valles extollet ab imo;  
Non erit in rebus hominum sublime, vel altum;  
Æquantur campis montes.

Which is almost the same with the Passage cited from *Isaiab*. Compare also Luke iii. 5. The same Metaphor is used by *Homer*, Il. 6. y 260. where *Apollo*, promising to assist *Hector*, saith,

Αὐτὰρ ἐγὼ προπάροιθε κίων, ἵπποισι κέλευθον  
Πᾶσαν ληνάω,

I will go before and make smooth all Passages.

Ver. 8. *Every sweet smelling Tree shall overshadow Israel.*] i. e. God will furnish his People with all sorts of Accommodations for their Return home; in particular, that they should not be incommoded with Heat, a Calamity very incident to Travellers in hot Countries; God would plant Woods, as it were on purpose to shelter his Chosen in their Return, from the scorching Heat of the Sun. This undoubtedly refers to Is. xli. 19. where God says, *I will plant in the Wilderness the Cedar, the Shittah Tree, the Myrtle, and the Olive Tree, &c.* conducting the People home almost in the same marvellous Manner, as he did his Chosen in the Wilderness, by the Shadow of a Cloud to defend them from the Heat. Or without having Recourse to a Miracle, this may be understood of his appointing their Return at such a Season, when the Trees afforded most Shade; or that they marched thro' such Places where there was a natural Cover over them. Others think, and not without Reason, that this is rather a poetical Description, to display, but in an exaggerating Manner, the Easiness and Pleasure with which the Jews would return from *Babylon*. Our Translators follow the Copies which read ἱστιάσαν, but others have ἱστίστησαν, subsultarunt; and thus *Junius* renders, exsili-



*exsultantque etiam silvæ*, that all the Trees of the Wood rejoiced on the Occasion, like that of the *Psalmist*, *Pf. xcvi. 12.*

## CHAP. VI.

Ver. 3. *SEVEN Generations.*] The Word *γενεα*, or Generation, has many Senses. Sometimes it signifies Twenty, Twenty-five, or Thirty Years, but most generally the last Term; and in this Sense it is used by approved Authors, and particularly in the Genealogy recorded by St. *Matthew*. By it here is meant Ten Years, or rather Seven Decads of Years; but this Acceptation is not very common: But as it was very well known to have been predicted by the Prophets, that the Captivity should last Seventy, that is, Seven Ten Years, it cannot be doubted but that this Author had that Term in View here, and meant the precise Period of Ten Years. The Seventy Years of the Captivity of *Babylon* are usually reckoned from the first Year of *Nebuchadnezzar the Great*, and the fourth of *Jeboiakim*, i. e. *A. M.* 3398, and ended 3468; or before *Christ*, 606, and ended 536, before his Appearance; at which Time *Cyrus* gave leave to all the *Jews* in his Dominions, to return to their own Country. This Epistle, said to be *Jeremiah's*, is supposed to be wrote to the *Jews* when they were going into Captivity with their King, to admonish them to beware of the Idolatry, which they would see in *Babylon*: And seems to be the Letter referred to, *2 Macc. ii. 2, 3.* where the same Caution is given as here, to guard against the Idolatry they would observe in that Place, and is an Epitome of sundry Things in *Moses*, the *Psalms*, and the *Prophets*, against Idolatry, and the fullest Dissuasive against it, in one continued Tract or View, of any thro' the whole Volume of the *Bible*, and handled in the most proper Manner: As Banter and Ridicule are often found more effectual to expose and confute an Error, than grave and serious Reasoning.

Ver. 4. *Gods of Silver, and Gold, and Wood, born upon Shoulders.*] *Isaiah* takes Notice of, and condemns this Custom, *He maketh it a God, they fall down, yea they worship, they bear him upon the Shoulder, they carry him, and set him in his Place, he standeth, and from his Place shall he not remove, xlii. 7.* *Jeremiah* likewise mentions this Idolatry, and their carrying Images in great Procession and Pomp, *They must needs be born*, says he, *because they cannot go, ch. x. 5.* And to this Sense *Spencer*, and other learned Interpreters, explain those Words of *Amos*, *Ye have born the Tabernacle of Moloch, and Chiun your Images, ch. v. 26.* which the *LXX* rightly render *ἀνελάβετε, sursum tulistis*. Numerous Instances of this Superstition used among the Heathen, are to be met with in sacred and profane Writers. See *ψ 26.*

Ver. 6. *Say ye in your Hearts, O Lord, we must worship thee.*] These Words seem wrong-

ly pointed in our Translation, and the common Editions of the *Greek*. The Sense would be better and more agreeable to the Context, if the Rendering was, "We ought to worship thee, O Lord, with the Spirit, or Understanding, in Contradistinction to senseless Images, which take no Notice of their Votaries." And so St. *Cyprian* renders this Passage, *In sensu tibi debet adorari Deus. De Orat. Domin.* One Copy of the *Greek* reads without any Comma at all, probably intending this Sense; but for Clearness I would place it thus, *ἐπαλε δὴ, καὶ διανοία οὐ δὲ δὴ προσκυνεῖν, δέοντα*. The *Psalmist*, in like Manner, after having exposed the Folly of Image Worship, and from the Honour given by the Heathens to their Idols, presses the like Conclusion upon the *Israelites*, and excites them to praise the living God, the Lord of the World, with the greater Devotion, *Pf. cxxxv. 17, 18, 19, 20.*

Ver. 7. *For mine Angel is with you, and I myself caring for your Souls.*] i. e. Mine Angel shall protect you, which these Idols cannot. Our Version, and the *Vulg.* seem faulty in the Rendering of the latter Clause; in the *Greek* it is, *αὐτὸς δὲ ἐκζητῶν τὰς ψυχὰς ὑμῶν*, which I would translate, "And he (the Angel) will watch over you, and revenge any Injury done to you." The *Geneva* Version understands *αὐτὸς*, in like Manner of the Angel, *For mine Angel shall be with you, and shall care for your Souls.* *Junius* is more explicit to the same Purpose, *Angelus meus vobiscum est, qui idem reposciturus est animas vestras*; and so the Oriental Versions also have it.

Ver. 8. *As for their Tongue, it is polished by the Workman, and they themselves are gilded and laid over with Silver; yet are they but false, and cannot speak.*] The mimic Representations of Life are all Deceit; they are mere insensible Images of things, having Mouths, and a Tongue beautifully polished, but are unable to give a Word of Advice, or Comfort to their Supplicants. Their Images are overlaid with Coverings of Gold and Silver Plates, see *ψ 57, 58. Is. xxx. 22.* either to attract the Eyes of the Beholders, or to cover some Defect; but their Gold and Silver serve only to expose their Weakness. They are of no more Value than that of the rich Materials of which they are made, and so far from being able to say or do any thing, that they themselves are the handy Work of those that worship them: Every Excellence that they have is derived from the Ingenuity of the Artificer, and shews rather his Art, than their Divinity.

Ver. 9. *And taking Gold as it were for a Virgin that loves to go gay, they make Crowns for the Heads of their Gods.*] The *Geneva* Version is clearer, which has, *And as they take Gold for a Maid that loveth to be decked, so make they Crowns for the Heads of their Gods.* But the Sense, I conceive, would be more perfect, if the pointing was thus, "And taking Gold, as for some Virgin that loves  
" Dress



"Dress and Finery, they make Crowns for the Heads of their Gods:" And so Calmet understands it, *Comme on fait des ornements à une fille, qui aime à se parer, ainsi on fait ces Idoles avec de l'or.*

Ver. 12. *Yet cannot these Gods save themselves from Rust and Moths, tho' they be covered with Purple Raiment.*] See y 72. i. e. Their Ornaments and royal Attire are perishable Things, like those that wear them; pass but a few Years, and their Riches are corrupted, and their Garments Moth eaten, their Gold and Silver cankered, and the Rust of them shall be a Witness against them, and shall eat them up, as it were Fire, as St. James speaks upon another Occasion, ch. v. 2, 3. That the Heathens, in their idolatrous Worship, adorned the Images of their Gods with costly Robes, is confirmed from Jer. x. 9. where speaking of the Decorations, and rich Apparel of the false Gods, he says, that *blue and purple are their Clothing.*

Ver. 13. *They wipe their Faces because of the Dust of the Temple, when there is much upon them.*] Or, as the Geneva Version has it, "They wipe their Faces because of the Dust of the Temple, whereof there is much upon them." And so the *Vulg.* *Extergunt faciem ipsorum propter pulverem domus, qui est plurimus inter eos,* i. e. thro' the Concourse of the People, or Votaries, who come there in great Numbers. The Multiplicity of Persons, which tread the hallowed Courts, which is an Honour to the true God, is to them an Inconvenience and Disgrace, for when the Idol Temples, like that of *Baal*, are filled with Worshipers from one End to the other, being unable to help themselves in any respect, they must be beholden afterwards to the Care of others, to remove any accidental Stain or Filth that may fasten on them, and to keep them neat and clean. See y 24.

Ver. 15. *He bath also in his Right Hand a Dagger, and an Ax.*] *Arnobius* observes, concerning the Gentiles, "That they designed to create Fear by the Manner in which they framed and represented the Statues and Images of their Gods: Hence Scythes, Clubs, and Thunderbolts, were Appendages to their Idols." *Adv. Gent.* l. vi. Like the God of War, or some martial Hero, they were exhibited, armed with Swords, Lances, Helmets, Bucklers, or whatever Fancy could invent to excite Terror. In the foregoing Verse indeed they are set forth in a milder Attitude, to create Veneration, seemingly dispensing Justice, like some Prince or Governor of a Province, of which the Sceptre which they held forth, was to be the Symbol.

Ver. 19. *They light them Candles . . . whereof they cannot see one.*] Either in their Temples, or in their Processions. See *Cic. Offic.* iii. 26. And *Apuleius*, who says of the Pagan Processions, that, on such an Occasion, *Antistites sacrorum Deum proferebant insignes exuvias, quorum primus lucernam præmicantem claro porrigebat lumine—Magnus præterea*

*sexus utriusque numerus, lucernis, tædis, cereis, &c.* The Sense of the Writer of this Epistle would be more complete, if the first Sentence of the following Verse was added to it thus, "They light them Candles . . . whereof they cannot see one, for they are as one of the Beams of the Temple." And thus the *Vulg.* from some Greek Copies, connects the Sense, *lucernas accendunt illis, & quidem multas, ex quibus nullam videre possunt; sunt quidem sicut trabes in Domo.* And so the Geneva Version, "They light up Candles before them, whereof they cannot see one; for they are but as one of the Posts of the Temple." And *Junius* renders in like Manner. The Intention of the Heathens in having Lamps or Candles burning before their Images and Altars, seems to have been what *Lactantius* intimates, the furnishing Light for their Gods; the Folly of which he thus exposes, *num mentis suæ compos putandus est, qui auctori & datori luminis candelarum ac cerarum lumen affert pro munere?* l. vi. 2.

Ver. 20. *Yet they say, Their Hearts are gnawed upon by things creeping out of the Earth, and when they eat them and their Clothes, they feel it not.*] Thus *Arnobius*, who was himself once a Pagan, speaks of Idols, setting them upon all Occasions in the meanest and most ridiculous Light, *Non videtis sub istorum simulachrorum cavis mures habitare? in ore ab Araneis ordiri retia,* l. vi. *Adv. Gent.* It should seem, say *Mess.* of *Port Royal*, from the Context, as if the Priests themselves, who got their Livelihood by this false Worship, or some of the Worshipers at least, made this Acknowledgment of the Meanness and Imperfection of their Images. But is such an open Declaration from them, much to their great Discredit, at all natural or credible? would it not, in the Esteem of every sensible and well meaning Votary, be the Means to expose and discard them, and at length take from the Priests themselves all the Gain of their Craft? Nor is *Phariv*, as others contend, to be understood as spoken by way of Hear-say, that it is so reported of them, as *Coverdale* understands it; little Need was there to refer to uncertain Tradition, or Report; every one might be convinced from their own Observation of their Decay, how contemptible such Objects of Worship were. Might not this more properly be understood of the Idols themselves betraying their own Defects and Shame by their frail Appearance? i. e. their Idols confess, testify, or make it plain by the Signs of Decay and Rotteness visible about them, and by their being eaten as a Piece of ordinary Wood by Worms, and not perceiving what is done to them, that they are perishable and senseless. And thus *Junius* expounds it, *Ipsa idola testantur se facillime a tenuissimis vermibus erodi in partes intimas usque.* Or the Sense, lastly, may be that of *Isaiah* ch. xlv. 9. that the Makers themselves are their own Witnesses, i. e. they best know the Materials of which they are made, and are sufficiently convinced from



their wanting often to be repaired and beautified, that they are mouldring Vanities.

Ver. 22. *Upon their Bodies and Heads sit Bats, Swallows, and Birds; and the Cats also.* Besides the Meanness of their Original, and the Imperfection of their State, if one considers further the Rudeness and Insults offered to their Divinityships, by vile, despicable and abject Creatures, this also is sufficient to expose Mens Folly in worshiping them. *Minucius Felix*, is very pleasant upon the Occasion, *Quanto verius de Diis vestris animalia muta naturaliter judicant, mures, hirundines, milvi? Non sentire eos sciunt, rodunt, insultant, insident, ac, nisi abigatis, in ipso dei vestri ore nidificant*, p. 175. Edit. Oxon. i. e. The Mice, Swallows, and Crows know better than you (Pagans) what your Gods are; for by gnawing and sitting upon them, and being ready to make Nests in their Mouths, if you do not drive them away, they know that they have neither Sense nor Understanding. Spiders also spin upon their Faces, and use their sacred Heads for Blocks only to hang their Webs on.

Ver. 27. *If they fall to the Ground at any Time, they cannot rise up again themselves.* This was the Case of *Dagon*, who fell upon his Face to the Earth before the Ark of the Lord; and tho' he was once set right again after his Fall by his Priests, yet fell in the like Manner a second Time, with the additional Misfortune of losing his Head, and both his Hands, *1 Sam. v. 3, 4.* So if *Bel* at any Time is bowed down, and *Nebo* stoopeth, they cannot restore or make themselves straight again, but must continue in that Posture and Direction, in which Design or Accident has placed them. The Author of the *Book of Wisdom* has been no less happy than this Writer, in exposing the Weakness and Impotence of Idols; "When the Workmen (says he, speaking of this particular Defect) "had formed it by the Skill of his Understanding, and fashioned it as he designed, "he then looked out for a convenient Room "for it, set it in a Wall, and made it fast "with Iron; for he provided for it that it "might not fall, knowing that it was unable "to help itself, as being an Image that hath "need of Help." Ch. xiii. 15, 16.

*Ibid.* *Set Gifts before them as unto dead Men.* In Scripture likewise they are compared to dead Things, to nothing, and Vanity. The Sense here is, that they are served with Victuals, which are set before them in form, without their being able to avail themselves of them, to touch or use them, or to receive and feast on the Viands and Offerings which are made to them. And how, indeed, should they, being inanimate and senseless Things? And their Votaries themselves must be equally so, to think that they had such a Power, or ever could make use of it: And yet we find, by the Story of *Bel and the Dragon*, that the Simplicity of the *Chaldeans* was such, that they thought that Idol ate in Reality the great Store of Provisions set be-

fore it. *By Gifts placed before dead Men*, the Writer alludes to the Parental, or Sepulchral Entertainments, which were anciently much in Vogue in the Eastern and other Countries, and particularly among some Idolaters, whose Notion was, that the Souls of the Departed wandered about their Sepulchres, and wanted a proper Sustenance, and that it was a pious Office to place Bread and Wine over their Graves, for their Support and Refreshment. See Note on *Ecclus xxx. 18.*

Ver. 28. *The Things that are sacrificed unto them the Priests sell and abuse.* Instead of exercising Acts of Hospitality and Charity to poor and helpless Persons, Widows and Orphans, and bestowing upon them the Remains of the Sacrifices, they make a Trade of holy Viands, or pervert them to bad and evil Uses. It is certain the ancient Idolaters were wont to save some Part of their Sacrifices for magical and superstitious Purposes. *Herodotus* testifies the same concerning the ancient *Persians*, l. i. c. 132. And therefore God orders in the Paschal Sacrifice, that nothing of it should remain until the Morning, lest it should be profaned, or any ways corrupted and abused.

Ver. 29. *Women in Childbed, &c. eat their Sacrifices; by these Things ye may know that they are no Gods.* It appears from their many false Rites, and the shameful Abuse of their Sacrifices, that they are no true Gods. For if they were, neither would their Priests dare to take such Liberties in holy Things, nor unclean and impure Persons be permitted to approach them, or partake of them, which they might not do of a true Sacrifice, nor in the Service of the true God; for according to the Levitical Law, such Persons were not to enter into the Sanctuary, nor touch any hallowed Things, but to continue in a State of Separation for a certain Time, as being defiled by their Infirmary, *Lev. xii. 4.*

Ver. 30. *For how can they be called Gods? because Women set Meat before the Gods of Silver.* The Sense is more determinate and clear in the *Geneva* Version, "From whence cometh it then that they are called Gods? "because the Women bring Gifts to them," i. e. their silly and superstitious Votaries, thro' their Ignorance, pay the like Honours and Regard to their Idols, as if they were really Gods.

Ver. 31. *The Priests sit in the Temples having their Clothes rent, and their Heads and their Beards shaven, and nothing upon their Heads.* Several of the Heathen Priests, particularly those of *Isis* and *Serapis*, had their Heads shaved, and uncovered, in the Manner here described. It was a standing Ordinance at *Memphis*, *Ut Isidis sacerdotes semper derafo sint capite, utque tertia quaque die corpus eradant.* See *Alex. ab Alex. l. vi. Juven. Sat. vi.* It is observable, that the Rites here mentioned were funeral Ceremonies, and therefore the most proper to be used in the Worship of the Heathen Deities, who were no better than dead Men. In the Service of the



the true God, the Jewish Priests were forbid to rent their Clothes, and shave their Heads, thereby to distinguish them, as we may suppose with great Probability, from the Heathen Priests. See *Levit. xxi. 5—10*. Calmet thinks, the Writer here refers to the Lamentations for *Adonis*, customary not only in *Egypt*, *Palestine*, *Phœnicia*, and *Syria*, but also in *Babylonia*, and the Provinces beyond the *Euphrates*.

Ver. 32. *They roar and cry before their Gods, as Men do at the Feast when one is dead.*] This refers to a Rite or Custom among the Jews at their Funerals, by the LXX called *πρὸς θάνατον νεκρῶν*, or the Funeral Feast. For the Jews had Feasts or Banquets upon Account, or in Honour of the Dead, and for the Refreshment of the melancholy Relations and Friends present at the Burial. Thus we read of the *Meat of Mourners*, *Hos. ix. 4.* and of the *Cup of Consolation* to comfort them for the Loss of the deceased, *Jer. xvi. 7.* And this probably the Son of *Sirach* means, where he mentions *θέρματα βρωμάτων παρακείμενα ἐπὶ τὰ φέτα*, i. e. Messes of Meat set on the Sepulchre, *Ecclus xxx. 18. Tobit iv. 17.* See Notes on those Places. This Custom, as we are informed by one of the Jewish Writers, was the impoverishing of many, and that almost unavoidably; for if any one omitted the Funeral Feast, he was reflected upon for want of Piety. On this Account, and some Abuses attending these sepulchral Entertainments, this Custom was at length abolished. By their Lamentations and Cries before their Gods, Calmet thinks those for *Adonis* most probably are meant.

Ver. 40. *When even the Chaldeans themselves dishonour them.*] i. e. They inwardly laugh at them, persuaded of their Weakness and Inability to do any thing. If their Priests presented any sick Person before the Idol, it was rather to comply with the prevailing Superstition, than from any Hope that the Cure would be effected. They were conscious of the Cheat, tho' for gainful Reasons they continued the Practice. *Haruspex ridet cum Haruspiciem videret*, was *Tully's* Sneer upon such Impostors as these. *St. Austin* argues very strongly against the Continuance of such Superstitions from the plain Confession of the Worshipers themselves of these Pagan Deities. *Junius*, who joins this Sentence to the following Verse, makes the Sense to be, That the Chaldeans themselves sufficiently expose the Weakness and Impotence of such Gods, when despairing of Help from their *Dii minorum Gentium*, or inferior Sort of Gods, they carry the Patient to their great God *Bel*, but to as little Purpose.

Ver. 41. *If they see one dumb that cannot speak, they bring him, and entreat Bel that he may speak, as tho' he were able to understand*] *Bel* was the principal Idol of the Babylonians, *Is. xlvi. 1.* The same with *Baal*, as *Selden* conjectures, *Syntag. i. c. 2.* How unable *Baal* was to hear, understand, or answer, the Petitions of his Worshipers, we learn from that

signal Instance, *1 Kings xviii. 26.* where tho' his Prophets called on the Name of *Baal* from Morning until Noon, saying, *O Baal, hear us*, yet was there no Voice, nor any that regarded. Strange that any should be so senseless, as the Author of the *Book of Wisdom* well argues, *ch. xiii. 18.* as for Power to call on that which is weak, and for Aid humbly beseech that which hath least Means to help, and for Speech apply to dumb Idols; emphatically, and by way of Infamy so called, as neither having any Faculties themselves, nor able to confer the Gift of Speech upon others.

Ver. 42. *Yet they cannot understand this themselves, and leave them, for they have no Knowledge.*] Καὶ ἡ δύναμις αὐτοῖς νοήσασθαι κατὰ λῆν αὐτά. Or, as the *Alex. MS.* has it, τὸ νοήσασθαι, which would be better rendered, "They cannot, tho' they observe the Inability of their Idols to administer any Help, persuade themselves to leave and forsake them, for they are foolish and infatuated themselves." And thus the *Geneva* Version more clearly, "Yet they that understand these Things, cannot leave them, for they also have no Sense."

Ver. 43. *The Women also with Cords about them.*] This refers to the Tents or Tabernacles of *Venus*, in which Virgins were solemnly prostituted to the Honour of that false Goddess, under the Title of *Mylitta*, and *Venus πάνδημος*, or the popular Goddess of sensual Pleasures. These Tents were called *Succoth-benoth*, i. e. the Tabernacles of Daughters, or the Pavilions of the Girls, on account of their Residence. According to *Selden*, it means the Chapels of *Venus Mylitta*. The Men of *Babylon*, *2 Kings xvii. 30.* are said to make *Succoth-benoth*, wherein their Daughters were prostituted to such as came to worship *Venus*, as the Manner was in *Babylon*, from whence this Filthiness had its Original. See *Selden de Diis Syris, Syntag. ii. c. 7.* And to this scandalous Custom, he thinks *Levit. xix. 29.* particularly to refer. Every Woman, it seems, throughout all the Country, was bound once in her Life to repair to the Temple of *Venus*, and there to prostitute herself to any that would throw down a Piece of Money, be it less or more, which Money was applied to the Temple, and to the Honour of the Goddess. *Herodotus* gives the following Account of this infamous Custom, ὅδε δὲ αἰχίστος τῶν νόμων ἐστὶ τοῖσι Βαβυλωνίοισι, κ. τ. λ. erat *Babyloniorum* lex, ut omnes feminae semel in vita sederent apud templum Veneris, praestolantes adventum peregrinorum, qui cum eis congregarentur; primum adventantem qui se offerebat non debebant recusare, nec eam quam offerebat mercedem, quamvis non ita magnam, quae in sacrum usum reponebatur. Advena dicebat, ἐπικαλέω τὴν θεὰν Μύλιττα; tanti tibi deam Mylittam implora. Et quaecunque femina sedere inceperat, non debuit abire donec vitata fuerat. Unde formosae cito dimissae, sed deformes unum aut plures annos expectabant; i. e. every Babylonian Woman was once in her Life-time bound to prostitute herself to a Stranger at the

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Temple of *Venus*. They were crowned with Knots and Garlands, and ranged in long Ranks before the Temple, each Rank being parted from the other by a Line, that the Men might conveniently pass between them, and choose those they liked best. They declared their Choice by throwing Money into the Lap of the Woman they most admired, and saying, as they threw it, I implore the Goddess *Mylitta* for thee. The Money, how little soever, was by no Means to be refused, being accounted sacred. Nor had the Woman the Power of rejecting any Man that accosted her in the Form prescribed, but she was absolutely to retire without Delay. Having thus fulfilled the Law, and performed some Ceremonies in Honour of the Goddess, she returned home; and nothing could tempt her to grant the same Favour again to her new Lover. Women of Rank (for none were dispensed with) might be conveyed to the appointed Place in a covered Vehicle, and keep in it, while their Servants waited their Return at some Distance, *Herod. in Clio*, l. i. c. 199. From this Passage it appears into what infamous Usage and Indecency Religion had degenerated: When the most dissolute Pleasures were turned into so many Acts of Devotion, and it was counted a Dishonour not to be defiled. By *zonæ*, here rendered *Cords*, some understand fine Twine, of which their Knots or Garlands were composed; and possibly this may be the Meaning of the Syr. which has *funibus ornata*. Others suppose them to be Rushes, which are easily broken. *Selden* understands Cords, properly so called, to distinguish and guard the Passages leading to the Women, and to keep them separate.

*Ibid. The Women sitting in the Ways.* i. e. In the public Ways leading to the Temple of *Venus*. This Description, and Particularity of the Place, is very natural and well suited to the Followers and Retainers of *Venus*, whose known Custom it is to frequent the most public Places, to entice and allure Passengers. See *Prov.* ix. 14, 15. Thus *Tamar*, *Gen.* xxxviii. 14. is represented as sitting in an open Place, or a Place where Roads crossed, which is by the Way of *Timnab*, *πρὸς ταῖς πόλιν Αἰνάν*, at the Gates of *Ainan*, according to the LXX. Such a Place as this was most likely to meet Passengers in, and therefore most proper for *Tamar's* Design. Of those who followed the Trade in a public Way, such whom *Plautus* calls *Scanicolas*, seem most to resemble the *Babylonish* ones here mentioned. One cannot help observing a sort of gradual Decay of Decency in Women of this profligate Character; at first they had their Haunts without the City, and followed the Trade as it were in Disguise, hiding their Faces with a Mask; afterwards they dropped this, and appeared bare-faced, but nevertheless the Laws not allowing them to come within the Walls, they yet kept their Distance; but the State of Things every Day growing worse and worse, they had the Impudence at last to settle, and carry on the Bu-

siness of Lewdness publicly in Cities. But tho' in all Times and Places such vile Prostitutes have been too much followed and caressed, yet never was any Age so degenerate, or People so abandoned, except the *Babylonians*, as to account them sacred.

*Ibid. Burn Bran for Perfume.* *Badwell* takes it in the Sense of our Version, and the Oriental ones translate accordingly. The *Syriac* in particular has, *imponentes pro Thymamite surfures*. A poor Incense this! but good enough for such a Deity, and so scandalous Rites. *Grotius* understands the Greek, *θυμιασμοὶ τὰ πίτυρα* in an impure Sense, from the Hebrew *פתארה* *Petarab*, *apertura*, which the Greeks express by *τὰ αἰδοῖα*, and thinks it answers to *suffire naturam* in *Pliny*; which seems to be confirmed from *Strabo*, who speaking of the *Babylonians*, says, *οὐκ αἶσιν δ' αἰ μὴδ' ὄσιν ἀλλήλοις ἐπιθυμίας αἰσιν*, l. xvi. See also *Spencer de Leg. Hebr.* vol. i. *Selden* renders *πίτυρα* by *ἐλόχουλα*, *moles*, or Cakes and Libations, called also *θυμιαμαῖα*; and in this Sense we meet with *θύειν τὰ πίτυρα*, in *Theophrastus*, as an Expedient to procure Love. And to this very Custom the Prophet *Jeremiah* is by him thought to allude, ch. vii. 18. where it is said, *that the Women knead their Dough to make Cakes for the Queen of Heaven*, another Name for the *Babylonian Venus*, who was also called *Venus-Urania*. *Syntag.* ii. c. 7. The same learned Writer observes of *ἰφικροβόρα*, in the next Sentence, which our Translators render, *drawn*, that it means a seeming Unwillingness in these Votaries of *Venus*, and a Reluctance to comply, *Funiculum forsan, usquedum ab amasio fuerit disruptus, veluti retinaculum pudicitie muliebri simulatione retinentes*. *Ibid.* An Artifice only, as he observes, to make the Persons that solicit their Favour, the more eager and enamoured.

*Ver. 44. Whatsoever is done amongst them is false.* i. e. Whatsoever is done to, or about them, is vain, and the Labour to no Purpose: Or whatsoever is said or pretended to be done by them is false. The *Alex. MS.* has *γινόμενα παρ' αὐτοῖς*.

45. *They are made of Carpenters and Goldsmiths, they can be nothing else than the Workman will have them to be.* i. e. They are such as were carved out of a refuse Piece of Wood, *Is.* xlv. 13, 14, 15. *Wisd.* xiii. 13. which the Workmen could have formed into any Shape he pleased, to be a Thing either of Honour or Dishonour: Or else they came out of the Smith's Furnace, and were fashioned by the Anvil and Hammer, as *Arnobius* expresses it, l. i. Who in another Place, speaking of himself, when under a State of Paganism, says, *Beneficia poscebam nihil sentiente de ligno*, l. vi. And after, *At quæ dementia Deum credere quem tute ipse formaris, supplicare tremendum fabricatæ abs te rei?* i. e. What an Instance of Madness is it to think that a Piece of Timber hath any more Divinity in it than it had before, because it is fashioned and carved into the Figure of a Man? The Prophet *Isaiah*, with a peculiar Smartness of Argument,



gument, exposes Image Worship from the Absurdity, that a Man should dress his Meat, and make his God out of the same Stick of Wood, and fall down to the sorry Stock of a Tree, and say, *Deliver me, for thou art my God*, Is. ch. xlv.

Ver. 46. *And they themselves that made them, can never continue long, how then should the Things that are made of them be Gods? for they left Lies and Reproaches to them that come after.*] As the Effect cannot be more perfect than the Cause, so impotent and frail Man cannot invent, or make any Thing or Being immortal and divine. The Makers of these Idols being mortal themselves, shall leave behind them indeed a Proof of their Ingenuity; but such as is disgraceful, and exercised upon wrong Objects. For the Idols made by them are Lies and Vanities, as the Scripture terms them, and are such despicable and reproachful Things in themselves, as Posterity, more wise and sagacious, will have in Abhorrence. Or the Sense may be, like that, *Isaiah* lxiv. 11, that the Time will come, when all the Makers of Images, and such as have been most devoted to their Worship, shall be ashamed and confounded at their own Folly, to think, that the frail Work of Man's Hands could have any Divinity in it, or any Principle of long Continuance.

Ver. 49. *How then cannot Men perceive that they be no Gods, which can neither save themselves from War, nor from Plagues?*] As material and perishable Things, they are liable themselves to Accidents and Casualties, called here *Plagues*. And if they cannot help themselves in Times of public Calamity and Distress, much less can they be expected to succour and assist others. And how indeed should they watch over either their own or other's Safety, being endued neither with Power, Life, nor Understanding; and are indeed nothing but what they appear to be, senseless Wood or Stone? One Reason which some Expositors assign for *Rachael's* stealing her Father's *Teraphim*; *Gen.* xxxi. 19. was to let him see, that his Gods, as he called them, could not preserve themselves, much less do any Service to him. See *¶* 57. The King of *Affyria*, with equal Truth and Smartness, reflects upon the Impotence of such Deities. *Have any of the Gods of the Nations delivered their Land out of my Hand? Where are the Gods of Hamath, and Arphad? Where are the Gods of Sephervain?* Is. xxxvi. 18, 19. The like may be observed from prophane History, of *Aeneas's Penates*, which were so far from assisting him, that if he had not taken them along with him, they could not have set one Foot forward, nor have been saved themselves at the burning of *Troy*, if his great Piety had not secured them. See *¶* 55.

Ver. 51. *There is no Work of God in them.*] Οὐδὲν θεῶν ἐργον ἐν αὐτοῖς ἐστίν, i. e. there is no divine Power in them, or they cannot work or effect any Thing like a God.

Ver. 53. *Nor give Rain unto Men.*] The descriptive Character of the living God is, *He that*

giveth Rain, both the former and the latter in his Season, that reserveth unto us the appointed Weeks of Harvest, *Jer.* v. 24. The Vicissitude of Seasons, of Cold and Heat, of Drought and Moisture, so wisely fitted for the Growth of the Fruits of the Earth, and other Uses of human Life, is both the Effect and Proof of a God, and a Providence. *Videmus*, says *St. Cyprian*, *Dei nutu tempora obsequi, elementa famulari, spirare ventos, fontes fluere, grandescere copias messium, fructus mitescere vinearum, exuberare pomis arbuta.* And therefore *Maximus Tyrius*, expressly, and with great Propriety, calls God, τῶν ὡρῶν ταμίαν, ἡ καρπῶν τροφέα, ἡ γενέθλιον, τοῦ νέτιον, ἡ επικαύριον. But false Gods, or Idols, have no Power over the Elements, nor at the Request of any Votary can they make any Alteration in them, as the true God did, thro' the Intercession of *Elias*, *James* v. 17. They can neither shew Signs, *¶* 67. in the Heavens above, or produce any Alteration on the Earth beneath; but are themselves subject to, and often suffer by, the great Inclemency of Weather; they are sometimes struck down by a Thunderbolt, or melted by the Power of Lightning.

Ver. 54. *Neither can they judge their own Cause, nor redress a Wrong, being unable, for they are as Crows between Heaven and Earth.*] Our Translators follow a Copy which had αὐτῶν. The *Alex.* and others have αὐτῶν, i. e. they cannot interpose to right themselves by any Miracle, nor to execute Justice in their own Behalf, as the true God did in the Matter of *Core*, and his Faction. See *¶* 64. which respects the other Reading. Nor can they relieve any City or Country from Distress, *Neque regiones liberabunt ab injuria*, *Vulg.* as the God of *Israel* did *Jerusalem* from the Power of *Sennacherib*. They as little know, and are as little able to alter Things upon Earth, as the meanest Bird that flies. Possibly this Writer might instance in the Crow, as being a Bird of Omen, according to the superstitious Notion of the Ancients.

Ver. 56. *They cannot withstand any King or Enemies, How then can it be thought or said that they be Gods?*] The Prophet *Isaiah*, ch. xlv. 1. takes Occasion to insult over the *Babylonish* Idols, who could neither preserve themselves nor their Worshipers, but were carried about by their Enemies in Triumph, by way of Contempt and Derision: And when he says, *Bel boweth down, and Nebo stoopeth*, he means to express, that the Images of these Deities were carried in Triumph by the *Persians*, as Part of the Spoil, so that the very Deities themselves, which were worshiped in the Idols, must own that they were conquered likewise. We read, *2 Chron.* xxv. 5. that the Anger of the Lord was kindled against King *Amaziah*, for seeking after the Gods of the People, which could not deliver their own People out of his Hand. And indeed it was a great Instance of Folly likewise in that Prince, after he had subdued and slain the *Edomites*, to set up their Gods, which he ought rather to have burnt in the Fire, than



bow down to them, and burn Incense before them, whose Impotency he had proved, and detected. *Abaz* was more justifiable in this Respect, who sacrificed to the Gods of those People, who had overcome him, hoping they might be induced to assist him also, 2 *Chron.* xxviii. 23.

Ver. 60. *For Sun, Moon and Stars, being bright, and sent to do their Offices, are obedient.* [*ὑποσσελλόμεθα ὅτι χείρας.* The Geneva Version here seems preferable, *when they are sent for necessary Uses, obey.* These great Bodies follow the Appointment of their Creator: If any Creature really deserved Worship, it should seem that these were most worthy of it. Their Beauty and Splendor attract our Admiration, and the Advantages we receive from them claim our Acknowledgment: But all their Glory and Power they derive from the Father of Lights. The Gods of the Nations neither equal these in Beauty, nor are alike beneficial by their Influence: We ought therefore to confine all our Worship and Homage to the living God only, and to give no sort of Adoration to false Gods of any kind.

Ver. 61. *In like Manner the Lightning, when it breaketh forth, is easy to be seen, and after the same Manner the Wind bloweth in every Country.* [*Ἀεὶ παρὴν, ὅταν ἐπιφανῇ, ἐνοπλὸς ἐστίν.* Grotius conjectures the true Reading to be *ἐνοπλὸς ἐστίν*, is obedient, which indeed is more agreeable to the Context, and the Reflection, as it now stands, seems but of little Weight and Consequence. The Meaning of the latter Clause, which is obscurely expressed, is, that under all Climates the Wind and Storm fulfil his Word, *Pf.* cxlviii. 8. And in this Sense we may expound *Pfalm* civ. 4. *He maketh his Angels Spirits*, i. e. he maketh the Winds occasionally his Ministers to execute his Pleasure; and thus the Rabbins understand רוחות *ruchoth* in that Place. See *De Muis in Loc.*

Ver. 70. *For as a Scar-Crow in a Garden of Cucumbers keepeth nothing, so are their Gods.* The Birds for a little while are afraid of a Scar-Crow, *προβασκάνιον* (a very unusual Word, *Junius* understands it of the Statue of *Priapus*, which is probable enough, as *Suicer* renders it, *Pudenda statua*) but when once they began to be accustomed to the Sight of it, they gave themselves no more Pain or Concern about it: When one comes near to inspect and examine it, it is found to be a mere nothing, or something occasionally

placed in *terrorem*, and not a real Man. The Case is the same with Idols; it is only the Folly and Mistake of those who adore them, which gives them their Authority, they only impose upon the Weak and Superstitious, the more knowing and inquisitive soon find out the Cheat.

Ver. 72. *You shall know them to be no Gods by the bright Purple that rotteth upon them.* [*Ἀπὸ τῆς πορφύρας, ἢ τῆς μαρμάρου.* Not the Marble itself, which is more durable, but the shining Varnish, or Polish, like Marble. Grotius reads, *μαρμάρου*, i. e. that the Lustre of the Jewels decays upon them. It is observable, that this Writer is very explicit, and descends to a Detail of the Vestments, Ornaments, and Decorations of these Idols, whom their Priests set off and adorned with all possible Care, to make them look more rich and glorious. And the Reason of his being so particular seems to be, that he might set their delectable Things, as the Prophet calls them, *Is.* xlv. 9. in a true Light, and expose their Unprofitableness and Decay to a carnal and gross People, too apt to be affected with Pomp and Pageantry; and whose Senses were likely to pervert their Understanding, so as not to discern the Cheat and Falstiy of such a Worship.

*Ibid.* *And they themselves shall afterwards be eaten.* This may either refer to Idols worm-eaten thro' Time, or to such living Animals, as tho' they were the Objects of the Pagan Worship, were eaten by others. The Christian Fathers and Apologists, continually expose the Heathens for worshipping such Deities, as might be sacrificed and eaten, and declare against the Practice, as infinitely absurd and ridiculous. *Minucius Felix* is very pleasant on the Occasion, particularly with respect to the *Ox Apis*. *Athanasius* mentions it as a strong Instance of the Folly of the Heathen Worship, that those Fishes and Calves which the Egyptians worshiped, were made the Food of others, *Cont. Gent.* And the Reason why *Moses* beat the golden Calf to Powder, and made the Jews to drink of it, was, according to *St. Jerom*, *Ut discent contemnere quod in secessum projici viderant*, i. e. that the People might learn to despise what they saw went down into the Stomach, and out into the Draught. But as the Scope of this Epistle seems directed to expose Idols, as mere dead Things, the former Sense seems preferable.



## COMMENTARY

ON THE

## History of SUSANNA.

Ver. 1. **I**N many Editions this, and the two other supplemental Parts, are inscribed Δανιήλ, and in some, διαχειρίσεις Δανιήλ. In the Preface to this Story it is said to be set apart from the Beginning of *Daniel*, where it stands in the *Rom.* Editions; others, as the *Complut.* and some *Latin* ones, make it to be the xiii<sup>th</sup> Chapter of that Book. But if what is here related belongs to the Prophet *Daniel*, it should seem that what is therein contained happened before some other remarkable Particulars which are mentioned in his Book; especially if what *Ignatius* and *Sulpicius Severus* observe, be well-grounded, viz. that the Prophet *Daniel* was not above Twelve Years of Age, when this Story happened. It has been concluded also from his established Character, that it preceded *Nebuchadnezzar's* Dream and its Interpretation, because it is then said of *Daniel*, that he was looked upon as more wise and able than all the Magicians, Astrologers, and Wisemen of the *Chaldeans*, which great Repute he could not, it is thought, have obtained, but by some such wonderful Action or Determination, as this which is here related. But *Origen* disclaims this History as belonging at all to the Book of *Daniel*, and calls it κτεθνηλον τῷ βιβλίῳ μέγας, a spurious Part of it. *Epist. ad Jul. Afric.* See also *Grabe de Vitiis* LXX. Interp.

Ver. 2. *A very fair Woman, and one that feared the Lord.*] This is a great Commendation of *Susanna*, that she was as virtuous and religious, as she was fair and beautiful; Qualities both very aimable, but yet do not always go together, as Beauty often inclines the Owners of it to Vanity, exposes them to Dangers, and is an Inlet to Temptations. To excel therefore in both Respects was much to the Honour of *Susanna*, as what follows about the great Care taken by her Parents of her Education, is to their Credit, and probably

her being so virtuously disposed was the Effect of it.

Ver. 4. *Joachim was a great rich Man.*] *Africanus* objects, that it is not credible that *Joachim*, the Husband of *Susanna*, was so rich and powerful in the Captivity, as he is here said to be. To this *Origen* replies, that the *Jews* that were carried away Captives into *Babylon*, were not so plundered, but that many among them were both rich and powerful. See *Tob. i. 13, 14, 22.* To his House the *Jews* seem to have resorted for Advice, or as to a Seat of Justice. See *ψ 6, 7, 28.*

Ver. 5. *The same Year were appointed two of the Ancients of the People to be Judges.*] The Term *Ancients* has not Respect purely to their Age, nor proves necessarily that they were far advanced in it: the sensual and impure Love which inflamed them for *Susanna*, makes it more probable that they were in the Vigour of their Age. The Government by *Ancients* or *Elders*, was the Regimen of most Cities. We meet with them in several Authors, and from them public Sessions or Meetings are styled *Senatus*, and γερουσία. Sometimes these *Elders* are called, πρεσβύτεροι, in general, sometimes πρεσβύτεροι λαῶ; these some think to be the Judges here mentioned. *Josephus* says, that *Moses* appointed, that every City should have a Council of Seven Magistrates, Men of exemplary Virtue, and Lovers of Righteousness, *Antiq. l. iv. c. 8.* *Seld. de Synedr. l. ii. c. 6.* And this perhaps was the determinate Number in his Time, but anciently there seems to have been more; for *Boas* mentions Ten *Elders*, who were probably the same with Judges, in the City of *Bethlehem*, *Ruth iv. 2.* See Note on *Judith vi. 21.* But in this History two only are mentioned, and those as annually chosen, a Method and Constitution, says *Grotius*, which obtained not among the *Jews*. He thinks them rather Assessors to the αἰχμαλιωταρχῆς, the



the Chief, or President among the Captives. Their Business was to be assisting by their Advice and Opinion, and to give Counsel or Determination in such Cases as were brought before them, chiefly in Suits in Law, & 6. or Forensic Matters. It is probable the Jews retained a sort of judicial Power, even in their Captivity, and that they executed some of the Penal Laws of Moses in smaller Instances. Thus Haman tells Abasuerus, *Esth.* iii. 8. that the Jews observed their own Laws. This History of the Accusation and Trial of Susanna, is a Proof, says Calmet, that the Jews had their Judges, and Methods of administering Justice during the Captivity; but that they had not the Power of Life and Death, seems most probable. See Note on & 62.

*Ibid.* Ancient Judges, who seemed to govern the People.] *Oi ἐδοῦσαν κλέσσαν.* The Vulg. and Junius translate according to our Version, with which that of Geneva, and also Coverdale's agree. St. Jerom observes, that it is not without good Reason that the Text here says, that these Elders seemed only to rule, for they who judge or govern with Partiality and Injustice, have only the honourable Name of Judges, and are Rulers in Appearance only, rather than true and valuable Magistrates; *Qui injuste præsumunt populo, tantum nomen habent judicium; regere videntur populum, magis quam regant.* There may also a second and more literal Sense be given from the then State and Condition of the Jews; for being in Captivity, and under the Dominion and Tyranny of the Chaldeans, they had rather a Shadow of Government among them, than any real Power and Jurisdiction. But there is no Necessity of understanding these Words of seeming Power, or the Abuse of it, as *δοκεῖ*, and *videtur*, are often used as mere Expletives. See *Mark* x. 42. where *οἱ δοκῆσες ἀρχεῖν*, an Expression very much resembling this, is rendered by St. Matthew xx. 25. *οἱ ἀρχόντες*, the Rulers. And *Luke* xxii. 24. *τίς αὐτῶν δοκεῖ εἶναι μέγας*, i. e. which of them should seem to be the greatest; as Geneva and Coverdale have it, means only, which of them should be so. And thus *δοκῶ πνεῦμα Θεοῦ ἔχειν*, *1 Cor.* vii. 40. would be more properly and consistently, I conceive, rendered, *Flavour the Spirit of God.* There are other Instances of this Usage in this Epistle. See *ch.* xi. 16. and *ch.* xiv. 37.

Ver. 9. And they perverted their own Mind, and turned away their Eyes, that they might not look unto Heaven, nor remember just Judgments.] i. e. That they might not look unto, nor reflect upon the God of Heaven, nor remember his just Judgments against such notorious Sinners. Heaven, by a Metonymy, means the Father of it. See & 35. and *Luke* xv. 18. The Author of the *Book of Wisdom* has the like Observation, and makes the Reason of Mens going astray to be, *because their own Wickedness hath blinded them*, *ch.* ii. 21. The judicious Hooker, has the following pertinent Reflection upon the Passage before us, "How should the Brightness of Wisdom

" shine where the Windows of the Soul are  
" of very set Purpose closed? True Religion  
" hath many Things in it, the only Mention  
" whereof galleth and fretteth wicked Minds.  
" Being therefore loth that Enquiry into such  
" Matters should breed a Perswasion in the  
" End, contrary unto that which they embrace, it is their Endeavour, as much as  
" in them lieth, to banish quite and clean  
" from their Cogitation, whatsoever leaderh  
" or pointeth that Way. The Fountain and  
" Well-Spring of which Impiety, is a resolved Purpose of Mind, to reap in this  
" World what sensual Profit or Pleasure forever the World yieldeth, and not to be  
" barred from any whatsoever Means available thereto. And this is the very radical Cause of their Atheism." *Eccl. Pol.* B. v. p. 191.

Ver. 14. When they were gone out, they parted the one from the other, and turning back again, they came to the same Place, and after that they had asked one another the Cause, they acknowledged their Lust: then appointed they a Time both together when they might find her alone.] The Description here is very natural of the Artifice used on the Occasion; they pretend to go home as it were to Dinner, and take a formal Leave of each other, with Hearts equally bent on Mischief, and meditating the same wicked Design. But Hypocrisy and Dissimulation were the least Blemishes in their Character. Lust, ever impatient to perpetrate its Schemes, and satisfy its raging Passion, hurries them both back to the same Haunt, and conscious Guilt urging to a Confession, unites them in a shameful Confederacy against Virtue, of which by their Station they ought to have been the Guardians and Protectors.

Ver. 15. She was desirous to wash herself in the Garden.] St. Chrysostom takes Occasion, from her great Circumspection and Care to guard all the Avenues of her Heart, to compare her to a Garden enclosed, to a Spring shut, to a Fountain sealed up, *Cam.* iv. 12. *Ἡ ἀληθὴς καὶ πρὸς κλεισμένης, κ. τ. λ.* *Quasi hortus erat beata, quam nemo poterat deprædari, pudicitie suaves effundens odores: quasi fons erat fide signatus, ex quo nemo petulans pudicitie pulchritudinem poterat haurire.* *Serm. de Susanna*, tom. vi. p. 141.

Ver. 19. Now when the two Maids were gone forth, the two Elders rose up.] St. Chrysostom observes, that these Elders were like two Wolves, or Lions, that had seized upon a tender Lamb, *ἢ μὲν Σοφάννα ἀνὰ μέσον τῶν ἀδελφῶν, κ. τ. λ.* "Susanna (says he) was alone in the Midst of two hungry Lions, none were near to assist or succour her, neither Maid, Companion, Neighbour, Friend, or Relation, only God was Inspector and Witness, who indeed could have hindered the wicked Attempt, but permitted this Trial that he might publish Susanna's Virtue, and the others Incontinence; and at the same Time, by her exemplary Conduct,



“duſt, give a Pattern to the Sex of the like  
“Reſolution and Conſtancy, in Caſe of Tem-  
“ptation.” *Ibid.*

Ver. 20. *We are in love with thee.*] The Tempter was not wanting to ſuggeſt Reaſons to them, ſuch as they were, to encourage their Boldneſs. They urge their Suit from the Opportunity of Privacy, and the ſecret Paſſion which they conceived for her; they would perſwade her it was Love occaſioned their Fondneſs, as if a Name ſo tender belonged to their brutal Deſign. Such carnal and ſenſual Love differs as much from the real and virtuous Paſſion ſo called, as good Money from counterfeit Coin, or Truth from Falſhood. *Ἐν ἐπιθυμίᾳ οὐκ ἐσμεν*, which the *Vulg.* literally renders, *in concupiſcentia tui ſumus*, is a particular Idiom, it reſembles that of St. Paul, *ἐν καρπῷ εἶναι*, Rom. viii. 9. and that Mode of Speech among the *Latins*, *In voluptatibus eſſe*, *in vitiis eſſe*, which we meet with in *Seneca*, *Epist.* 59.

Ver. 21. *If thou wilt not, we will bear Witneſs againſt thee.*] St. Chryſoſtom finely harangues upon theſe Words, *Καλέχουσι τὴν Σαράναν οἱ παρὰνομοι, κ. τ. λ.* i. e. The Ruſſians ſeize upon *Suſanna*, and firſt they attack her by Diſcourſe, and endeavour to intimidate her by Threats, hoping to prevail that Way. “We are the Rulers of the People, the “Guardians of the Laws, have the Power “of binding and looſing, of acquitting or “condemning; you are in our Hands, may “comply ſafely, there is none preſent to make “any Diſcovery; Come, conſent to lie with “us.” On which he breaks out into the following Exclamation, *Hei mihi, quos paſtores arbitrabar, lupos video; quos arbitrabar eorum, qui tempeſtate jaſtantur, eſſe portus, hi naufragium excitantur.* And then he introduces *Suſanna* thus nobly replying to theſe wicked Tempters: “Ye ſhall not ruin “my Honour, nor violate my Chaſtity; I “will not conſent to diſgrace my Parents, “nor bring a Reflection on my Family: I “will not injure or grieve my Huſband, nor “forfeit my conjugal Faith to him, by an “unlawful and ſinful Compliance; a violent “and unjuſt Death is more eligible than to “conſent to your impure Sollicitations. My “Huſband is always preſent, if not in Perſon, yet in my Thoughts and Affections; “nor can I ſo ſoon, or eaſily forget my Parents valuable Inſtructions, whoſe Image “and Example is always before my Eyes.” *Ibid.*

Ver. 22. *I am ſtraitned on every Side.*] And well might ſhe ſay ſo; for either Way ſhe was expoſed to Death. If ſhe prostituted herſelf to their wicked Deſires, it was Death by their Laws; and if ſhe reſuſed to conſent to their Sollicitations, ſhe expoſed herſelf thereby to the ſame Peril of Death, by an Accuſation which the Authority of the Witneſſes would make weighty and convincing, tho’ in itſelf falſe. Her Reſolution therefore to withſtand the Temptation was noble, and as ſuch is commended by all Antiquity. St.

*Ambroſe* particularly thus honourably ſpeaks of her, *Sancta Suſanna denuntiatio falſi teſtimonii terrore, cum hinc ſe videret urgeri periculo, inde opprobrio, maluit honeſta morte vitare opprobrium, quam ſtudio ſalutis turpem vitam ſubire. Itaque dum honeſtati intendit, etiam vitam reſervavit: quæ ſi id quod ſibi videbatur ad vitam utile præoptaviſſet, non tantam reportaviſſet gloriam. Immo etiam pœnam criminis forſitan non evaſiſſet. Advertimus itaque quod id quod turpe eſt, non poteſt eſſe utile, neque ruruſus id quod honeſtum eſt, inutile. De Officiis, c. xiv. l. 3.*

Ver. 23. *It is better for me to fall into your Hands, and not to do it, than to ſin in the Sight of the Lord.*] *Αἰετὸν μοι εἶναι.* Almoſt all the Verſions uſe the Comparative Degree, except the Greek, which has *αἰετὸν εἶναι*, i. e. it is good and eligible to fall into your Hands, and not to commit the Sin, and thereby diſpleaſe God. A Compariſon, ſays St. *Jerom*, cannot be here properly formed, for to ſay Continency is better, is allowing ſome ſort of Goodneſs to the Sin itſelf. The Greek therefore, ſays he, may be ſuppoſed not to uſe it, *Ne videretur comparatione peccati, quod erat bonum, hoc appellare melius. Hieron. in loc.* But this Remark ſeems rather nice than juſt, for beſides that there are many Inſtances in approved Authors, where the Poſitive is uſed for the Comparative, the Compariſon is not here inſtituted of the Morality of the Actions, but of the Danger attending them: Or in other Words, that it is better to ſuffer a temporal than an eternal Punishment. Many of the Fathers, as St. *Ambroſe*, *Jerom*, *Chryſoſtom*, *Bernard*, *Auſtin*, have wrote ſet Panegyrics upon *Suſanna*’s wife Conduct and Determination. The laſt of theſe draws a long Parallel between her and the famed *Lucretia*, the Heroine of Roman Story, the boaſted Pattern of Chaſtity for all Ages. “What is “*Lucretia* when compared with *Suſanna*? “ſhe murders herſelf, tho’ ſhe knew herſelf “innocent; the Action ſo much celebrated, “was rather Raſhneſs than Fortitude, the “Effect not of any ſuperior Love of Chaſtity, but of Weakneſs, or falſe Modeſty. “She was too delicate, it ſeems, to bear the “Thought of a ſhameful Action committed “even againſt her Conſent and Concurrence, “without revenging it raſhly upon herſelf. “*Seipſam etiam non adultera occidit; non eſt pudicitie charitas, ſed pudoris infirmitas.* “Or ſome Tincture of Pride was lurking under it. She was afraid leſt any ſhould think “her guilty of the Crime, if ſhe did not reſent it thus unnaturally. She could not “content herſelf with the Approbation and “Teſtimony of her own Conſcience, unleſs “ſhe ſhewed her Detestation of the Fact by “killing herſelf, to avoid the very Suſpicion “of it.—She ought rather to have hindered “the baſe Action of *Tarquin* at the Expence “of her own Life, than throw it away afterwards out of meer Vexation. Herein *Suſanna* exceeded her, that ſhe was ſo far “from conſenting to the brutal Attempt of



"the Elders, that she chose rather to expose herself to the manifest Danger of Death, than comply with their vile Sollicitations—*Lucretia* killed herself, innocent as she was, lest she should appear guilty; and it is this very Consideration of her Innocence, that aggravates her Fault. Why should she kill herself if she was no Ways culpable; and if she was culpable any Ways by consenting, she must then certainly be thought to have killed herself, merely to have it supposed that she was innocent. *Si adultera, cur laudata; si pudica, cur occisa?* *Susanna* was no less sensible of the Rudeness offered, but she did not think it her Duty to punish upon herself another's Crime, and to add to the Sin of others, that of wilful Murder of herself; *nec in se ulla est crimen aliorum, ne aliorum sceleribus adderet sua.*" August. l. i. de Civit. Dei, c. 18.

Ver. 24. *With that Susanna cried with a loud Voice, and the two Elders cried out against her.* One hears, says St. Bernard, two Cries very different, and for very different Reasons. *Susanna* cries like an innocent Lamb, in Danger of being devoured, and the two Elders roar like ravenous Wolves for their Prey, or because they were disappointed of it. St. Chrysostom has the very same Comparison, *Clamor ut luporum gravium, & balantis oviculæ inter eos.* She cries to fetch in Help, and to attest her Innocence; they to drown her Shrieks, and to cover their own Crime by turning Accusers; for they now quitted their Office as Judges, by appearing as Witnesses and Informers.

Ver. 32. *These wicked Men commanded to uncover her Face, for she was covered.* The Way of covering the Head was used chiefly on Three Occasions: 1. In Cases of Grief and Mourning, 2 Sam. xix. 2. As an Expression of Reservedness and Modesty, as in the Instance of *Rebecca*, Gen. xxiv. 65. and this of *Susanna*. 3. As a Testimony, or Token of the greatest Respect and Reverence, or when an Inferior was unable to bear the Sight and Splendor of another's Majesty and Greatness. Thus *Elijah*, 1 Kings xix. 13. when he heard the Voice of God upon Mount *Horeb*, wrapped his Face in his Mantle. Covering the Face with a Veil was the universal Practice of almost all Nations. The Romans in particular, were so strict and punctual in the Use of it, that when C. Sulpicius Gallus knew his Wife had appeared abroad without it, he divorced her only on that Account. And from this Covering, as the Critics observe, the Latin Word *nubere*, which at first signified no more than to cover with a Veil, came to express Marriage. Calmet thinks that these Judges ordered her to be uncovered under the Pretext that it was an Instance of Disrespect to their Office and Quality; to continue veiled in their Presence, especially when cited before them as a Criminal. Or perhaps pretending, that her Guilt would discover itself in her Countenance, tho' doubtless the true Reason was that given in

the Text, *that they might feed their Eyes with her Beauty.*

Ver. 34. *And laid their Hands upon her Head.* A Form used among the Jews, when one accused another of a capital Crime. See Levit. xxiv. 14. by which Ceremony these Elders signified, that they now appeared as Witnesses, and had given a true Testimony against her, and thought her worthy of Death; and it was customary, according to the Jewish Writers, to say, *Let thy Blood be upon thine own Head, which by thy Guilt thou hast brought on thyself.* And to this alludes probably that other Ceremony among them, of laying the Hands upon the Head of the Victim intended for the Sacrifice, Levit. i. 4. iv. 4—24. xvi. 21.

Ver. 45. *Therefore when she was led to be put to death, the Lord raised up the holy Spirit of a young Youth, whose Name was Daniel.* It hath been objected against this History, that what is here related could not happen when *Daniel* was a Youth, much less when he was *παῖς ἀνέω νεώτερος*, as the Greek expresses it, for it appears from v. 65. or the last Verse of this Story, according to some ancient Versions, that *Astyages* was at this Time dead, and *Cyrus* reigned in his stead. Now *Daniel*, say some Objectors, was then well advanced in Years. To this it is answered, that this History happened a long Time before, and that the Verse referred to about *Astyages*, does not at all concern this Narration, but that of *Bel and the Dragon*, which immediately follows; and accordingly in many Editions, both Greek and Latin, it is made the very Beginning of it. See Dupin's Prel. Disc. p. 24. As to *Daniel's* Age several Writers expressly say, that he was only Twelve Years old at this Time. See Sulpit. Sever. Sac. Hist. l. ii. c. 2. Theodoret. in Cap. i. Ezek. Ignat. Epist. ad Magnes. It seems as if God, by the Mouth as it were of an Infant, meant to confound the Malice and Cunning of these Elders, and to detect their Hypocrisy and Iniquity. "One sees in this Story (says St. Chrysostom) "how far it pleases "God to permit the Malice and Wickedness "of Men to proceed, and how far he seems "to abandon his Servants: He permits *Susanna* to be condemned to death, and "even to be led forth to public Punishment, to prove her Faith and Constancy "unto the End; in like Manner as he tried "the Faith of *Abraham* by letting *Isaac* come "to the very Spot, where he was to be offered as a Sacrifice, and not interposing, "till his Father had bound him, actually "had taken the Knife, and stretched out his "Hand to kill him. But as he sent his Angel "in the very Instant to hinder him from laying his Hands upon, or doing any Harm "to his Son, and to assure him that he was "pleased with this signal Instance of his Obedience, so to prevent the Evil intended "against *Susanna*, the Lord raised up the "holy Spirit of young *Daniel*, to undeceive "the People, and make them open their "Eyes."



"Eyes." *Serm. de Susan.* tom. vi. "It should seem, (says St. Jerom, from the Text) that the Spirit did not then first enter into Daniel, but that it was already in him, only quiescent on account of his tender Age: But an Occasion now offering to rescue thereby oppressed Innocence, it appeared, and acted with Power and Clearness in Favour of Justice; God exemplifying in this Instance, that his Spirit, when he pleases, acts independently, or without Regard to the Weakness or Minority of Age, which serves rather to make his divine Power the more illustrious.

Ver. 46. *Who cried with a loud Voice, I am innocent from the Blood of this Woman.*] God opposed to the two Elders a Child in Comparison, and made innocent Daniel the Judge of these corrupt ones; *I am clear,* says he, *from the Blood of this Woman.* "He uses, (says St. Ambrose) the same Expression with regard to *Susanna*, as *Pilate* did with respect to the holy *Jesus*, but does it much better, and more consistently; for he urges it for the Deliverance of innocent Blood, whereas *Pilate* bore Testimony to his being a just Man, whom he delivered up soon after, as a Criminal, which greatly aggravated his Fault, *Gravius est peccatum unum eundemque & pronuntiare justum, & tradere quasi criminofum.* Daniel, by his Declaration, freed the People from the Mistake they lay under, and the Sin they were about to commit, whereas *Pilate* by his Conduct confirmed the *Jews* in their wicked Design." It is surprizing, that the Words of so young a Person should affect the People so all on a sudden, and make them defer the Execution of a Sentence pronounced in Form upon the Deposition of two Witnesses, so irreproachable in all Appearance; it should seem that God, who alone can rule the Will and Affections, touched the Hearts of this People, and inclined them at this Time to attend favourably to what the inspired Youth offered in Behalf of distressed Innocence. They had judged too hastily upon the Deposition of two such Witnesses, without taking the necessary Precaution to be assured of the Truth of their Testimony: Especially as *Susanna's* Conduct had always been such, as put her beyond Suspicion of the Crime charged upon her, and she denied so solemnly that she had been guilty of it.

Ver. 48. *So be standing in the Midst of them said, Are ye such Fools, ye Sons of Israel, that without Examination or Knowledge of the Truth, ye have condemned a Daughter of Israel?*] St. Bernard observes, that tho' Daniel saw himself alone amongst so great a Multitude, yet was he not afraid or ashamed, notwithstanding the great Authority of these Elders among the People, to oppose himself against their false Accusation, and the Sentence pronounced thereupon. He chose rather to be thought guilty of Rashness and Presumption for the honest Freedom he had taken, than to be found guilty before God in be-

traying Truth and Innocence by his Silence. *Sulpicius* observes, that the extraordinary Courage, and unusual Boldness discovered by one so young on this Occasion, before so numerous an Assembly, was the very Reason that induced those *Jews* who had passed the Sentence upon her, to enter again into the Examination of the Cause: *Enimvero multitudo Judæorum quæ tum aderat, non sine Domino existimans, puerum contemptæ ætatlæ, in hanc constantiam prorupisse, favore accommodato, in consilium revertitur.* *Sacr. Hist.* l. ii. c. 2.

Ver. 50. *And the Elders said unto him, Come, sit down among us, and shew it us, seeing God hath given thee the Honour of an Elder.*] Καθίσον ἐν μέσῳ ἡμῶν. This Compliment was paid him on account of the superior Wisdom which he discovered. See *Luke* iii. 46. where our Saviour is described at Twelve Years old, the supposed Age of Daniel, as sitting in the Midst of the Jewish Doctors, both hearing them, and asking them Questions. But who are they who invite Daniel to this Honour? if the Persons who speak thus civilly to him are the Elders that accused *Susanna*, we must then either imagine, that what is here spoken and offered him, is by Way of Sneer or Raillery, to insult his Youth, and to expose his Forwardness and Presumption, in pretending to reform the Judgment of the whole Assembly, or else that they thought to win upon him, and gain him over by their Flattery. But it is more probable that the Persons who addressed Daniel in this obliging and honourable Manner, were different Elders, or Assessors, not in the Plot or Interest of the two others, but acting agreeably to their public Office and Character, and therefore well inclined to detect the Falsity of the Accusation, and to re-examine the Cause for that Purpose.

Ver. 52. *Thou that art waxen old in Wickedness, now thy Sins which thou hast committed are come to Light.*] Ἡμερῶν κακῶν πεπληρωμένη. It should seem as if Daniel here alluded to the Term Elder, especially if that Word is literally to be understood; by adding κακῶν the Expression answers to πλήρης πάντος δόλου, *Acts* xiii. 10. and πεπληρωμένος πάσης ἀδικίας, *Rom.* i. 29. Sins may here either be understood strictly, and the Sense be, "Thy former wicked Way of Life, which thou hast had the Artifice to conceal, is now apparent, or may hence be inferred:" Or by a Metonymy we may understand ἀμαρτίαι of the Punishment due to Sins, see *Numb.* xvi. 26. *1 Tim.* v. 22. *Apocal.* xviii. 4. and then the Sense will be, "The Punishment due to thy many Sins hath now overtaken thee."

Ver. 54. *Under a Mastic Tree. And Daniel said . . . even now the Angel of God hath received the Sentence of God to cut thee in two.*] Daniel, in his Reply to the Elders, alludes to the Greek Names of the Trees, under which they said the Fact was committed; and from the very Names of these Trees pronounces Sentence to their Confusion. When one of them said, that he saw the adulterous Act



ὁ ἀγγέλων, Daniel answers in Allusion to ἀγγέλων, *The Angel of God is ready*, ἀγγέλων σε μέσον, *to cut thee in two*: And when the other Elder said it was ὁ πρίων, Daniel replies, in Allusion to this likewise, the Angel of the Lord waiteth with the Sword, πρίων σε μέσον; which Allusions are not, nor can be, preserved in our Language. The *Vulgate* retains the Greek Names of these Trees, the one is called *Prinus*, the other *Schinus*. The Reflection we may draw from the Condemnation of these Elders, expert, no doubt, in the Art of Defence, as well as Accusation, is, that the Spirit of God makes use of such Means as he sees most proper to confound Wickedness and Injustice; if he had not in some measure blinded the Reason of these wicked Elders, it would have been easy for them to have eluded the Force of Daniel's Questions, and to have prevented the Consequence drawn from his Answers, by saying only, that they did not trouble themselves to be so particular as to mind the sort of Tree they were criminal-ly concerned under, it was sufficient, that they saw them indecently acting together in such a Part of the Garden, and under the Covert of some shady Tree. As the Allusion in these Verses is founded upon the Greek Names, some have from thence inferred, that this History could not be written by Daniel, but was wrote originally in the Greek Tongue by some Hellenistic Jew: To which Origen replies, that Daniel never used the Terms or Names of the Trees as they occur in the Greek, but such other Hebrew or Chaldee Words, as the Verb that signifies *to cut asunder*, best answered to: That the Greek Interpreter, it is probable, in order to preserve the Force of the Original, changed the Names of the Trees, and sought out such other Names instead of them, as had the same Allusions as the original ones had which were lost. Many Instances of this Figure of Speech called *Paronomasia*, are to be found in the sacred Writings; in the Hebrew of the Fifth Chapter of *Isaiah*, § 7. it is, *be looked for מִשְׁפָּט Mischpat, but behold מִשְׁפָּח Mischpach; for Righteousness צְדָקָה tsedaka, but behold צַעקָה tsaaka, a Cry*. See also *Is.* xxiv. 18. and *Vitringa* in *Is.* p. 120. The like Allusion is observable in the Hebrew Text of *Eccles.* vii. 1. but *Dan.* v. 25—28. is nearest to the Passage before us. Many other Examples might be collected out of both Testaments. See *Jer.* i. 11, 12. *Ezek.* vii. 6. *Hos.* ix. 15. *Amos* v. 5. viii. 2. *John* xv. 2. *Rom.* i. 29—31. xii. 3. 2 *Thess.* iii. 11. *Heb.* xi. 37. all which Instances have an Affinity of Sound with each other, like these of *Daniel*, but cannot easily be translated into another Language, and therefore the Beauty of them is frequently lost.

Ver. 55. *The Angel of God hath received the Sentence of God to cut thee in two.*] The punishing Offenders by sawing them in two with a wooden or iron Saw, to which Daniel here seems to allude, was in use among the Ancients. We are assured that the Thracians

sometimes sawed Men asunder alive, *Val. Max.* lib. ix. c. 2. by *Suetonius*, that Rebels and Betrayers of their Country were punished this Way; and by *Tertullian Apol.* c. iii. that it was used of old to those, who were false to their Creditors. It appears from the Laws of the Twelve Tables, that this Punishment was annexed to certain atrocious Crimes, but was so seldom put in Execution, that *Aulus Gellius* says he never read of any that suffered it, *Noct. Attic.* l. xii. This is thought to be the Punishment inflicted by *Samuel* on *Agag*, the Enemy of God's People, 1 *Sam.* xv. 33. and by *David* on the *Ammonites*, 2 *Sam.* xii. 31. It was by *Nebuchadnezzar* threatened to the Blasphemers of the true God, *Dan.* iii. 29. In general it is observed, that all those Places of Scripture, where the Word פָּרַט *parats*, to divide, or break asunder, is used in the Hebrew Text, for putting to death, probably allude to this Punishment. In *St. Matthew* the wicked Servant is threatened to be cut asunder, and to have his Portion with the Hypocrites, ch. xxiv. 51. Among the Sufferings of the Saints of the *Old Testament*, the Apostle mentions their being sawn asunder, ἐκείθεν, *Heb.* xi. 37. which the Jews and Christians by Tradition understand of *Isaiab*, who is said to have been put to death in this Manner by *Manasses*, King of *Judab*, for boasting he had seen the Lord sitting on his Throne, *Is.* vi. 1.

Ver. 56. *O thou Seed of Canaan, and not of Judab.*] This is spoken by way of the greatest Reproach; for the *Canaanites* were a cursed Generation from an accursed Father, so overgrown with Wickedness, that God devoted them to Destruction, and to be cut off from that good Land which they possessed, that he might place *Israel* therein, the Seed of blessed Parents, whom for their Fathers sake he loved, and entailed his Blessings upon. The Expression here is the same with that *Ezek.* xvi. 3. *Thy Birth and thy Nativity is of the Land of Canaan, thy Father was an Hittite, and thy Mother an Amorite*: So of the Elder it is observed here, that he resembled the Manners of *Canaan*, more than those of *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, his Ancestors, and is therefore said to be of the Seed of *Canaan*, because those, in Scripture Dialect, whose Manners we resemble, are said to be our Parents. And as the Name *Canaan*, in the Greek Σάλας, i. e. *Commotion* or *Agitation*, alludes probably to that disorderly Ferment in his Blood, which betrayed him into that Sin that derived the Curse upon his Posterity, so one thus wantonly and viciously disposed, is properly said to derive his Descent from him. There is also an Expression resembling this, *Hos.* xii. 7. where *Ephraim*, on account of his Injustice, Violence, Calumny, and false Accusation, is called, by way of Indignation *Canaan*, according to the Rendering of the *LXX*, *Vulg.* and *Orient.* Versions. That of *Geneva* has it in the Text, and this marginal Annotation on it, *Ephraim is more like the wicked Canaanite, than godly Abraham*,



brabam, or Jacob; intimating, that they were so unlike Jacob their Father beforementioned, that they were not to be reputed his genuine Seed, but as if their Birth and Nativity was of the Land of Canaan, had forfeited their Right to the Privileges and Blessings belonging to Israel, and were become Heirs of the Curse annexed to Canaan, and his Posterity. It is observable, that where Ephraim is reproached as Canaan, Judah is before commended. See ch. xi. 12. For the Tribe of Judah, for the Generality, retained the public Worship of God, its Purity, at least Truth of Worship, and was comparatively faithful, and that Kingdom was the lawful Succession of David's Lineage. The Jews have a Tradition, according to St. Jerom, that when Israel came out of Egypt, and were encompassed on one Side by a Mountain, on another by the Red Sea, on another by the Army of Pharaoh, and even quite shut in, the other Tribes despaired and desired to return into Egypt, only Judah, with Confidence in God, entered into the Sea, and so deserved the Kingdom. With respect to this Fact, Judah is said, in the Place last referred to, and which ought indeed to begin the next Chapter, to be a Witness of God's Word, and as a faithful Assertor thereof, descended with God into the Sea, and was most faithful among the holy ones, so as to believe the Words of God commanding him. See Pocock in loc.

Ver. 61. And they rose against the two Elders.] See Apost. Constit. l. ii. 49, 51. The Jewish Writers, tho' they do not look upon this History as authentic, yet have a traditional Account of the same Story, differing only in the Relation of it. They make the two Elders to be punished by Nebuchadnezzar, by being roasted, or cast into the Fire (Burning among the Chaldeans being the Punishment for Adultery;) and not by their own People, as mentioned in the following Verse. They will have these Elders to have been Abab and Zedekiah, mentioned Jer. xxix. 21. of whom it is there said, that they committed Villany in Israel, by Adultery with their Neighbours Wives. See Orig. Epist. ad African. Jerom. Epist. 10. and Comm. in loc. and on Dan. xiii. The last Clause of v. 5. here, has been thought by some to countenance this Opinion: But this is a mere Fancy and Conceit, the Meaning of that Sentence being only, that these Elders resembled those corrupt ones, which the Prophet there speaks of; and it seems more probable from the following Verse, that these Elders were stoned, as they suffered according to the Law of Moses, or in the Manner appointed by it for such a Crime, and in such sort, as they intended to have done unto Susanna.

Ver. 62. And they put them to death.]

Tho' the Jews, as Origen and others maintain, might have the Power of the Sword sometimes in their Dispersions, yet it may be questioned how far they had the Power of Life and Death during their Captivity under the Chaldeans. It seems more probable that they had not such a Power, and therefore the Jewish Writers will have these Elders to have been punished by Nebuchadnezzar. Under the Romans, who gave the Jews as much Liberty as the Babylonians, it is certain they had not this Power of Life and Death, as appears from John xviii. 31. It is not lawful for us to put any Man to Death. It is more likely that they had only Magistrates, Judges, and Courts of Justice of their own to decide Differences in Cases of Property, in a Way peculiar to themselves; as Strabo, quoted by Josephus, Antiq. l. xiv. c. 12. says they had at Alexandria in the like State. However this be, it is certain these Elders deserved a very exemplary Punishment, as their Crime was greatly enhanced from their public Character, as Judges, and their Sway and Authority as such among the People, and yet made Use of all the Respect and Esteem which their Age and Office procured them, to colour and conceal their detestable Crimes.

Ver. 63. Therefore Chelcias and his Wife praised God for their Daughter Susanna. . . . because there was no Dishonesty found in her.] As her Father and Mother, her Children and all her Kindred wept, v. 33. at the unexpected Charge against her, so their Joy, no doubt, was proportionably great for her Deliverance. "They praised God (says St. Jerom) not so much for the Preservation of her Life, which she would have lost very happily as being innocent, but because he had afforded her Grace and Strength enough not to fall under the Temptation, and that he had so signally glorified his Name by so miraculous a Protection of Innocence." The Fathers greatly extol the Constancy of Susanna, and call her the Glory of her Sex; as on the contrary they style these Elders, the Shame and Reproach of theirs.

Ver. 64. From that Day Daniel was had in great Reputation in the Sight of the People.] It is one Objection among others brought against this History of Susanna, that Daniel was not advanced upon the Occasion that this Story mentions, viz. for delivering Susanna from Death by his Wisdom, but rather for the Interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's Dream, Dan. ii. 48. But may we not conceive a double Advancement of Daniel? the first by his Judgment concerning Susanna, whereby he came into great Credit with the People, and the second occasioned by his expounding the Dream, whereby he came into Favour and Reputation before the King.



# COMMENTARY

ON THE

## History of BEL and the DRAGON.

Ver. 1. **K**ING *Astyages* was gathered to his Fathers, and *Cyrus* of Persia received his Kingdom.] *Herodotus* confirms this, telling us in express Words, that *Astyages* was succeeded by his Grandson *Cyrus*. This immediate Succession of *Cyrus* to his Grandfather is vouched by *Diodorus*, *Justin*, *Strabo*, *Clemens Alex.* *Lactantius*, *Eusebius*, *Jerom*, *Austin*, and others. But these, as they have copied after *Herodotus*, add no Weight to the Scale. But tho' the above Writers give *Astyages* no other Successor than *Cyrus*, nor is any Notice at all taken of any other in the Canon of *Ptolemy*, yet *Xenophon*, *Cyropæd.* l. ii. c. 19. does, and likewise *Josephus*, *Antiq.* l. x. c. 12. The former calls the Successor of *Astyages*, *Cyaxares*, and the latter gives him the Name of *Darius*, adding, that he overturned the Kingdom of *Babylon*, being assisted in that Enterprize by his Nephew *Cyrus*: Which is consonant both to Scripture, and Chronology. For if we suppose that *Astyages* had no other Successor but *Cyrus*, we must allow him to have lived a Hundred Years and upwards. Could we believe that *Astyages* lived to so great an Age, we should not scruple to follow *Herodotus*. But it is certain from *Dan.* v. 31. that *Darius* the Mede, or *Cyaxares* the Second (for they mean the same Person) succeeded immediately. Perhaps the Reason that *Cyaxares* is not mentioned, as succeeding, may be his reigning only Two Years at *Babylon* after he took it, and at his Death *Cyrus* became Master of the whole Empire: And because the other had no more than the Name and Shadow of the Sovereignty, excepting only in *Media*, which was his own proper Dominion. Our Translators follow the *Gr. Arab.* and *Syr.* Copies, but the *Vulg.* places this Verse at the End of the History of *Susanna*.

Ver. 2. And *Daniel* conversed with the King, and was honoured above all his Friends.] It is not agreed what King is here meant, whether

*Astyages*, *Darius* his Son, or *Cyrus* his Grandson. *Calmet* declares for the last; *Mess.* of *Port Royal* think the Account of *Bel* suits with neither of the three, as it is well known they worshiped the Sun, and not such an Idol. Besides what is mentioned § 28, 29. that the *Babylonians* were angry with, and threatened to destroy the King and his House on account of the Destruction of the *Dragon*, is an Instance of outrageous Behaviour not at all consistent with their being lately subdued by *Darius*, and *Cyrus*. They suppose therefore this to have happened under *Evilmerodach*, the Son of *Nebuchadnezzar*, with whom *Daniel* was in as high Esteem, as he had been under *Nebuchadnezzar*. And they place this History about A. M. 3442. the Beginning of *Evilmerodach's* Reign, *Daniel* being then, as is supposed, about Fifty-six Years of Age.

Ver. 3. An Idol called *Bel*.] This *Bel* was the great and national Idol of the *Babylonians*, who had erected a most magnificent and sumptuous Temple for it. As *Baal* is said to be the proper Name of *Belus*, the King of *Babel* or *Babylon*, next after *Nimrod*, and as he is said to be the first Man that was deified, or reputed a God after his Death, so the said Name is supposed by learned Men more peculiarly and primarily to belong to him. And accordingly the *Hebrew Baal* answering to the *Chaldee Bel*, it is this Successor of *Nimrod* that we are to understand by the God that is called by the Name of *Bel* in this History. *Ninus* his Son erected a Statue or Idol to his Father *Belus*, to be worshiped, and thereby gave the first Hint to Idolatry, or Image Worship, as many learned maintain. This Image or Idol of *Belus*, is, they say, what is here called *Bel*, or *Baal*, contracted, and continued until *Daniel's* Time, when it was destroyed by *Darius*, the Mede, or *Cyrus*, upon the Discovery of the Imposture of *Bel's* Priests.

Ibid. And there were spent upon him every Day Twelve great Measures of fine Flour, and Forty



*Forty Sheep, and Six Vessels of Wine.*] There are but two ancient Writers that make any mention of the History of *Bel*, viz. this apocryphal one, and *Josephus Ben Gorion*, and their Accounts differ in several Particulars. The learned *Selden* hath extracted from the latter the daily Allowance made to *Bel*, and makes it to be, *Juvenus, x Arietes, c Pulli Columbarum, et LXX Panes subcinericii, & x amphoræ vini*. Tho' they vary in the stated Quantity of Provisions, yet they had some Warrant, says he, from sacred History, viz. *Jer. li. 44.* to represent *Bel* so voracious, and to countenance his being served in so plentiful a Manner by the idolatrous Priests. *Seld. Syntag. ii. de Belo & Dracone.*

Ver. 4. *And the King said unto him, Why dost thou not worship Bel?*] It should seem that the King did not know but that *Daniel* worshiped *Bel*, but by his not accompanying him with the rest when he went daily to worship him. But as *Daniel* hated all Hypocrisy and Dissimulation, he was too good to seem to countenance by his Presence, what he inwardly abhorred. But that he might not appear to stay away thro' a supercilious Pride or Obstinacy, he assigns the Reason in the following Verse, for not joining in this idolatrous Worship, and the Reason is both natural and cogent, viz. that Idols are inanimate senseless Things, and both unworthy, and insensible of the Honour paid them; that God alone, who made all Things by his Power, even those very Persons whose Skill and Ingenuity contrived and fashioned these Idols, was the true Object of Worship, the everliving God, subsisting in, and from himself; the sovereign Being, from whom all others derived their Existence, and upon whom they depend for their Preservation and Continuance.

Ver. 6. *Thinkest thou not that Bel is a living God? seest thou not how much he eateth and drinketh every Day?*] One may easily judge what sort of God this *Bel*, the God of the *Babylonians* was, and how imperfect and insufficient to his own Existence and Happiness, who was beholden to his Votaries for his daily Sustenance and Refreshment, in the Opinion of his very Worshipers. But tho' the Idol had no Use of, or Occasion for this prodigious Quantity of Provisions, as being insensible of what was set before it, yet the Devil who inhabited and acted therein, greatly availed himself of the Cheat and Imposition put upon the credulous People, and tho' he eat none of the good Things prepared, but left them to feed the Luxury of the Priests, yet in the false Religion maintained and propagated by them, he found Means in Return to satisfy a more craving Appetite, viz. his insatiable Appetite to ruin and destroy Souls. See *Port Royal Comm. in loc.* What a strange Blindness must possess this idolatrous King, to fall down before such a despicable Object of Worship! and how mean and groveling must his Conceptions be, whom it became necessary to convince, that his

God did not eat all, to prove him to be no God? as if a Necessity of eating was any Proof of Divinity, and not rather an Argument of Decay and Mortality; and as if All-sufficiency was not a distinguishing and an essential Attribute of the Deity. How much juster was the Conclusion of a much wiser King, who, because of God's absolute Perfection and Independency on any of his Creatures, said unto the Lord, *Thou art my God: my Goods are nothing unto thee, Ps. xvi. 2.* where the Rendering of the LXX, who insert the Particle, *ὅτι*, is far more strong and beautiful, *ἐπὶ τῷ Κυρίῳ, Κύριός μὲν ἐστὶν, ὅτι καὶ ἀγαθὸν μὲν ἔχει καὶ χρεῖαν ἔχει.* And so the *Vulg.* *Dixi Domino, Deus meus es tu, quoniam bonorum meorum non eges.*

Ver. 11. *Bel's Priests said, Lo we go out, but thou, O King, set on the Meat, and make ready the Wine, and shut the Door fast, and seal it with thine own Signet.*] The wretched Sordidness of these Priests of *Bel*, who thro' a Greediness of gaining the Offerings themselves, made the People believe that their God eat up all that was offered in his Temple, is not so much to be wondered at, as they were Heathens, and Priests of a false Religion. "They are an Image of such (if any such there be of the sacred Order, say *Mess. of Port Royal*) who through a selfish Principle are tempted to make free with the Corban, or possess themselves of the Goods of the Church, which being a solemn Tribute, and Homage paid by some among the Faithful to God, and an Instance of their pious Acknowledgment, for the many Blessings received from him, and devoted by them to holy Purposes, are sealed with the Seal of the Most High, as Things sacred, and forbidden to be touched, and cannot be appropriated to private Uses, without the Guilt of manifest Injustice, and even of Sacrilege itself. If there be any such, who after the Example of these idolatrous Priests, convert holy Offerings to their own personal Emolument, abuse consecrated Things, or seize on what was given for the Relief of his poor Members, they are not the true Pastors, who enter into the Sheepfold by the right Door, but come in by some private Entrance, some unwarrantable Way, like Thieves and Robbers." *Comm. in loc.*

Ver. 19. *Then laughed Daniel, and beld the King that he should not go in, and said, Behold now the Pavement, and mark well whose Footsteps are these.*] "One knows not (says *Tertullian, adv. Valentin. c. vi.*) whether to laugh at the Folly, or lament seriously the Blindness of this Prince, who suffered himself thus to be imposed upon by his self-interested Priests." *Daniel* laughs at his Folly, as knowing that some Errors are best exposed by Ridicule and Contempt. "Let us laugh (say *Mess. of Port Royal*) when we look upon the Ashes strewed thro' the Temple of this false God, and the Footsteps of these Robbers of his Offerings, who

"ridi-



“ridiculously attempted to establish the Divinity of *Bel* upon their own Lying and Gluttony. But let us lament with Tears of Blood, if there be any in the Church, who thus play the Hypocrite, and fall upon the Piety of the Faithful. It is by Mens Footsteps and Goings, i. e. by their Conduct, and Manner of Behaviour in the Temple of the Lord, that one only justly knows whether they be Robbers, or true Pastors. It is by considering whether they be open or secret, Workers, and looking into their Works, whether they be those of Darknes or Light. For those who like these Priests of *Bel*, walk in Darknes, know not where they set their Feet, and the Traces of them, discovered by the Light of Truth, shew the hidden Work they have been about. Happy for them, if Ashes were the Symbol, and Token of their Penitence.” *Comm. in loc.*

Ver. 22. *Then the King was angry, and took the Priests with their Wives and Children . . . and slew them.* A Conduct so blameable in the Priests, and so scandalous an Imposture in Persons dedicated to holy Offices, and the Care of religious Affairs, carries in it something so shocking and unworthy of their Character, that one is not at all surprized at the Rigour with which this King punished a Cheat so detestable; for nothing is more criminal than Fraud in Matters of Religion, or to impose upon the Simplicity of Persons, who rest their Belief often upon the Authority of their Pastors, whose Integrity they entertain a good Opinion of, and think they can safely depend upon. But these crafty Priests of *Bel* had too much Interest in this Imposture not to carry on the ridiculous Cheat by a solemn and affected Gravity, and support it with all their Artifice and Power. It reminds one of what *Aristophanes* mentions of a like Fraud practised by the Priests of *Plutus*, and thus described by him:

Ἐπει' ἀναβλέψας, ὁρῶ τὸν ἱερέα,  
τὸς φθοῖς ἀφαρπάσσοντα, καὶ τὰς ἰσχυράδας,  
Ἀπὸ τῆς τραπέζης τῆς ἱεράς, μετὰ τῷ δέ  
Περὶ ἡλθε τὸς βωμὸς ἀπαντὰς ἐν κύκλῳ  
Εἰπὲς πόπανον εἴη τι κατὰ λείμμενον.

*Plut. Aet. iii. Scen. ii.*

Ver. 23. *There was a great Dragon whom the Babylonians worshiped.* By the Dragon we are to understand a Serpent, which unaccountable sort of Worship prevailed much in the early Times. That the Babylonians had Images of Serpents in the Temple of *Belus*, *Diodorus Siculus* informs us. We may observe, that the Serpent has all along been the common Symbol and Representation of the Heathen Deities, see *Jul. Firmic. De Error. Prof. Rel.* p. 15. But Serpents were not only mere Symbols and Hieroglyphics, but real Objects of Worship themselves, and had religious Worship paid them by the ancient Heathen, as appears from the Passage before us, from the *Book of Wisdom*, ch. xi. 15. and other Writers. It is well known, that the

Romans, upon a great Plague, sent to fetch a Serpent that was worshiped at *Epidaurus*; the Serpent came, or rather the Devil brought it, and it placed itself in an Island on the *Tiber*, where it was worshiped as a God propitious to the Roman People, *A. U.* 462. See *Val. Max.* i. 8. *Ovid. Metamorph.* l. xv. The Arrival of this Serpent is beautifully delineated upon a Coin of *Antoninus Pius* in *Montfaucon. Supplement.* vol. v. cap. 1. Tab. 26. What *Ælian* says, is much closer to our Purpose, ἐν Μελίτῃ τῆς Αἰγύπτου δράκων ἔστι, καὶ τ. λ. i. e. there was a Serpent worshiped in Egypt, in a Village called *Melita*, which lived in a Tower, and had Attendants, and Officers, and a Priest: A Table was kept for it, and Provisions served up to it; every Day Meal mixed with Honey was put into a Cup for its Use, which was all eaten and gone the next Day, *De Animal.* l. xi. c. 17. It seems as if the Devil took a Pride to be worshiped under that Form, to insult perhaps fallen Man, if we may indulge Conjecture. *Grotius* out of several ancient Authors has made it appear, that in the old Greek Mysteries it was usual to carry about a Serpent, crying *Εὐα*, the Devil thereby, as it may seem, expressing his Triumph in the unhappy Deception of our first Parents. See *Orig. cont. Cels.* l. vi. And probably the Story of *Ophioneus* among the Heathen, was taken from the Devil's assuming the Form or Body of a Serpent in his tempting of *Eve*. That from his Success at that Time he should be encouraged to assume often the like Figure to deceive her Posterity, is not to be wondered at. But one cannot conceive what Mankind could at any Time find, in such a hideous Creature as a Serpent is, worthy of their Adoration. But if Man in *Paradise*, in a State of Innocence, and with that high Degree of Light and Perfection, that he was then possessed of, preferred the Voice of a Serpent to that of God, and thought he could be more happy in listening to the artful Suggestions of such a Monster, than the gracious Commands of his Creator, what Wonder is it, if one meets with Marks and Traces of that first fatal Blindness spread far and near among dark and unenlightened People, and even whole Nations, as the Babylonians here mentioned, paying religious Adoration to Serpents and Crocodiles?

Ver. 27. *Then Daniel took Pitch, and Fat, and Hair, and did see the them together, and made Lumps thereof.* The Composition or Materials which *Daniel* made use of to burst this Dragon, had not in themselves any natural or specific Power to effectuate that, or to kill him, but being crammed, say *Mess. of Port Royal*, into a Throat naturally strait, they stopped the Respiration or Breath, and so suffocated it. *Josephus Ben-Gorion* gives a very different Account of its Destruction, as we have it translated from the Hebrew by the learned *Selden*: *Abiens vero Daniel a conspectu regis paravit instrumenta ferrea instar pectinum, quibus lina repurgantur, et conjunxit ea interius, tergum conjungens tergo; aculei au-*

*tem*



tem eorum extra prominebant per circuitum limati & acuti, quibus undique adhibuit varias ciborum species, præsertim adipem, pinguedinem, & alias res pingues. Lituram quoque sulphuris & picis apposuit ei, quibus fomentis absconditi sunt aculei ferrei & dentes illi serrati, habuitque formam demensi, (Ebraice Mincha, quod est munus Deo oblatum) cumque Daniel illud projecisset in rictum draconis, suscepit ipsum draco, & devoravit eum, desiderio animæ suæ; at ubi descendit ad interiora ventris ejus, dissolvebatur adeps, & pinguedo a ferreis aculeis, & ingrediebantur acumina serratorum dentium in viscera draconis, atque perforabant ea, & illico caput draco sentire ingentem dolorem, corruensque mortuus est sequenti die. Ben-Gorion, l. i. c. 10. apud Seld. Syntag. ii. De Belo & Dracone, c. xvii.

Ver. 28. They conspired against the King, saying, The King is become a Jew.] i. e. The King seems, like the Jews, to have conceived a Dislike and Abhorrence of Idols, as appears plainly from his permitting the Overthrow of our national one: Or they might imagine him to be turned Jew, or Jewishly inclined, from the great Favour so lately shewed to that People in setting them at Liberty; or lastly, they might conclude so from the particular Esteem and Regard shewed to Daniel. Grotius departs from the common Interpretations, and quite transposes the Sense, and instead of the common Rendering, The King is become a Jew, makes the Meaning to be, "A Jew is become King," *Iedai & yegonen basildes* (not *o basildes*, as the present Reading is) i. e. Daniel assumes the supreme Power, he acts as absolutely as the King, his Power and Sway over him is so great, as to persuade him to do as he pleases; he hath destroyed Bel, and slain the Dragon, &c.

Ver. 31. Who cast him into the Lion's Den.] Some, from that single Circumstance of Daniel being here said to be cast into the Lion's Den against the King's Inclination, contend, that this is the same Story with what is related Dan. vi. 19. with some Addition of Circumstances in the Beginning, and Want of others in the End: But there are many Reasons against this Opinion, as that Daniel in this Story is said to be six Days in the Lion's Den, but in the sacred one to have remained there but one Night. Secondly, The Apocryphal History mentions, that it happened in Cyrus's Reign, whereas the Text of Daniel says expressly, that it was in the Reign of Darius. Thirdly, The Accusation, and the Matter on which Daniel is said to be cast into the Lion's Den, is very different, the one being for his putting up his Petition to the true God three Times a Day. the other for destroying Bel and the Dragon. It seems therefore most probable to suppose, that different Facts and Times are meant, and that either the Prophet Daniel was twice cast into the Lion's Den, once under Darius, because he prayed to his God, contrary to the King's express Command, and again under Cyrus, upon Occasion of the killing this Dragon;

or that a different Daniel from the Prophet so called, is here spoken of.

Ver. 52. And they had given them every Day two Carcases, and two Sheep.] The Margin very properly renders two Slaves, i. e. two Prisoners condemned to Death. As it is an ordinary Mode of Speech to use Body for the whole Man, so the Greeks often put *σώματα* for Persons. Slaves in particular are called *σώματα*, Rev. xviii. 13.

Ver. 53. There was in Jewry a Prophet called Habbacuc.] St. Jerom thinks the Prophet here mentioned to be the Habbacuc among the minor Prophets, that he was at this Time in Judæa, where Nebuchadnezzar had left the meaner sort of People to till and cultivate the Land; but if this be the same Person, whose Book we receive as Canonical, he must have lived a long Time, for he prophesied either before, or at least in the Reign of Nebuchadnezzar the Great. But Eusebius and others contend for the different Habbacuc, whom they suppose to be the Writer of this short History, as also of that of Susanna, and they ground their Opinion on an ancient Title, or Inscription in some of the Greek Copies prefixed to the History of Bel, which runs thus, *προφητεία τῆς Ἀββακού, ἡς τῆς Ἰούδα, ἐκ φυλῆς Λευί. Prophetia Abbakum, filii Judæ, de tribu Levi.* After which the first Words of the Book are, *ἀνθρώπος τις ἦν Ἰερὺς, ἐνόματι Δανιήλ, ὃς τῆς Ἀβδὰ, συμπότης τῆς βασιλεως τῆς Βαβυλωνος.* And from this Title they conclude, that the Facts here recorded relate not to Daniel the Prophet, but to another Daniel, a Priest, and of a different Extraction, and the History to be wrote likewise by another, and not the Canonical Habbacuc. See *Sexti Senen. Bibl. Sacr. & Dupin. Eccl. Hist.* vol. i. It may be asked, and the Question is natural enough, Why that Being, who is confessedly Almighty, should chuse to employ Help so far distant, for the Relief of a faithful distressed Servant, as that here mentioned, viz. the sending a Prophet express from Judæa to Babylon, for that Purpose, when it was so easy and ready to have administered Sustainance to Daniel by any of the Faithful that were in the City itself, or near the Place of his Confinement, or even to have supported him without any Nourishment at all, as he did in a miraculous Manner his Servant Moses for Forty Days together. But tho' it does not belong to, or even become us, to search too curiously into the hidden Reasons of God's Counsel, yet we may be assured, that he acted herein with the same consummate Wisdom, which is the standing Rule of his Providence; and in particular there seems to have been this weighty Reason for this Expedient, for hereby the Jews that remained in Palestine, would receive great Comfort and Assurance, and be encouraged in their religious Trust and Confidence, as by Habbacuc they would be informed both of Daniel's strong Faith, and God's remarkable Protection and Deliverance of him on that Account. And without



doubt it must afford great Consolation to them, as well as to the rest of their distressed Brethren, to be assured by this so signal an Instance of his Goodness, that the God of Israel still thought of, and had a Regard for his chosen People, however persecuted, or in what Manner soever persecuted and distressed: And probably would draw this, or the like Inference, in their own Favour, that if he stopped in a Manner so miraculous the Mouths of the Lions to save a faithful Servant, he might as easily calm the Fury of their Enemies, when he pleased; and that Succour, which by the Prophet of Jewry he administered to a distressed Prophet, they might look upon as a Pledge and Earnest of a future Recovery, and Re-union of all their captive Brethren, who, tho' reduced to the last Extremity like Daniel, ought not to set up their Rest at a foreign Babylon, nor fix there their Settlement, nor expect thence their Comfort and Refreshment, but aspire after their native Land, and thence only wait for their Sustenance and Relief.

Ver. 36. *Thro' the Vehemency of his Spirit.* Gr. *Εν τῷ πόσει in stridore*, and according to *Scapula*, it hath no other Signification. The Syriac has, *Viribus Spiritus Sancti*. The Arab. *Adjuvante Spiritu suo*. Junius, *impetu Spiritus ejus*. i. e. *Domini*, according to the Margin. It should seem from hence, that by the Spirit is meant the Holy Ghost, to whom the Inspiration and Conduct of the Prophets is commonly ascribed in Scripture: Who might do this, either immediately by his own Power, or by an Angel, or by a vehement and strong Wind. The Greek seems to countenance the last: Such Transportations of the Prophets having been usual long before this Time. See *1 Kings xviii. 12. 2 Kings ii. 11—16. Ezek. iii. 12, 14. Matth. iv. 1. Acts viii. 39.*

Ver. 38. *And Daniel said, Thou hast remembered me, O God.* It is observable, that Daniel, without paying any Regard, or speaking to the Prophet, who brought him this Sustenance, immediately addresses himself to God, whose Minister *Habbacuc* was. But it may be asked, How it happened, that Daniel was so late in his Acknowledgment, as now first to make this grateful and pious Confession, and that upon so small an Occasion in Comparison, as an unexpected Dinner brought to him? The Miracle of the Seven hungry Lions, who notwithstanding offered no Hurt or Violence to him, was it not a Proof far stronger and more illustrious, that God does not forsake those that seek and

love him, and called it not for an earlier and louder Acknowledgment? I answer, that we are not to imagine that Daniel omitted the Tribute of his Thanksgiving, for the Vouchsafement of that far greater Mercy, nor can it indeed be inferred or concluded from this Passage; but this new Testimony which God gave him of his Goodness, by the Service and Ministry of a Prophet, sent to him from such a Distance for his Refreshment, drew from him this other explicit Declaration of his loving Kindness. His Answer shews a Heart full of the most grateful Sentiments, and if Life be more valuable than Meat, we may be assured he was not only thankful, but in a greater Degree, for the Preservation of the former, being the more important Blessing. "One is at a Loss (say *Mess. of Port Royal*) "which most to admire, either "the Composure of Daniel himself, eating "what God had sent him in the Midst of "the Lions, or the Tameness of the Lions, "almost famished with Hunger, suffering "him to do so, and not offering any Violence "to him, when they saw him eating before "them." An Event the most unusual and surprizing, but arising probably from that Respect and Awe which God had impressed upon these savage Beasts for the Person of Daniel. Not that they were sensible themselves of any Merit or superior Goodness in Daniel, as some have whimsically imagined; but their seizing with so much Fury upon his Accusers shews, that their sparing him was miraculous.

Ver. 42. *Cast those that were the Cause of his Destruction into the Den.* i. e. those that intended his Destruction. There is no Mention here of the Accusers Wives and Children being involved in the same Punishment, as is mentioned, *Dan. vi. 24.* which shews the Occasion to be different, tho' it is observable that the *Vulg.* closes this Fragment, or little History of *Bel*, with that Decree of *Darius*, ch. vi. 26. *That Men should tremble and fear before the God of Daniel.* However this be, we may draw the following useful Reflection from the Sentence passed on his Accusers, "That if in Imitation of this Prince, those "who falsely accuse others, were exposed to "the same Punishment, they endeavoured "to inflict, as both the Civil and Canon "Laws do require, the World would be soon "purged from the Mischiefs of Falshood and "Perjury, nor should we see Innocence so "often oppressed by Calumny and Slander."

the same consummate Wisdom, which is the standing Rule of his Providence; and in particular there seems to have been this weighty Reason for this Expedient, for hereby the Jews that remained in Babylon, would receive great Comfort and Assurance, and be encouraged by their religious Trials and Consequences, as by Habakkuk they would be informed both of Daniel's strong Faith, and God's remarkable Protection and Deliverance of him on that Account. And without

Matter on which Daniel is said to be cast into the Lion's Den, is very different, the one being for his putting up his Petition to the true God three Times a Day, the other for destroying *Bel* and the Dragon. It seems therefore most probable to suppose, that the former Facts and Times are meant, and that after the Prophet Daniel was twice cast into the Lion's Den, once under Darius, because he obeyed to his God, contrary to the King's express Command, and again under Cyrus upon Occasion of the killing this Dragon;

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## DISSERTATION

## UPON THE

Two Books of the *MACCABEES*.

**T**HERE are often reckoned Four Books of the *Maccabees*, the Two First I shall have only occasion to speak to. The Third, contains a miraculous Deliverance of the *Jews*, who were exposed, in the Amphitheatre at *Alexandria*, to the Fury of Elephants. This Book, which is to be found in all the *Greek* Editions, is, without Reason, called the Third Book of *Maccabees*, since it does not speak of them in the least. If this History be true, it ought to have been placed the first of all, as what is mentioned there happened about Fifty Years before the Passages that are related in the other Two Books. See *Dupin's Bel. Differt. Eccl. Hist.* vol. i. The Fourth, containing the History of *John Hyrcanus*, is rejected as still more Apocryphal, and probably was taken from the Book or Memoirs of his Actions mentioned, 1 *Maccab.* xvi. 23, 24. The Two Books of the *Maccabees*, known and distinguished by that Name, were not written by the same Person, as the Learned conclude from the Style, and a different Manner of counting the Years; the one follows the *Jewish* Account, the other that of *Alexandria*, which begins six Months later. The first is generally thought to have been wrote by an *Hebrew* originally in that Language, as the Phrase of it is plainly *Jewish*, or rather in *Syriac*, which was the vulgar Tongue in *Palestine*, in the Time of the *Maccabees*, and afterwards translated into *Greek*, and is, by some, attributed to *Josephus*, or *Philo*, by others, to the Synagogue, or the *Maccabees* themselves. The other is supposed to be wrote originally in *Greek*, begins its History a great deal higher than the first, and is an Abridgment or Epitome, by what Author it is uncertain, of a Work wrote by *Jason*, a *Jew* of *Cyrene*, as appears from the Preface of that Book, which begins ch. ii. 23. The Book itself is opened by Two Letters of the *Jews* at *Jerusalem*, to their Brethren in *Egypt*, and added by the Author of this Abridgment. The Two Books together contain the History of the *Jews*, or the State of the Church under the third Monarchy, which was that of the *Greeks*, comprizing about Forty Years, from the Death of *Alexander the Great*, to that of *Demetrius Soter*, and they conclude about One hundred and thirty Years, and upwards, before the Coming of our Saviour. There is a great Chasm in the *Jewish* History, occasioned by the Loss of their Books; for scarce one Book written in the *Hebrew* Tongue, since Prophecy ceased, escaped the general Calamity that befel the *Jewish* Writings. Those that were retrieved by *Judas Maccabeus*, 2 *Maccab.* ii. 13, 14. from the Ravage of *Antiochus*, or were written afterwards, which were not a few, see *Prol. to Ecclesiasticus*, all perished under *Titus's* Dispersion, or *Adrian's* Persecution; on this Account, and the Obscurity occasioned by this Calamity, *Eusebius* says, he can go no further than *Zorobabel* in his Catalogue with any certainty, as there was no sacred Volume to be depended upon, from the Return from the Captivity to our Saviour's Time, *Demonst.* l. viii. During their Captivity, indeed the Prophets *Ezekiel* and *Daniel* give us an Account of many Particulars relating to their History, as does *Tobit* likewise at *Niniveh*, *Esther*, and *Mordecai* at *Susan*. After the Captivity, we have the Books of *Ezra* and *Nehemiah*, whose present Work probably is but an Abridgment of those Writings or Commentaries of his mentioned 2 *Maccab.* ii. 13. since the Passage quoted in the *Maccabees*, is not to be found there. With *Nehemiah* ended the History of the *Jews* contained in the Canonical Books of the *Old Testament*. As *Nehemiah* died after the Year of the World 3563, and the Reign of *Antiochus Epiphanes* began A. M. 3829, from the one to the other, there was a Distance of 266 Years, which Interval between *Nehemiah* and the *Maccabees*, for want of Records, Annals, and other proper Helps, from sacred or prophane History, may well be expected to be dark and obscure. In the Time of the *Maccabees*, Care seems to have been taken to record all remarkable



remarkable Events, which happened in that Country; the Author of the First Book quotes at the End of that Work, the Memoirs of the Pontificate of *John Hyrcanus*, 1 *Macc.* xvi. ult. which makes it probable, that he wrote from the Annals of that Time. The Author of the Second says, ch. ii. 14. that *Judas* made a Collection of the historical Accounts of his Nation, which had been dispersed during the War. And in fact great Use is to be made, and much Light is afforded from the apocryphal Writings, chiefly the Books of the *Maccabees*, for carrying on the Third of the *Jewish* History. Next to the Books of *Maccabees*, we are beholden to *Josephus*, *Philo Judeus*, and such *Greek* and *Latin* Writers, as would vouchsafe to take Notice of them, for further Insight into their History. This then is the first Use I shall mention of the Books of the *Maccabees*, viz. in some Measure to fill up the Chasm of the *Jewish* History from the ceasing of Prophecy. Secondly, No History is of like Use to explain the Book of *Daniel*, and what is contained therein relating to the *Jews*, and their great Enemy, *Antiochus Epiphanes*, on which Account the Fathers have always set a great Value on these Books. In them most of the Particulars of the great Revolutions mentioned by that Prophet, are so unfolded and explained, that even the very Time and Number of Days which are there set down, accord most strictly to Truth, and the Evidence of Fact. The first Book in particular is a Key to the Mysteries in the Eighth and Eleventh Chapters of that Prophecy, respecting the Horn, by which the Sanctuary was prophaned. From thence it appears, that that Horn was *Antiochus*, whose great Wickedness and Wantonness in shedding Blood, and the Abomination introduced by him into the holy Place, fully answer that Character. The like Use may be made of these Books for explaining other Parts of the Holy Scripture, as particularly, 1 *Macc.* x. 88, 89. Which, with other Passages in this grave Writer, whosoever, says the very learned Dr. *Jackson*, "will compare with the Ninth of the Prophet *Zachariah*, will perceive there may be good Use of Books not Canonical for the right understanding of sacred Writings most Canonical, and that these Books, though Apocryphal, do not deserve to be left out in any new Impressions of our Bibles." Tom. ii. p. 844. To which I must add, what another judicious Writer says on the Occasion, "That without all doubt all the World could not recompense the Loss of the Books of the *Maccabees*, and the Use of them for understanding the Prophets; so inestimable is the Benefit of them to that purpose." *Thorndike's Epilogue*, p. 210. Thirdly, God having withdrawn his Prophets, many and great Revolutions happened to the *Jewish* State, and the Church of God underwent very severe and heavy Persecutions both from the *Greeks* and *Romans*, in which the *Maccabees* in particular signalized themselves; the Account of which Times, and of their Conduct on the Occasion, we must take from these Books; and therefore they are to be valued, and of the Church not unprofitably used, says St. *Austin*, for those glorious Instances recorded in them of Persons suffering such horrible Persecutions with a remarkable Patience for the Testimony of God's Religion, and thereby encouraging others to undergo cheerfully the like Trial of Sufferings. Fourthly, There are some scattered Remains in these Books, as well as the other Apocryphal ones, which have preserved many Notions of the ancient *Jews* in the Interval between the Days of *Christ* and the last Prophets; and in particular their Belief of a future Resurrection, and the Hope which the *Jews* conceived and entertained of the *Messiah* that was to come, whom they speak of sometimes as a Prophet, or Priest, sometimes as a King, sometimes under the Character of two of these Offices joined together. See 1 *Macc.* iv. 46. xiv. 41. But notwithstanding the Usefulness of the Books of the *Maccabees* in these Respects, it must be acknowledged, and is very apparent, that there are great Errors, and often Accounts different, and even contradictory to be found in them, especially the Second, arising probably either from Ignorance of the *Greek* and *Roman* History, or national Prejudice, and an immoderate Partiality in favour of the *Jewish* Nation. A learned Writer has been at the Pains, see *Rainold's Preface*, vol. i. to select such Passages as are inconsistent with, and contrary to the Account given by approved Authors and Historians of particular Facts and Occurrences, and sets down among others, as Instances of Carelessness at least, the following Passages, 1 *Macc.* i. 6. where it is said, that *Alexander*, before his Death, divided his Kingdom among his honourable Servants: but the Writers of his History say otherwise; the Account generally received is, that after the Death of *Alexander*, his Dominions were parted among divers of his Princes and Captains, and, after a short time, fell into the Hands of Four, as is also intimated, *Dan.* viii. 8. (ch. xviii. 16.) It is said of the *Romans*, that they committed their Government to one Man, or Magistrate, every Year, whereas it is well known, that at that Time there were annually two Consuls chosen at *Rome*, and for Three hundred Years before, 1. ii. ch. ii. § 415, 416, 417. The Ark is said to be hid, and concealed by the Prophet *Jeremiah*, which could neither happen before the taking of the City, for *Jeremiah* was then in Prison; nor after its being taken, for the *Chaldeans* would scarce have suffered so valuable a Part of the Spoils, as the Tabernacle, the Ark, and the Altar to be taken away, and secreted from them. And what follows after, that God would, upon the future Return of that People, discover where *Jeremy* had hid these, once so famous in *Solomon's* Temple, is no less false as it is certain the material Furniture of that superb Temple was all destroyed with it. The Two Books also often contradict one another in their Relation of memorable Events, as, 1. i. ch. vii. 13, 16. it is said, that *Antiochus* perished through great Grief in a strange Land, which is thought by



by some to be confirmed from *Dan. viii. 25.* but, *l. ii. ch. i. 16.* he is said to have been slain in the Temple of *Nanea*, by throwing Stones like Thunderbolts upon him, and his Company, and, *ch. ix. 28.* to have ended his Days miserably in the Mountains, by an incurable and invincible Plague in his Bowels. *Judas Maccabæus* is said, *l. i. ch. ix. 3, 18.* to have been slain in Battle, *An. 152,* but, *l. ii. i. 10.* he is represented as writing a Letter, or Epistle, *An. 188,* thirty-six Years after his Death. Again, *l. i. iv. 36.* he is said to have purified the Temple before *Antiochus's* Death, but, *l. ii. x. 2, 3.* it is mentioned as done two Years after his Death. Nor will it be sufficient to say, that these two Years are to be reckoned from the Prophanation of the Temple, and not from *Antiochus's* Death, for even thus will it not be consistent with the first Book, for it appears from thence, that the purifying the Sanctuary was three Years after its Prophanation; for the Prophanation was on the 15<sup>th</sup> Day of the Month *Chasleu*, *An. 145.* *l. i. ch. i. 54.* and the purifying was on the 25<sup>th</sup> Day of the same Month *An. 148.* *l. i. ch. iv. 52.* There are also some Instances, particularly in the second Book, which are contrary to the Canonical Scriptures, and of dangerous Consequence to be recommended as Precedents, or to stand upon Record, uncontradicted in History, as *l. i. ch. xii. 44, 45.* *Judas Maccabæus* is commended for praying for the Dead, and making an Offering or Reconciliation in their behalf, that they might be delivered from Sin; *Bellarmino* from hence takes occasion to confirm the Doctrines of Purgatory and Prayers for the Dead, *De Purgator. l. ii. ch. iii.* but it appears plainly from the Context, that *Judas's* Prayer was not for the Relief of the Dead, but that the Guilt and Punishment of the Trespas committed by some wicked ones, who had displeased God, and perished in their Sins, might not be imputed to, or transferred upon, the Living. The rendring of the *Vulgate* here, and its Inference, are both faulty, *Sancta ergo et salubris est cogitatio pro defunctis exorare, ut a peccatis solvantur.* The *Greek* has nothing like it, nor can any such Doctrine be founded upon it. Herein lies the Fallacy of that Version; it joins those Words, *It was a good and holy Thought*, which manifestly is spoken of what went before, to the Sentence that follows after; though the *Greek*, by a full Stop, quite distinguishes it from this last Sentence. Nor will the Syntax of the present *Greek* Text ever allow it to belong to it. There is a like Mistake, and for the same Purpose, two Verses above, *γ 43.* where the *Vulg.* reads, *Duodecim millia* (it should be *duo*) *drachmas argenti misit Hierosolymam offerri pro peccatis mortuorum sacrificium.* But the *Greek* barely is, *παραγγελλειν διδωαι, as even the Roman Edition of 1587,* published by the Order of *Sixtus Quintus* himself expressly reads, without any notice or mention of the Dead; nor is that Version less faulty in rendring the *Greek* Adverb *αυτων*, by *religiosis.* It is most probable, that *Judas* thought of nothing less than Purgatory in this Action, for the Money sent to *Jerusalem* was for a Sin-Offering, to expiate, or take away, the Guilt from the rest of the People. And it is observable, that this Sum was a general Contribution, according to the Appointment, *Levit. iv. 13.* So that upon the whole, what was here done by *Judas*, was not for the Sake of the deceased Soldiers, but for the Safety and Preservation of the Remainder that were living, that the Judgment of God might not overtake the rest; *l. ii. ch. xiv. 41, 42.* *Razias* is commended for laying violent Hands on himself, and is said to die manfully. But this whole Account seems a Fiction. That a Man should fall on his Sword first, then leap down from a Wall into the Midst of his Enemies; that they should make way for him, where he fell amongst the thickest of them, that he should rise up again in Anger, but in such a Condition, that his Blood gushed out like Spouts of Water; that he should run through the Midst of the Throng notwithstanding; and standing upon a steep Rock, when his Blood was now quite gone, should pluck out his Bowels, and take them in both his Hands, and cast them among the Croud, and even at his last Gasps should have the Use of his Understanding so perfect, as to call upon God to restore him those Bowels again, these are Circumstances too odd and romantic to gain any Credit to this Story. It would be almost endless to Instance in the several faulty Particulars of the second Book; but of all others, *ch. i. γ 18.* to the End of that Chapter, excepting the Prayer itself, is the most unwarrantable, which the learned Reader may see exposed with great Strength of Reasoning, by consulting *Rainold. de Idriatopostyph. tom. ii. Præf. 133, 134.* But notwithstanding this Mixture of Dross, there is a Fund of valuable Treasure still remaining. Lastly, It cannot but be observed, that the Series of these Books is very much disturbed, that not only the same Facts are frequently related in both, but the Order of Time is not truly preserved; it may not be amiss therefore, that these Books may be perused with more Pleasure and Profit, to refer the Reader to *Wells's Histor. Geogr. of the Old Testament*, vol. ii. where he will find the several Chapters in each set down according to the true Series of the Jewish History.

H h A D I S-



# DISSERTATION

## UPON THE

## Two Books of *ESDRAS*.

**T**HAT which is called the First, or, according to other Accounts, the Third Book of *Esdras*, the Author of which is not known, but supposed to be an Hellenist Jew, inserts an odd Narration in the third and fourth Chapters of three young Men that were of *Darius's* Guard, contending for the Reward of a Problem, or Sentence propounded by every one of them. The Arguments, it must be confessed, are weighty, and very proper on the Occasion; but it is obvious, that the Writer makes these Candidates to prescribe, as it were, to the King, what Gifts and Rewards he shall bestow on them in token of Victory: and besides the Rewards themselves are too magnificent for such a Contest, and more proper to be bestowed on a General, who had gained a signal Victory, or conquered divers Provinces. His Design in this Narrative seems to have been, to embellish the Account of *Zorobabel*, by a Circumstance so honourable to him as the Prize, and, at the same Time, entertaining enough to the Reader. I conceive it to be a traditionary Story, as the true *Ezra* takes no notice of it, founded probably upon Truth, but mixed with some fabulous Circumstances. In different Parts of the Book, there is a summary Repetition of the two last Chapters of the second Book of *Chronicles*, and of the Books of *Ezra* and *Nehemiah*. But one cannot excuse the Author for injudiciously inserting several Particulars from them, to give an Air of Truth to his Relation, and to make it more credible. But against its Authority there are the following material Objections: 1. When the *Jews*, by the Permission of *Cyrus*, returned to *Judea*, this Writer makes their Governor, or Conductor, to be *Sanabassar*, whereas, according to the true *Ezra*, *Zorobabel* was their Conductor. 2. He places the Re-consecration of the Altar, and the renewing the Sacrifices in the second Year of *Darius*, whereas the Canonical Book of that Name fixes it in the Reign of *Cyrus*, ch. iii. 1. and in the seventh Month. 3. If *Darius*, when he permitted the *Jews* to return with *Zorobabel* to *Jerusalem*, to rebuild their Temple, wrote to his Officers beyond the *Euphrates* in their Favour, as this Writer represents it, would they have had the Assurance to demand of them by what Authority they engaged in the Work? Did they not know the King's Orders, and were not they themselves obliged to furnish them with Materials? Or would *Zorobabel* have had any occasion to have recourse to the Decree of *Cyrus* to rebuild their Temple? 4. He makes *Zorobabel* to be one of the Guard about the King's (*Darius*) Person at *Babylon*, when he confessedly was, at that time, at *Jerusalem*, *Ezra* ii. 2. 5. He represents *Darius*, ch. iv. 46. as engaged by a solemn Vow, before his Advancement to the Kingdom, to rebuild their Temple: If this was the Case, what need was there to search the Archives with such Diligence for *Cyrus's* Decree for that purpose? 6. He distinguishes *Nehemiah* from the *Tirshatha*, making two separate Persons of them, whereas, the latter is only a Name of Office, *Nehem.* viii. 9. 7. He contradicts both Scripture and himself, when he says, ch. iv. 44, 57. that *Zorobabel* entreated *Darius*, to send to *Jerusalem* the holy Vessels,



Vessels, which Cyrus had intended to have sent, as if Cyrus had not executed that Design, contrary to what the true *Ezra*, and even himself, says, ch. vi. 18, 19. 8. He charges the *Edomites* with burning of the Temple, at the same Time that he mentions *Jerusalem* being taken by the *Chaldeans*. 9. He says, that when *Darius* gave leave to the *Jews* to return, he ordered them to be escorted for their greater Safety by a thousand Horse, as if a Number so inconsiderable could be a Safeguard for fifty thousand Persons. Lastly, Where he does, agree with the Canonical Books, he quite confounds the Order of Time and Events, and, after all his Pains to adjust his Account to that of the true *Ezra*, he betrays his Inability, for so nice an Undertaking, and has fallen into Faults so gross, that the Church has deservedly rejected this Book, as uncanonical, and unworthy to be read in its Service. I have the rather taken Notice of these, as well as those respecting the Books of *Maccabees*, to acquit myself of a Promise, see *Pref. to Comm. on Eccles.* to make some Strictures and Observations upon particular Passages in them. As to the second Book of this Writer, it must be confessed there are in it lofty Sentiments, beautiful Similes, ancient Traditions, the Appearance at least of a prophetick Spirit, and a surprizing close Resemblance of many Passages in the *New Testament*; but the following Objections are made against it. 1. The Genealogy of this *Pseudo-Esdras*, placed at the Entrance, differs from that, 1 *Esd.* viii. 12, and from that in the true *Ezra*, ch. vii. 1, 2. which has induced the Learned to conclude, that they are different Persons. 2. It is said, ch. i. 11. that God scattered the People of two Provinces, even of *Tyrus* and *Sidon* in Favour of his People returning from *Egypt*, of which there is no Confirmation in Scripture. And a little after, § 22, 23. two very different Facts are confounded: *Moses* is made to work the Miracle of sweetning the Water at the Brook *Arnon*, *Num.* xxi. 16. which was wrought only on the Waters of *Marah*, *Exod.* xv. 25. *Ibid.* § 39, 40, the Author enumerates the twelve Minor Prophets, though *Haggai*, *Zachary*, and *Malachi*, whom, according to a Rabbinical Conceit, he calls an Angel of the Lord, prophesied after the Captivity, and their Times agree not with that of this Writer. It is moreover observable, that he places them not according to the Order in the *Hebrew Canon*, but follows that of the *LXX*, or *Greek Bibles*. Ch. ii. 33, he introduces his having received a Charge from the Lord, upon Mount *Horeb*, abruptly, without any Authority, Connection, or Reason, except it be to insinuate and countenance a Notion of *his* Inspiration. Ch. iv. 35, 41, mention is made of Souls departed in a State of Grace, being kept in Chambers, or secret Storehouses, till the Day of Judgment, agreeably enough to *Apoc.* vi. 9, 10. which has been objected to, as seemingly countenancing the Doctrine of Purgatory; and it must be confessed the *Catholics* have so applied it, but without Reason, as nothing is therein said or intimated of their being detained there by way of Punishment, or to be purified by it. Ch. iii. 6, we have another Rabbinical Conceit of *Eden*, or the earthly Paradise, being planted even before the Earth itself came forward, or was made. Ch. vi. 49, it is said, that God, on the fifth Day, created two Animals of an enormous Bigness, one called *Enoch*, the other *Leviathan*, and as the seventh Part would not contain them both, he separated them, and put the former into a dry Place, wherein there were a thousand Mountains, and the *Leviathan* he reserved in the Sea, to furnish an Entertainment for his People at the Coming of their *Messiah*. This is also another Rabbinical Whim, which the Author borrowed from the *Talmudists*, who have likewise abused *Gen.* i. 20, 21. and *Pf.* ciii. 26. to the same fanciful Purpose. See *Raynold's Praelect.* xxvii. vol. i. What he mentions, ch. xiii. 40, 41. about the ten Tribes being carried by God beyond the *Euphrates*, which divided itself for their Passage, into a further Country, where never Mankind dwelt, into a Region called *Arareth*, that they might there keep their Statutes without Danger or Disturbance, from thence to return at the latter Time by a like miraculous Stopping of the Waters, I say, though these Tribes are allowed to be in Being, in what Country it is uncertain, yet their Passage both ways in the Manner described is scarce credible. It seems a fond Persuasion, arising from national Prejudice, that God will never cease to do Miracles in behalf of his Chosen. Ch. xiv. 11, he makes ten Parts and a Half of the World, dividing it into twelve, to be in his Time already past, and therefore according to his Account, the World should have been at an End above 1700 Years agoe. It is computed, that from the Creation of the World (for I see no Reason to begin the Account at the Deluge) to the Time of *Esdras* were about 3470 Years, and therefore after 500 Years more, or the Time of our Saviour's Birth, or at least of his Death, the Period should have been compleated, and this World have had an End. Ch. ii. 43. mention is made of a young Man of high Stature, taller than all the rest, crowning those that have confessed the Name of God, called also, § 47. the Son of God: To confirm the same Legend, and to give the more Credit to this Tale, are these Words inserted, ch. vii. 28, 29. *My Son Jesus shall be revealed with those that be with him, and they that remain shall rejoice within 400 Years; after these Years shall my Son Christ die, and all Men that have Life.* This and many other Passages speak so clearly of *Jesus Christ*, his Coming, Office, Death, &c. that, if this Book had been known and received as authentic among the *Jews*, it seems almost impossible, that any *Jew* should remain unconverted. From a Number of parallel Passages to those in the *New Testament*, which a learned Hand has digested Columnwise, see *Lee's Dissert. on*  
2 *Esd.*



2 *Ejdr.* it seems necessary to conclude, either that *Jesus Christ* and his Apostles copied from hence, or that this Writer transcribed largely from the other. It seems most probable, that the Author was a *Jew* converted to Christianity, who, in Hopes of converting others, composed this Work under the Name of a Writer, for whom the *Jews* had the highest Esteem. And there seems good Reason to conclude, that the Author lived in the Times of the first Heathen Persecutions, from many Passages encouraging Faith, and a Spirit of Constancy and Persecution, as may, I think, be inferred also from some Circumstances in the Visions themselves, see ch. xiii. some of which have been thought to have been taken from *Ezekiel's* Visions, *Daniel's* Prophecies, see *Dan. vii. 7.* who, as from the Mouth of God, is called his Brother, ch. xii. vii. or *St. John's Revelation*. But I forbear to enter or remark upon these, as acknowledging my Ignorance of their true Design, which the Learned themselves are so much divided about. What a great Critic (*Scaliger*) observed of *Calvin*, that he was wise in not Writing on the *Apocalypse*, admonishes me not rashly to attempt the visionary Part of this Book, who have neither sufficient Reading, nor Judgment to discern the Scope and Intendment of mystical and prophetic Writings.

I cannot conclude, without blessing the Goodness of God for enabling me to put the finishing Hand at Length to these Sheets; and am glad likewise to embrace this Opportunity of acknowledging my Obligation to those *Right Reverend*, and *Reverend*, Persons, who have occasionally favoured me with their learned Assistance in the Course of this Work.

Passages



# Passages of SCRIPTURE occasionally altered or illustrated.

N. B. The initial Letter denotes the Book.

Genesis.			2 Samuel.			Psalms.		
Chap.	Ver.	Pag.	Chap.	Ver.	Pag.	Chap.	Ver.	Pag.
iii.	17.	7. <i>Wisd.</i>	v.	6.	113. <i>W.</i>	civ.	4.	106. <i>B.</i>
v.	24.	22.	vii.	12.	237. <i>E.</i>	cv.	30.	66. <i>W.</i>
vi.	3.	3.	xvii.	23.	10. <i>T.</i>	cvi.	35.	80.
ix.	1, 7.	100.				cvii.	20.	119.
	24.	83.	1 Kings.			cxiv.	5.	149.
xi.	31.	92.	xx.	1.	65. <i>W.</i>	cxix.	109.	24.
xii.	13.	23. <i>Tob.</i>				cxxv.	3.	8. <i>E.</i>
xviii.	17.	40. <i>W.</i>	2 Kings.			cxxxv.	6.	86. <i>W.</i>
xxv.	8.	23.	i.	2.	88.	cxxxvii.	7.	98. <i>B.</i>
xxxi.	19.	105. <i>Bar.</i>	ii.	23.	215.	cxli.	5.	160. <i>E.</i>
xxxii.	2.	63. <i>W.</i>	v.	23.	4. <i>T.</i>	cxlvii.	4.	78. <i>W.</i>
xxxix.	21.	64.	x.	29.	2.			
xli.	2.	208. <i>Eccl.</i>	xvii.	30.	103. <i>B.</i>	Proverbs.		
	45.	65. <i>W.</i>		31.	80. <i>W.</i>	iii.	29.	38. <i>E.</i>
Exodus.			xxi.	18.	232. <i>E.</i>		35.	23.
iii.	14.	105.				viii.	2.	2.
vii.	13.	86. <i>E.</i>	1 Chron.			ix.	18.	123.
viii.	21.	89. <i>W.</i>	x.	13.	232. <i>E.</i>	x.	10.	144.
x.	17.	118.	xvii.	12.	235.	xviii.	3.	20.
xxviii.	41.	229. <i>E.</i>				xxii.	8.	35.
Leviticus.			Ezra.			xxvi.	7.	80.
xix.	29.	103. <i>B.</i>	iv.	10.	5. <i>T.</i>	xxvii.	14.	213.
Numbers.						Eccles.		
vi.	22.	245. <i>E.</i>	Job.			v.	6.	44. <i>W.</i>
xxi.	8.	117. <i>W.</i>	iv.	8.	35. <i>E.</i>	x.	11.	29. <i>E.</i>
xxiii.	19.	64. <i>J.</i>	vii.	9.	10. <i>W.</i>	Isaiab.		
xxv.	13.	229. <i>E.</i>	xiv.	5.	9.	xxviii.	16.	x.
Deuteron.			xvii.	6.	25.	xxx.	30, 31.	30. <i>W.</i>
xvii.	8.	106. <i>W.</i>	xx.	7.	207. <i>E.</i>	Jeremiab.		
xxii.	5.	107.	xxxvii.	23, 24.	64. <i>J.</i>	vii.	18.	104. <i>B.</i>
xxiii.	3.	83. <i>J.</i>	xxxviii.	36.	122. <i>W.</i>	xlvi.	15.	74. <i>W.</i>
xxxii.	8.	91. <i>E.</i>	xli.	22.	76.	Ezekiel.		
Joshua.			Psalms.			xxxvii.	3, 5.	239. <i>E.</i>
i.	8.	1. <i>W.</i>	i.	6.	18.	Daniel.		
x.	12.	231. <i>E.</i>	vi.	7.	7. <i>T.</i>	ii.	20.	95. <i>B.</i>
Judges.			vii.	14, 16.	20. <i>E.</i>	ix.	17.	247. <i>E.</i>
i.	7.	64. <i>W.</i>	xxii.	1.	2. <i>T.</i>	xii.	13.	26. <i>W.</i>
v.	27.	79. <i>J.</i>		8.	12. <i>W.</i>	Hosea.		
xx.	18.	228. <i>E.</i>	xxix.	2, 3.	218. <i>E.</i>	iv.	15.	241. <i>E.</i>
1 Samuel.			xxxvii.	13.	98. <i>B.</i>	x.	5.	2. <i>T.</i>
ii.	3.	4. <i>W.</i>		41.	12. <i>E.</i>	xiv.	2.	181. <i>E.</i>
xiii.	3.	83. <i>J.</i>	xliv.	14, 15.	25. <i>W.</i>	Habakkuck.		
xxv.	25.	34. <i>E.</i>	xlvi.	8.	69. <i>J.</i>	iii.	4.	67. <i>W.</i>
			xlvi.	12, 13.	32. <i>W.</i>	Malachi.		
			lv.	10.	20. <i>E.</i>	iv.	6.	238. <i>E.</i>
			lxii.	11.	168.	I i		Matthew.
			lxxviii.	50.	30. <i>W.</i>			
			lxxxviii.	10.	93. <i>E.</i>			
			lxxxix.	36.	221.			
			xcii.	7.	20. <i>W.</i>			



# Passages of SCRIPTURE occasionally altered or illustrated.

Matthew.			Acts.			Philippians.		
Chap.	Ver.	Pag.	Chap.	Ver.	Pag.	Chap.	Ver.	Pag.
ix.	2.	195. E.	vii.	43.	97. W.	i.	27.	129. W.
xiii.	19.	3. W.	xiii.	8.	34. E.	Colossians.		
xv.	6.	15. E.	xiv.	34.	237.	ii.	8.	68. J.
xvii.	11.	238.	xv.	15.	38. W.	1 Timothy,		
xxv.	41.	6. W.	xvii.	14.	186. E.	ii.	26.	8. W.
xxvii.	5.	10. T.	xix.	23.	104. W.	2 Timothy:		
Mark.			xxvii.	24.	97.	ii.	6.	33. E.
iii.	21.	25. W.	Romans.			iv.	7.	18. W.
vii.	14.	3.	i.	25.	109. W.	Hebrews.		
xiv.	62.	2. T.	ii.	28.	5.	xi.	3.	76. W.
Luke.			iv.	17.	78.	10.	36. T.	
i.	10.	245. E.	xii.	3.	18.	James.		
37.		1. T.	1 Corinth.			i.	17.	52. W.
iii.	23.	49. J.	vii.	40.	108. Suf.	v.	3.	160. E.
vi.	36. 44.	25. W.	x.	4.	69, 71. W.	1 Peter.		
xii.	20.	25.	2 Corinth.			iii.	20.	225. E.
xvi.	9.	27.	v.	1.	55. W.	Revelations.		
22.		23.	x.	12.	90.	iii.	14.	2. E.
xviii.	7.	184. E.	xii.	4.	105.	iv.	6.	75. W.
John.			Galatians.			xiv.	8.	117.
i.	14.	55. W.	ii.	10.	129. W.			
ii.	1.	25. T.	v.	13.	ib.			
viii.	48.	246. E.	vi.	16.	5. E.			
56.		225.	Ephesians.					
ix.	2.	50. W.	v.	12.	106. W.			
Acts.								
i.	4, 5.	32. W.						
vii.	16.	52. J.						

Corrections



# Corrections in our Version

## in the Book of W I S D O M.

Ch. i. 4.	xii. 1, 5, 12, 15, 17,
ii. 4, 14.	19, 21, 23, 24, 27.
iii. 14.	xiii. 6, 9.
iv. 2, 6, 18.	xiv. 23, 25, 26, 31.
v. 9, 11, 17, 21, 23.	xv. 2, 14, 19.
vi. 22.	xvi. 2, 4, 5, 16, 24.
vii. 2, 10, 14, 15, 19,	xvii. 3, 4, 6, 9, 10, 13,
21, 22, 23.	14.
viii. 3, 6, 8, 18.	xviii. 5, 6, 7, 12, 13,
x. 3, 5, 7, 19.	17, 18, 23, 24.
xi. 9, 12, 14, 18, 23.	xix. 2, 3, 7, 10, 18.

## in the Book of ECCLESIASTICUS.

Ch. i. 7.	11, 18, 20, 22, 26,
ii. 4, 16.	27.
iii. 6, 8, 14, 15, 24,	xxvii. 1, 2, 3, 6, 10,
25, 27, 28.	30.
iv. 11, 19.	xxviii. 7, 10.
v. 4, 10, 15.	xxix. 1, 4, 6, 10, 15,
vi. 2, 7, 28, 36.	21.
vii. 7, 8, 12, 18, 20,	xxx. 7, 9, 11, 13.
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13. Col. 2. l. 21. *read* Notion.  
20. Col. 1. l. 56. *read* mere.  
30. Col. 2. l. 1. *after* following *put* a Comma.  
33. Col. 2. l. 44. *read* narrate.  
45. Col. 2. l. 60. *read* precarious.  
60. Col. 1. l. 56. *read* and when.  
Col. 2. l. 29. *read* they cry.  
65. Col. 1. *read* Chap. viii.  
67. Col. 1. *read* Chap. ix.  
70. Col. 2. l. 42. *read* Pavilion.  
73. Col. 1. l. 38. *read* such a Sin.

P. 80. Col. 1. l. 16. *read* Ancients.  
87. Col. 1. l. 50. *read* If. lxvi.  
52. *read* and they shall be an  
Abhorrence.  
87. Col. 2. l. 54. *read* postea in Templum.  
91. l. 20. *read* enjoyed.  
95. *read* Chap. iii.  
96. Col. 2. l. 58. *omit* to.  
103. Col. 2. l. 65. *read* implore.  
106. Col. 1. l. 52. *read* begin.  
53. *read* they give.  
107. Col. 2. l. 36. *read* Boaz.

CMC  
MVSEVM  
BRITANNICVM



in the Book of TOBIT.

Ch. i. 2, 5, 15, 21. vi. 12.  
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